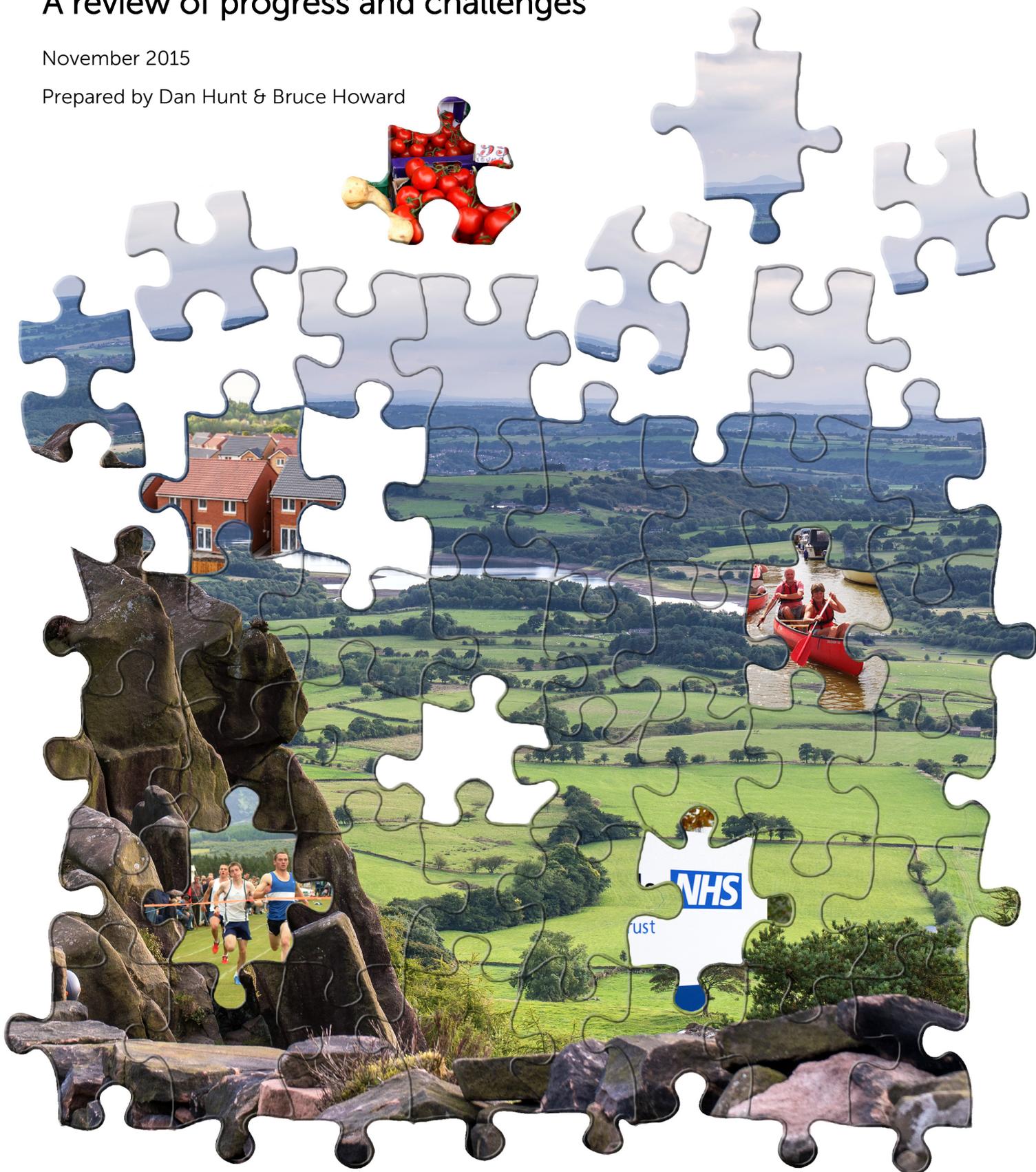
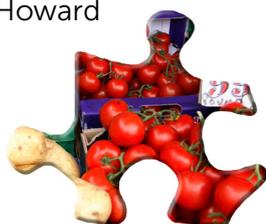


# Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

A review of progress and challenges

November 2015

Prepared by Dan Hunt & Bruce Howard



This report has been prepared by Dan Hunt (Bowfell Consulting) and Bruce Howard (Ecosystems Knowledge Network).

Suggested citation: Hunt, D. and Howard, B. (2015) *Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale: a review of progress and challenges*. Ecosystems Knowledge Network. <http://ecosystemsknowledge.net>

### **Front cover iamges**

Main landscape image: View from the Roaches, Peak District National Park (© Shutterstock / Sponner). Other images from the Ecosystems Knowledge Network and <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/press/press-images>.

## Summary

The ecosystem approach is a set of principles to guide the planning, design and management of activity on land and water for the benefit of society. It is the primary framework for delivering the obligations of the international Convention on Biological Diversity, to which the UK is committed.

This review provides insight into how the ecosystem approach is being applied by initiatives that are working across some of the UK's most treasured landscapes. A cross-section of thirteen people directly involved in applying the approach at this 'landscape scale' were interviewed. Nine people with national insight into the approach were also interviewed.

The review addressed three themes in the ecosystem approach:

- a) Integrating the objectives and plans of different interests and sectors.
- b) Addressing long-term challenges.
- c) Helping people to deliberate and express their values for what land, water and nature do for society.

The findings show that the ecosystem approach is reinforcing existing good practice in how land, water and nature are managed at the landscape scale. This includes helping local people to communicate their values for the landscape and ensuring that projects are delivered in accordance with a long-term vision. The approach is also helping to define new good practice. An example is the way that some landscape scale initiatives are working to influence spatial plans and other strategic documents for local areas.

Public policy narratives in the UK are increasingly supportive of the application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. There are concerns, however, that progress could stall if organisations that leading landscape-scale initiatives respond to resource constraints by becoming less collaborative.

A set of challenges were identified by the review, together with ways of overcoming them.

Challenge	Suggested responses	Suggested roles
Uncertainty about the <b>benefits of integrated working</b> across landscape areas, as is encouraged by the ecosystem approach. It is unclear whether it leads to operational efficiencies for landscape scale initiatives and improved outcomes for society. This includes the benefits of collaboration with the economic development and health sectors.	Detailed case studies of the benefits of integrated working at the landscape scale. These would cover engagement with economic development, spatial planning and health improvement. The case studies would be written for organisations working at the landscape scale.	Ecosystems Knowledge Network (as part of its UK-wide role in evaluating the uptake of the ecosystem approach).

Challenge	Suggested responses	Suggested roles
<b>The pursuit of adaptive management.</b> There is a gap in perceptions about the identity and value of adaptive management between people working at the landscape scale and people who's work is at a national level. A lack of evidence of the outcomes of adaptive management limits uptake of this approach.	Structured evaluations of the benefits that arise from adaptive management. This includes showing how different forms of knowledge about what land, water and nature do for people are deliberated together.	National organisations overseeing networks of initiatives that operate at the landscape scale (Landscape Partnerships, Futurescapes etc).
<b>Effective use of data and information.</b> Legal, technical and financial barriers to sharing data and information remain a major hurdle to landscape scale partnerships becoming more integrated.	Guidance on how existing readily accessible data can be used to provide new angles on how people value nature across a landscape area.	Pilot projects initiated by public sector organisations.
<b>The meaning and purpose of 'valuing nature'.</b> There is uncertainty over what this means in practice and the resources required to undertake valuations. There is concern over monetisation of things of 'intrinsic' and highly place-dependent value.	Make valuation tools and frameworks accessible to landscape scale initiatives.	Research organisations, public agencies and national charities.
	Create a system to record existing good practice in valuing nature, as well as identify gaps in tools.	Ecosystems Knowledge Network.

In conclusion:

1. There is a need for **greater recognition** of the unique position of landscape scale initiatives in applying the ecosystem approach. This involves communicating the benefits of working across natural and administrative boundaries. It includes illustrating how efforts to value the ecosystem services are more effective when done across landscape areas (as opposed to other geographical scales).
2. There is a need for **further action** to encourage the application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. This will involve:
  - a. Sharing specific examples of how data and information can be combined to show what the networks of natural features and processes across a landscape do for society.
  - b. Sharing ideas about how to engage organisations and interests focused on outcomes such as health and economic development.
  - c. Closer alignment of the 'catchment based approach' with other models of integrated management of land, water and nature.
  - d. Showing to a wide range of organisations (including those whose primary interest is not the environment) what benefits for society can be achieved through the ecosystem approach.

## Acknowledgements

The Ecosystems Knowledge Network currently receives funding contributions from Defra, Scottish Government and the Natural Environment research Council (via the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Sustainability Programme).

This review would not have been possible without the assistance of the thirteen local and nine national experts interviewed. They provided insight in to current state of play for use of the ecosystem approach at landscape scale, and case studies to demonstrate this. We are grateful to all of them for their enthusiastic involvement. They are listed in [Annex 1](#).

The Ecosystems Knowledge Network website contains profiles of place-based projects that illustrate the ecosystem approach. There is an open call to nominate initiatives for inclusion in this listing.

Only a selection of initiatives operating at the landscape scale could be included in this review.

<http://ecosystemsknowledge.net>

## Contents

Summary.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iv
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Purpose .....	1
1.3 Implementing the ecosystem approach.....	1
1.4 Landscape scale activity.....	3
1.5 The ecosystem approach and the landscape scale.....	4
<b>2 Methods and report structure .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Focus and approach of the review.....	5
2.2 Report overview.....	5
<b>3 Findings.....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	7
3.2 Integrating objectives and plans.....	7
3.2.1 Context .....	7
3.2.2 Responses to integrated planning .....	7
3.2.3 Factors driving and constraining integration .....	8
3.2.4 Benefits of integration .....	11
3.2.5 Skills, capabilities and knowledge for integrated action.....	12
3.3 Taking a long-term approach.....	12
3.3.1 Context .....	12
3.3.2 Beyond a five year plan.....	13
3.3.3 The challenge of time-limited projects .....	14
3.3.4 Addressing long-term issues.....	15
3.4 Helping people to deliberate and express values for nature.....	15
3.4.1 Context .....	15
3.4.2 Perceptions of valuation .....	16
3.4.3 Valuing the benefits for people.....	18
3.4.4 Economic benefits at the landscape scale .....	18
3.4.5 Data to inform values and valuation .....	19
3.4.6 Understanding cultural services .....	21
<b>4 Discussion and conclusions .....</b>	<b>23</b>
4.1 Taking stock of progress.....	23
4.2 Over-arching challenges .....	24
4.2.1 Challenge 1: Retrospective application of the ecosystem approach...	24
4.2.2 Challenge 2: The pursuit of adaptive management.....	26
4.2.3 Challenge 3: Effective use of data and information.....	27
4.2.4 Challenge 4: The meaning and purpose of valuing nature .....	28
4.3 Conclusions.....	29
4.3.1 Conclusion One .....	29
4.3.2 Conclusion Two .....	29

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

Annex 1 – National and landscape experts interviewed .....	31
Annex 2 – Ecosystem approach principles.....	32
Annex 3 – National public policy frameworks .....	33
Annex 4 – Interview guide .....	35

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The ecosystem approach is a set of principles to guide the planning, design and management of activity on land and water for the benefit of society. It can be applied at a wide variety of spatial scales and settings, ranging from local neighbourhoods to international marine areas.

The land areas that people view as 'landscapes' are a logical setting in which to apply the ecosystem approach because they are determined by a combination of historical, social, cultural and environmental factors. While administrative boundaries sometimes follow the margins of landscapes, they often cut across them. Landscapes provide the people who reside within them, as well as visitors, with a common identity and purpose. This can endure for generations. They tend to be large scale.

There are many ways of identifying and describing the landscapes of the UK. Areas given this label are often relatively unpopulated. In others, urban and industrial features are visually more prominent than natural features. Each country within the UK has a set of profiles of areas of distinctive landscape character.

Public policy relating to the UK's natural environment is increasingly oriented around making more of role and value of land, water and nature in society. Looking after the natural environment is advocated as a way of advancing societal goals such as reduced inequality and increased prosperity.

## 1.2 Purpose

The review was designed to provide insight into how the ecosystem approach is being applied across a sample of landscape areas in the UK. The review was not intended to be a piece of systematic research. Instead, the aim was to find out from a range of people involved in applying the ecosystem approach what progress has been made and what challenges remain. The report forms part of the wider sharing of good practice that is being undertaken by the Ecosystems Knowledge Network across the UK.

## 1.3 Implementing the ecosystem approach

While the ecosystem approach principles were adopted as the primary framework for action within the Convention on Biological Diversity, they extend far beyond the spirit and obligations of this piece of international law. They inform what sustainable development is and how it is achieved. While the term *ecosystem approach* is unlikely to enter common parlance, the ideas underlying it have implications for organisations and professions for whom the natural environment is not a primary focus.

Many different professions, sectors and other groups have formulated their concepts and principles to guide action related to land, water and nature. There are, for instance, ten principles for sustainable land management in Scotland and seven principles for the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales. Other examples are RSPB's twelve principles of good spatial planning. All reflect aspects of the ecosystem approach.

### Terms used in this report

Ecosystem approach	A set of principles for how society should go about planning, designing and managing what happens on land and water ( <b>Annex 2</b> ). It is the primary framework for action in the Convention on Biological Diversity.
Landscape scale	Operating across a geographical area that is recognised by a variety of communities and organisations as a landscape. The identity of a landscape arises through historical, social, cultural and environmental factors. Landscapes tend to be large scale (crossing river catchments and administrative boundaries).
Integrated working	Proactively seeking partnership with those who have interests, agendas and needs beyond the immediate considerations of protecting landscape and conserving nature.
National expert	Someone who has extensive experience of studying, formulating or applying public policy that relates to landscapes within the UK.
Landscape expert	Someone who is involved in implementing or directing a landscape scale initiative.

Over the last ten years, there have been significant advances in knowledge and know-how required for strategic management of the natural environment within the UK. The publication of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) in 2011 was a milestone for recognition of the value of nature for people. Along with other reports on the state of nature, it provides an impetus for action at the landscape scale.

The focus of the NEA was on broad ecological units (habitats) and their connection with people's needs and aspirations (ecosystem services). Since publication of the NEA, the concepts of natural capital and natural assets are now growing in popularity among large businesses and within the parts of government that have been assigned responsibility for the environment.

Informed by studies such as the NEA, the focus for public policy related to the natural environment is moving away from single-issue concerns towards more integrated approaches. This means that multiple societal priorities are addressed together and the many functions of any one area of land or water are given recognition. There is also increasing emphasis on empowering local communities and improving wellbeing. With devolution of environment-related policy in the UK, a diverse array of plans, strategies and policies that relate to the ecosystem approach has arisen (**Annex 3**).

Throughout the UK, the emerging public policy narrative highlights the positive role of the natural environment in society. This is an important factor influencing landscape scale action which is integrated and cross-sectoral. It informs funding decisions in both the public, private and third sectors, as well as research activities.

## 1.4 Landscape scale activity

Landscape scale thinking, planning and action is not a new concept in the UK. The establishment of National Parks in England and Wales in the 1950's enabled integrated protection and management of these pre-dominantly upland landscapes. The designation Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) followed soon after. Between 1956 and 1998, 41 AONBs were designated in England and Wales to enable landscape scale protection and enhancement across many landscape types – from coastline to upland moorland. These protected landscapes have been developing increasingly integrated approaches to landscape management for over 60 years.

### The spectrum of landscape scale initiatives in the UK

- Over 70 Landscape Partnerships (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund)
- 150 Living Landscapes (led by the Wildlife Trusts)
- Over 80 Futurescapes (led by RSPB)
- 12 Nature Improvement Areas funded by Defra for England (plus others self-designated)
- 38 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (designated by law in each country)
- In England, some Local Nature Partnerships operate at a landscape scale, while others follow administrative boundaries (e.g. counties) that encompass a variety of landscape areas.
- 9 Biosphere reserves (UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme)
- 7 Nature Action Zones (designated by Welsh Government), along with Nature Fund Projects and Natural Resource Management Trials.
- Individual initiatives (such as the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network, the Mersey Forest and the Tweed Forum).

More recently, action at the landscape scale has been pursued through various non-statutory approaches. There are now a range of non-profit partnerships spread across the UK undertaking joint work to deliver shared objectives across landscape areas. These include Nature Improvement Areas in England, the Central Scotland Green Network Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnerships, as well as the networks of Futurescapes (delivered by RSPB) and Living Landscapes (delivered by the Wildlife Trusts).

A common theme across landscape scale initiatives is shared and integrated planning and delivery. This involves a wide range of partners, stakeholders and local communities, including local authorities, national delivery agencies, businesses and third sector organisations. Each has its own locally-devised outcomes, leading to a multitude of partnership arrangements and approaches. All of these landscape scale initiatives can contribute to current implementation of public policy related to land, water and nature.

## 1.5 The ecosystem approach and the landscape scale

As well as giving full consideration to natural processes, functions and interactions, the ecosystem approach recognises that people are part of a complex and system that shapes our surroundings. Landscape areas are, therefore, a logical setting in which to consider all these factors. This is not just because of their large scale, but the range of factors that give them identity and distinctiveness.

Central to both the ecosystem approach and action at the landscape scale is the need to consider risks, opportunities, objectives and actions coherently by taking an integrated approach. The inter-dependence of the many ecosystem services a landscape provides on the same underlying natural assets makes this essential. It allows synergies and conflicts between different services to be considered and addressed.

### Aids to applying the ecosystem approach

- The *Ecosystem Approach Handbook*, commissioned by Natural England. <http://ecosystemsknowledge.net/handbook>
- A review of how the ecosystem approach is applied in the UK, conducted by the James Hutton Institute. <http://www.hutton.ac.uk/research/projects/ecosystem-approach-review>
- A pilot project to appraise the contribution of two National Parks in England to the ecosystem approach. <http://ecosystemsknowledge.net/resources/BiodiversityOutcome1C>
- Natural England's National Character Area profiles. These contain ecosystem service information. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>
- *Talking about our Place*, a toolkit commissioned and published by Scottish Natural Heritage. <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/B1117673.pdf>

In addition, the Ecosystems Knowledge Network website contains links to examples of how the ecosystem approach is being applied at a variety of spatial scales. See <http://ecosystemsknowledge.net>.

## 2 Method and report structure

### 2.1 Focus and approach of the review

As explained in the Introduction, the review focused on the application of the the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. The review addresses the following three themes in the ecosystem approach. Each of these represents one aspect of how the twelve principles of the approach are put into practice.

- a) Integrating the objectives and plans of different sectors and interest groups.
- b) Addressing long-term challenges.
- c) Helping people to deliberate and express their values for what land, water and nature do for society.

For the review, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two groups of people:

- *National experts.* People with extensive experience of studying, formulating or applying public policy that relates to landscapes within the UK.
- *Landscape expert.* People who are involved in implementing or directing a landscape scale initiative. These were selected from both statutory (e.g. National Park Authorities) and non-statutory (e.g. Living Landscapes) structures.

**Annex 4** contains a copy of the interview guide for landscape experts.

A geographic range of both groups was selected to include England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, with case studies also reflecting a range of population densities from the urban-fringe to remote upland areas. The groups were selected by the authors as illustrative of the situation in each country rather than any attempt at obtaining a definitive stratified sample. **Figure 2.1** overleaf shows the projects represented by the landscape experts.

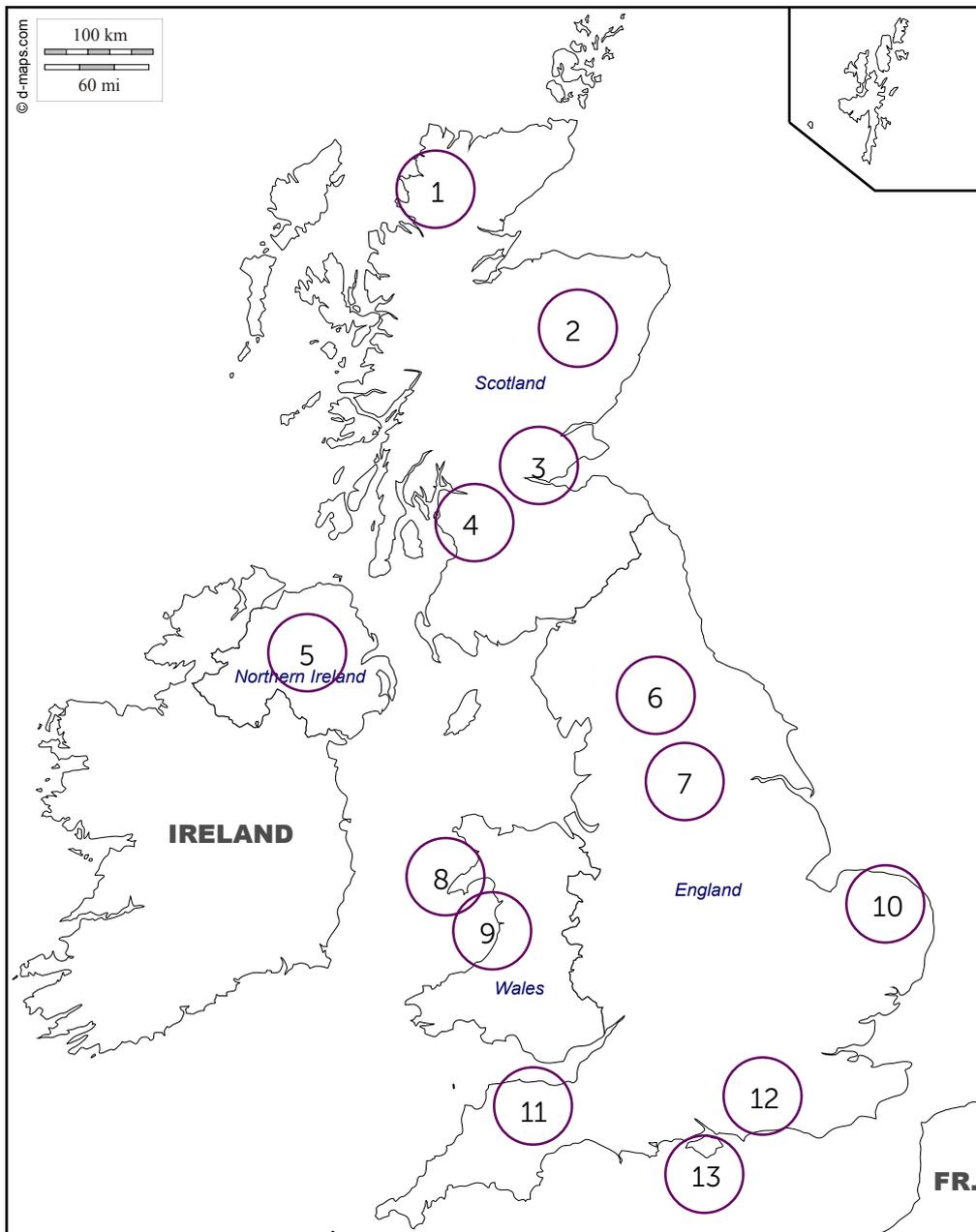
### 2.2 Report overview

This report synthesises the responses from the interviewees, identifying common themes and also clear distinctions across both national approaches and landscape scale initiatives in the UK. It provides a snapshot of current methods and progress in the application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. It covers both barriers to applying the ecosystem approach as well as suggested ways forward to address these.

The report has required considerable summarisation of the findings which gave a rich but lengthy account of national and local progress and barriers in application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale.

The feedback from the landscape experts has been used to write short case studies as part of the report to demonstrate how the three themes (Section 2.1) are being put into practice.

Figure 2.1. Location of the landscape scale initiatives represented by the landscape experts interviewed as part of this review.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape               | 8. Llŷn Landscape Partnership                        |
| 2. Cairngorms National Park                          | 9. Dyfi Biosphere                                    |
| 3. Inner Forth Landscape Initiative                  | 10. The Broads                                       |
| 4. Seven Lochs Wetland Park                          | 11. Holnicote Catchment Project                      |
| 5. Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership                 | 12. South Downs National Park                        |
| 6. Peak District National Park                       | 13. Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| 7. North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |  |

## 3 Findings

### 3.1 Introduction

The findings presented in this Section come from the semi-structured interviews with people involved in enabling, leading and evaluating landscape scale initiatives in the UK (the national experts and landscape experts). The observations are grouped around the three themes outlined in the previous section. Where one of the landscape scale initiatives represented by the interviewees is considered to be a particularly useful example, a case study summary is provided. Other examples cited by interviewees are also given.

### 3.2 Integrating objectives and plans

#### 3.2.1 Context

In recent decades there has been a shift in environment-related public policy away from single-issue concerns (such as water quality and renewable energy) to collective consideration of multiple public and private benefits arising from land, water and nature. This has been an important driver for actions taken at the landscape scale to become more integrated and outward-looking.

A wide range of plans may be operational within any one landscape area. These include statutory documents (such as local planning documents) as well as policies and strategies relating to enterprise, energy, agriculture, tourism and heritage. Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale involves not only establishing connections with these plans, but also getting involved in their development and implementation.

#### 3.2.2 Responses to integrated planning

Many initiatives operating at the landscape scale have had integrated action as their aim since they began. This includes many of those interviewed, such as the Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape (Scotland) and the Dyfi Biosphere (Wales). Several national experts pointed out that National Parks have been working collaboratively and at a large scale for many years. One remarked, "*National Parks have been doing this for years. They understand the benefits and often it is the only way to make progress on an issue. They have a long pedigree of joined-up working across interest.....[National Parks] are often good examples, even if they don't use the ecosystem approach language.*"

The initiatives tend to achieve this integration in two ways:

1. *Production of a single integrated plan.* These draw together objectives and actions within a specific area so as to become a stand-alone document. Actions are developed and agreed by the partners. Single plans have been used by long-standing landscape scale initiatives, such as the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
2. *Connecting and influencing the plans of others.* This involves showing in written and graphic form how existing strategies and plans relate to one another and the landscape area they relate to. It enables consideration of high level overlaps, synergies, and conflicts.

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

While these two ways are not mutually exclusive, they do represent different starting points. In landscape areas protected by law, fully integrated plans are part of the evolution of landscape scale planning since their designation. The planning process for these is, however, not static and has become increasingly inclusive. In the South Downs and Lake District National Parks this has led to partnership plans that are particularly broad (SEE **CASE STUDY A**). These bring together the actions across their many partner organisations.

Some landscape scale initiatives focus on connecting and influencing the plans of others. In the three Welsh Natural Resource Management area trial pilot projects underway in 2015 (the Rhonda Valley, the Tawe Estuary and Dyfi Valley), the intention is to avoid having a single landscape scale plan but to ensure there is effective synergy between existing plans (such as those formulated by local authorities). This requires a pragmatic approach, with existing plans being incorporated or nested within a landscape scale framework. It is hoped this will deliver efficiencies and better outcomes for society as a whole. They reflect the reality that when the ecosystem approach is applied and an initiative broadens its considerations, it will become increasingly difficult to produce stand-alone planning documents.

### *CASE STUDY A: South Downs National Park*

*The South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2014 to 2019 sets out the first full strategy for England's newest National Park. It is an example of integration. Production of the plan was been a joint venture from the start; involving local communities together with organisations and networks in and around the National Park. These will now be involved in implementing the plan.*

*The plan sets out a shared vision for the National Park, including eleven long-term outcomes. It provides a framework for diverse groups, including landowners, to work together. It focuses on where partnership action can make a tangible difference over the next five years. It aligns with the policies and programmes of other public bodies, as well as driving the National Park Authority's own actions.*

*The policies from the Management Plan are now underpinning development of the National Park Local Plan (a formal document that sets out how the National Park will develop into the future). The aim is that the Local Plan will reflect the same broad consensus and scope as the Management Plan. This will be the first Local Plan for the area to adopt the ecosystem approach in an overt way.*

*Next steps include a proposal to demonstrate the process and lessons from this innovative joined-up embedding of the ecosystem approach through a joint report with Birmingham University. The public examination of the Local Plan will be an important test of the translation of this approach into the statutory planning process.*

### 3.2.3 Factors driving and constraining integration

An important driver of integration among the initiatives interviewed is the need to maximise impact despite constrained public sector funding. There is, however, concern among national experts familiar with landscape scale action that as organisations come under increasing pressure to compete for

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

reduced resources, they may become less collaborative. A national expert interviewed observed that "*austerity has led to a focus on core business which can lead to retrenchment into statutory silos*". This view is not universal though; another national expert commented that, "*[the] integrated approach is vital in a context of increasingly limited resources.*"

Even at what is considered the landscape scale, there is often a need to be flexible about the most appropriate spatial scale to focus integrated planning. It will vary depending on the issue (or ecosystem service) that is being considered. For example, in The Broads (Eastern England), the appropriate scale for considering landscape character is defined by the National Park designation. On the other hand, when considering water resources and flood risk, the most appropriate scale is river catchments. There is a need for concerted effort to ensure integration between different issues. The Broads Authority, for example, does so by chairing the Catchment Management Partnership in its area.

Integrated planning is most likely to be achieved where there is a genuine desire to integrate action and delivery, as well as planning. This desire goes beyond the requirements of funders to achieve this. The Seven Lochs Project (**CASE STUDY B**) exemplifies how partners have come together out of a desire to plan ahead for the realities of increasing housing pressures, with all the associated issues of recreation, water management and public health improvement. The Isle of Wight AONB (**CASE STUDY C**) has a Management Plan that now takes a 'whole island' view, taking its ambition for integrated planning beyond the official boundaries of the AONB.

### *CASE STUDY B – Seven Lochs Wetland Park*

*The Seven Lochs Wetland Park is a long-term project arising from the integrated planning capability of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network.*

*The initiative is aiming to build understanding and appreciation of the landscape so that the natural environment is seen as a positive contributor to the community and local economic development. For this reason, involving people and identifying what they value about this landscape is important. There is a strong drive to expand housing in the Glasgow City Region. Understanding what people value now and how that could be affected by such development will enable consideration of the trade-offs.*

*Underpinning the project is an assumption that through community engagement and understanding local people will value the landscape more. People's values are being addressed primarily through public engagement activities led by the The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland, rather than more formal consultation valuation or consultation methods. The project has a strong focus on the values of the next generation: how will young people view this environment in adulthood?*

*This people-centred approach to valuation is being supported by developing other data on assets and values. Currently the Wildlife Trust's EcoServ-GIS mapping tool is being used to identify a range of ecosystem services spatially within the area of the initiative.*

### *CASE STUDY C: Isle of Wight AONB*

*The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2014 to 2019 has included the identification of the contribution of natural systems of the AONB, and the social, cultural, and economic benefits these provide. Page 16 of the plan distils the ecosystem approach into three core principles:*

- The natural systems that operate within Wight AONB are complex and dynamic and their healthy functioning should not be taken for granted.*
- Those that live, work and visit Wight AONB directly benefit from the services provided by the natural environment. These services underpin the social and economic wellbeing of not just Wight AONB, but the wider Island and in many cases may have a direct monetary value.*
- Those who benefit from the services provided by Wight AONB and those who have an active role in the management of them, should play a central role in making decisions about them.*

*The resulting increased understanding has connected the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area with the economic and social well-being and led to more integrated policies.*

*Officially, the AONB covers roughly half the area of the island. There is, however, increasing recognition of the need for a whole-island approach, as well as the need to take into account the many ecological connections with the mainland. The AONB Management Plan reflects this in two ways:*

- 1. By linking to the Eco Island Strategy, the Isle of Wight's Sustainable Community Strategy; a broad based strategy to 2020 for improving the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the Island.*
- 2. By linking to other key policies and strategies such as catchment plans – which was identified as a key gap in the preceding plan (2009 to 2014).*

*Now that the plan is in place, the next challenge is to enable delivery through a similarly integrated approach.*

The public policy frameworks within which some landscape scale initiatives operate do not always align with integrated planning. One example is the rise of catchment management, driven by the EU Water Framework Directive. In some circumstances, there is an assumption that water issues should take precedence in joint working. A narrow vision for the scope of catchment management initiatives can lead to a lack of integration with other sectors unless they are very clearly impacting on water supply or quality. Conversely, there are situations where catchment management is driven by local aspirations for integration rather than a national framework. An example is the Holnicote catchment management project (see **CASE STUDY D, PART 1**).

*CASE STUDY D (Part 1) - Holnicote Catchment Project*

*The Holnicote Project is centred on the National Trust's Holnicote Estate, near Porlock in Somerset, England. The importance of engagement with local communities and other stakeholders has been recognised from the time the project commenced in 2009. A recent evaluation of the outcomes of the first stage of this long-term project has found that an important part of its success has been a combination of scientifically rigorous monitoring and modelling with effective community engagement.*

*The key lesson from the engagement activity has been the requirement to invest sufficient resources into this throughout the life of the project. The use of the findings of the monitoring and modelling in this engagement has provided demonstration of the benefits of the 'natural flood management' approach being undertaken. Land managers and the wider community are only aware of this evidence because the project team had the time to present this in ways that they could engage with.*

*The project found its stakeholder engagement under strain when the statutory permissions and consents required for work on the ground led to considerable delays. Good communication skills were essential during this time.*

*A committed group of partners has underpinned this project. They are individually willing to challenge established organisational ways of working when necessary. Also, long-term relationships of trust with land managers and local communities have been built through having a knowledgeable and respected project manager throughout.*

*This strength of partnership and leadership has been critical to this project. It has been used as a demonstration for other catchment flood management projects. The lessons are now being transferred to six other catchment where the National Trust is a major landowner through the Catchments in Trust' project.*

### 3.2.4 Benefits of integration

This review observed general acceptance that integrated planning can lead to simpler and more joined-up messages to local communities about the priorities for action within a landscape. This is particularly helpful to farmers and other land managers. One of the national experts interviewed commented that "*the whole idea of multiple benefits from landscapes and land is now common*".

Landscape experts interviewed were convinced of the benefits of integration. This is seen in the following comments of theirs:

*"The biggest thing we can do is demonstrate landscape scale delivery. The only sensible way we can do things must be by working across land management units and with partners."*

*"People do 'buy' messages about the benefits for them far more readily than "please conserve this habitat". It's a different pitch to what we used before."*

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

*"We need to increase people's confidence to use the ecosystem approach at local level; it can provide integrated answers to the needs of their locality."*

While the logic of integrated planning may appear strong, many of the landscape scale initiatives considered in this review were concerned about the lack of evidence to demonstrate the benefits. This can lead to doubts about investing the effort and resources required to achieve it.

### 3.2.5 Skills, capabilities and knowledge for integrated action

The complex task of bringing together different organisations (including their objectives, plans and activities) means that people working for landscape scale initiatives need excellent management and communication skills. This includes negotiation with organisations and interest groups that may be unwilling to change. Integrated action may rest on one or two individuals within an initiative, who may have developed relationships of trust with local partners over many years. This situation can make initiatives vulnerable to changes of personnel.

The interviews revealed national and local concern about this vulnerability. Not all organisations operating at the landscape scale have access to the 'soft skills' required to enter into complex negotiations. In particular, staff need to understand the ways of working and terminology of a wide range of sectors and professions outside the traditional environmental community of interest. A landscape expert observed that *"[to get partners] to come along with us; we need to go at their pace and show how this fits with their thinking"*.

A good example of this being achieved is long-term collaboration of water utility companies with environmental partners on sustainable land management. This includes United Utilities' partnership with RSPB in the Sustainable Catchment Management Programme; South West Water's work with the Westcountry Rivers Trust in England; and the collaboration between Northern Ireland Water and RSPB on the Garron Plateau in Northern Ireland.

The language and terminology of the ecosystem approach was seen by some landscape experts as a hurdle to including local communities and other non-environmental players. Many commented that they tailored their language to suit the audience. One landscape expert noted that when engaging community groups *"you need to use direct practical terms if you want them to feel included."*

There is also a need to recognise that local communities can, and do, understand the complexity of their local landscapes. Both national and local experts identified the risk that simplifying the public dialogue about landscapes runs the risk of alienating those people who know and understand it well.

## 3.3 Taking a long-term approach

### 3.3.1 Context

The desire to take a long-term approach to land management is inherent in many initiatives that have been established to operate at the landscape scale. Public and private landowners are used to taking an inter-generational view of risks and opportunities. Planning and acting for the long-term remains, however, a universal challenge because there are so many factors outside the control of those involved. Financial pressures can lead to a focus on

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

short-term outcomes. Non-statutory initiatives operating at the landscape scale, operate largely by means of fixed-term project funding. This presents an additional challenge to keep the focus on a longer-term vision that may extend well beyond the life of the project and its funding.

### 3.3.2 Beyond a five year plan

The five year plan cycle for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a legal requirement and has become an established approach to delivering activity. Across these organisations there is clear recognition that the challenges facing these landscapes require a longer term view. The planning approach in most National Parks and AONBs does include a longer-term vision or high-level strategy, whilst a five year plan contains the actions to deliver this vision over the next five year period. Careful consideration needs to be given to whether this is genuinely effective at addressing and making progress with long-term issues and outcomes.

In the two newest National Parks – the Cairngorms (Scotland) and the South Downs (England) – the challenge of going beyond the five year planning cycle is being addressed through overt use of the ecosystem approach principles. As illustrated in **CASE STUDY E** (Cairngorms National Park), long-term issues have been identified, with integrated and collaborative working across interests being seen as critical to resolving them.

#### *CASE STUDY E – Cairngorms National Park*

*The National Park Authority is developing and implementing a partnership five year Management Plan for the area which is focused on addressing some of the long-term and long-running issues in the landscape. To secure lasting ways forward, they are building effective integrated and collaborative working, developing relationships and trust to enable long-term issues to be openly discussed. This includes conflicts and compromises.*

*The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan sets out actions for the area, not just the organisation. This has created a common sense of purpose and action. To focus on the long-term issues, a series of frameworks are being developed by stakeholder groups. Examples are the Capercaillie Framework (to protect an endangered woodland grouse species) and a Catchment Framework.*

*In parallel, and to address the same long-term issues, a Cairngorm Nature Partnership has been established to provide a cross-sectoral forum to address biodiversity concerns in conjunction with other interests and land-uses. In addition, the Cairngorms Landscape Toolkit has helped identify sensitivity for landscape assets and character in a strategic way – to enable land-use management to be planned with long-term landscape sensitivity in mind.*

*Next steps to address other priority long-term issues are the formation of a Moorland Partnership to address collectively what have been long-term tensions and entrenched positions, and a Cairngorms Nature Festival in 2016 to celebrate the areas wildlife, links with people and highlight the long-term challenges it faces.*

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

Developing trust and an open dialogue around what can be controversial issues have been recognised as key to making progress.

In the Peak District National Park – the oldest of its kind in Great Britain – the ecosystem approach is being used to provide a broader scope for development of the next five year management plan. This will allow long-term issues to continue to be addressed but through a different framework (see **CASE STUDY F**, Peak District National Park).

### 3.3.3 *The challenge of time-limited projects*

Landscape scale initiatives typically deliver outcomes by means of projects that are, by definition, time-limited. Many of those interviewed referred to the importance of the longer-term post-project legacy that each project should secure. Many short-term projects that follow the ecosystem approach have been delivered by longer-term partnerships and organisations. Eleven out of twelve of England's Nature Improvement Areas (which received funding for three years to deliver landscape scale outcomes), were put forward by established groups. By drawing on previous experience, they could take a view that extended beyond the life of the funding stream.

The Llŷn Landscape Partnership in Wales is an example of an initiative has successfully delivered a wide range of projects over many years that collectively have built capacity for application of the ecosystem approach. This includes several supported by Welsh Government's Nature Fund.

#### *CASE STUDY F – Peak District National Park*

*The current Peak District National Park Management Plan runs until 2017. It is now up for review. The intention is to use the ecosystem approach as a framework to provide a broader scope for developing the next five year plan. A priority will be sustaining the 'special qualities' of the National Park – which are the long-term statutory purposes and reasons for National Park status. These provide a high level and long-term set of priorities and values for this landscape, that continue across the five year management planning cycle.*

*Work is underway to identify and define the ecosystem services these 'special qualities' provide across the whole area. This will provide a long-term view of the values and services this landscape provides, against which management planning can be undertaken and assessed. Work is planned to better understand the cultural heritage and its significance in the landscape. This will provide a novel approach to cultural ecosystem services, particularly aesthetic and sense of place, which are directly linked to the long-term values of this upland landscape.*

*The aim is that this approach, along with the Peak District vision, will ensure that the next five year plan addresses long-term issues and secures the long-term special qualities of this cherished landscape. Boldly using the ecosystem approach to achieve this is a first for one of the original group of National Parks.*

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

There was positive support for innovative projects and pilots from many experts interviewed. The ability to 'think outside the box' and trial new ways of working (reflecting the ecosystem approach) was seen as a major benefit. A national expert observed that pilot projects do enable innovation, "*each developed tools that fit their area, using maps to engage across interests.....addressed synergies and trade-offs.....[with] relationship and organisational behaviours seen as a project focus.*"

An important element of ensuring that projects are able to take a long-term view is the involvement of local communities. Many people involved in projects – professionals and volunteers – have a long involvement and commitment to their local landscape. This can help foster continuity and a longer view within a short term project. Examples include the Holincote Estate catchment (**CASE STUDY D**), the Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape (**CASE STUDY G**) and projects within the Llŷn Landscape Partnership.

### 3.3.4 Addressing long-term issues

Long-term issues, such as climate change, pose a significant potential threat to landscapes, the natural features within them, and the services they provide. Nearly all the partnerships and projects interviewed identified long-term issues as being significant in their landscape and to the communities they serve.

The challenge of addressing long-term changes to landscapes is not new. The ecosystem approach recognises that change is inevitable. National Parks have been managing change for over 50 years, and have been working on, for example, the viability of upland farming and remote communities, habitat condition, plant diseases, water quality and the pressure due to increasing numbers of visitors.

The growth of the catchment-based approach and integrated river basin management, which are based on linking water and land management, has helped to ensure that long-term planning and management is more routine. (Section 3.2 contains observations on the catchment approach.)

Concerns about climate change have also helped in this respect. The risks from climate change vary across different landscapes. In low-lying coastal areas, sea level change is a major long-term threat to landscapes and local communities. In The Broads (Eastern England), these risks have been used to drive landscape scale planning and ensure that a long-term approach is taken (see **CASE STUDY H**).

## 3.4 Helping people to deliberate and express values for nature

### 3.4.1 Context

Many people in the UK care passionately about individual landscapes. This includes their own direct use of them, as well as a sense of their 'intrinsic' value. People value landscapes as a whole, as well as the natural features found within them (ranging from individual species to geological formations). Informing, stimulating and recording the values that people

*CASE STUDY G – Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape (CALL)*

*CALL is a community-led initiative that combines social and environmental objectives. The project area of 600 square kilometres (roughly equating to the area of the Isle of Man) is home to a small and dispersed population of just 1,200 people. The long-term viability of this small community is directly linked to land use and ecosystem services in this rugged and demanding environment.*

*The CALL initiative currently has development funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and hopes to secure a five year project. Despite the short-term nature of this funding, the project is working to a 40 year vision developed by the community. The key issues the project will address are all long-term:*

- Viability of the community. It wants to be able to thrive and grow in this relatively remote and wild landscape area.*
- Local employment. In this landscape setting, employment is directly linked to environmental assets and benefits.*
- Climate change. There is a need to increase resilience of this fragile environment to changes in precipitation and temperature. This issue is not recognised by all partners.*
- Overgrazing of habitats by deer. This is having a long-term negative impact on vegetation and the many services it provides – but provides important deer stalking employment.*

*The partnership that is addressing these is also unusual. The owners of over half the land are partners and sit on the partnership's Management Board, including Highland estates and conservation charities. As landowners, they take a long-term view of issues associated with the wider landscape, as well as the management of their land.*

*With this level of land owner involvement and working with a small but highly committed community, who are concerned about the long-term viability of the landscape as well as their sustainability, enables this time-limited project to address long-term issues and behaviours.*

hold for a place can help landscape scale initiatives to engage people in their cause and inform decisions affecting their area. Helping people to deliberate and express their values for nature is a theme that is implicit in the 12 principles of the ecosystem approach. Nonetheless, valuing nature is a challenging topic because of the varying views and understanding of the purpose of monetary valuation.

### *3.4.2 Perceptions of valuation*

Emphasis on economic growth and competitiveness can lead to calls to communicate the value of the natural environment in monetary terms.

*CASE STUDY H – The Broads*

*The Broads Authority has led the development of joined up area catchment-wide planning that has focused on the major long-term issue facing this low-lying area – climate change, sea level rise and flooding/salt water inundation of land.*

*They have led work to explore what the risks and potential impacts could be across many interests and sectors. This has required a joined-up approach, linking climate change with flood risks and catchment management. This has led to an integrated approach to water management across a catchment which much larger than The Broads National Park.*

*Behavioural shifts have been important. The approach by stakeholders to water management has shifted from site-scale to catchment scale, and now encompasses water quality, use, supply and flood risk considerations. The Broads Authority has understood that the issue cannot be addressed within its designated area, and partners have accepted them leading an initiative that extends far beyond that. Cross-sectoral working to assess the risks and possible impacts has extend far beyond just the water and nature conservation sectors. Changes to address long-term climate change impacts include:*

- *The Broads Management Plan places the impacts of climate change as the core issue for the area. It is central to developing the five year plan, which is seen as a five year step in addressing a long-term risk.*
- *A Catchment Partnership that is taking a holistic and long-term approach to water resources, water quality and flood risk.*
- *Mapping has been a key tool to demonstrate risks, potential impacts and synergies of interest.*

When the term *valuation* is applied at the landscape scale, it can be affected by the assumption that it will involve a monetary approach to benefits (such as a sense of place) that are not usually traded. While there are projects looking at monetary valuation of ecosystem services<sup>1</sup>, there is much more activity around understanding the non-monetary value of landscapes and the environment for people both collectively and individually.

Some landscape experts interviewed as part of this review were uncertain as to how far they should go in understanding what people value in a particular landscape. The concern is that valuation exercises could divert focus and effort away from the practical management of the landscape. They wanted to know if the result of valuation is worth worth the effort, and what their

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, the UK Natural Capital Accounting Framework project is developing a habitat linked approach. See: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/environmental/uk-natural-capital/natural-capital-accounting-2020-roadmap--interim-review-and-forward-look/index.html>

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

role is in empowering local people to make integrated decisions. They pointed to the need for development of effective tools or frameworks that can be applied locally, particularly for cultural ecosystem services.

This concern is echoed by national experts who observed that, while considerable effort has gone into refining valuation techniques and applying them locally, there is little evidence to demonstrate that this is leading to different decisions at the landscape scale. There is a widely held view that valuation of the natural environment is more often used to underpin and justify actions than to lead to new perspectives and actions.

### *3.4.3 Valuing the benefits for people*

There is a wide variety of work underway to try to understand and value the benefits for people that flow from landscape areas. These are the benefits derived from what are now called ecosystem services. For instance the *Valuing National Parks* report published in May 2013 showed the value of England's National Parks both for what they are as well as what they do.

A range of ecosystem service mapping methods have been developed and applied to help understand what a particular landscape provides for people. For example the Seven Lochs Project is working with the Scottish Wildlife Trust to map ecosystem services using the EcoServ GIS mapping tool (see **CASE STUDY B**). These tools use existing data and provide an analysis of services extrapolated from this. While this can illustrate the range of services, it does not infer value.

Engaging people who live in and/or enjoy a particular landscape is important to understand what they value. In the Isle of Wight the landscape is being used as driver for engaging people, tapping into the values and importance they place on its distinct island landscapes. This has led to the AONB planning approach being based on landscape as the unifying theme.

### *3.4.4 Economic benefits at the landscape scale*

The economic benefits derived from landscapes are often well understood. This is particularly the case for farming income and tourism spend, which can be calculated for specific landscape areas. What is less established is a clear linkage between the long-term condition of a particular landscape and the scale or intensity of these economic activities.

Over the past few years, interest in the economic metaphor of 'natural capital' has grown. Natural capital is the configuration of environmental features and processes that provide ecosystem services. Economic growth and resilience is among the benefits supported by these services. Despite the increasing prominence of national Natural Capital Forums and Committees, and aids such as the *Linking Economic Development and the Environment* toolkit (Natural England), the connection between landscape scale management and local economic development remains poorly understood.

Work by the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership, with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is addressing this (see **CASE STUDY I**). Elsewhere in England, landscape experts are keen to connect with the LEPs covering their area but are unclear on how to do this.

*CASE STUDY I – Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (NUCLNP)*

*The NUCLNP is piloting 'Environmental Investment Plans' to highlight the opportunities for investing in major projects which enhance the natural capital of landscapes in the partnership area and provide a return on investment. 'Natural Capital Investment Cases' are being developed for key landscape scale natural assets across the large area of the Local Nature Partnership (LNP), in collaboration with North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).*

*These investment cases will identify both monetary and non-monetary benefits that investing in the natural capital could provide for the local economy and communities. This approach includes identifying 'natural supply chains' that underpin economic activity in the area and beyond. The focus is on natural capital rather than ecosystem services, a concept which the partners consider the economic development sector are much more comfortable with.*

*This large and innovative LNP is collaborating with other LNPs and with the North East LEPS over a suite of possible projects where investment in the natural capital will provide improved environmental, economic and social benefits. It is hoped this will further connect economic growth and resilience with a healthy environment at the landscape or larger scale.*

As described in part 2 of **CASE STUDY D** (overleaf), The Holnicote Project is an example of valuation to understand the benefits of the landscape in addressing a specific issue of concern (flooding).

### *3.4.5 Data to inform values and valuation*

A wide range of national and local data exist to help inform the work of landscape scale partnerships and projects. They range from the frequency of visits by the public to places to specific measures of the quality of the environment and the conservation status of flora and fauna. Some data are collected nationally (such as land cover) while others are local and unique to the area in question. They arise from volunteer surveys as well as the work of privately-commissioned consultants, academia and the public sector.

Often, the available data are sufficient to provide a proxy for the ecosystem services provided by a landscape. Many local partnerships and projects have used nation maps portraying particular datasets and 'cookie-cut' these to their landscape boundary. Projects have used ecosystem service mapping tools such as the Wildlife Trusts EcoServ-GIS software tool (though there is concern about the time required to enable these to be used effectively).

Evidence can aid integration by identifying the shared reliance on the landscape of many beneficiaries of the services it provides. Demonstrating the connectivity between different users and beneficiaries and the shared issues to be addressed can help foster joint thinking – both on the vision for an area and its practical management. The case of the Peak District National Park shows how this may be done (see **CASE STUDY J**).

*CASE STUDY D (Part 2) - Holincote Catchment Project*

*This project has used valuation to understand the benefits of the landscape in addressing the risks posed to people from flooding. It was a pilot area in the Defra payments for ecosystem services project. The focus has been on monitoring and evaluating the benefits of the project actions on these and other outcomes has been important in communicating how changes to land management can address flood risk, its impacts and therefore people. The reduction of the peak storm flow in the river system by 10% benefits people, reduces the economic impacts and is making the landscape more resilient to flooding.*

*This has enabled the benefits to be valued, particularly via monetary tools, leading to:*

- *Working with insurance companies: demonstrating how a landscape management programme involving £138,000 of soft engineering can significantly reduce the flood risk for £30 million of private homes*
- *Consideration of who benefits and who pays – the scope for a visitor payback scheme has been assessed and direct payments from other beneficiaries has been considered (such as from the community and from insurers).*
- *Assessment of the impact of changes to farming practices; understanding how changed management affects farm incomes and provides wider financial benefits to others.*

The national experts interviewed held the view that greater recognition should be given to existing data in understanding the value of a particular landscape. This needs to be considered alongside the concern of many landscape experts that any need to collect new data could divert scarce resources away from practical action 'on the ground'. This was articulated by one landscape expert as "*We are on a learning curve; we need to broaden our scope and using new data can help us do that.....the difficult question is how deep do we go?*" There is a desire to know how existing data can be used as a proxy for key ecosystem services in a landscape.

A frequent comment from those involved in running landscape scale initiatives is lack of knowledge about the data available and how to access them. This is compounded by issues over the sharing of data, which can be a major practical barrier to desire to make the best use of them.

During the past five years, some sources for available data across services have been developed. For example, Natural England produced a list of relevant sources for upland landscapes.<sup>2</sup> However, problems in accessing available data result in a significant gap that hinders use of what could be the simplest route to understanding services at landscape scale.

---

<sup>2</sup> Natural England (2011) *Monitoring and modelling ecosystem services: A scoping study for the ecosystem services pilots*. NECR073.

### *CASE STUDY J – Peak District National Park*

*The Peak District National Park management plan is being reviewed with a refreshed plan being completed in 2017. To enable the National Park partnership, who are undertaking the review, to use the ecosystem approach and consider what people value about the Park they are making use of a wide range of existing data. This is the first of the original set of National Parks to overtly use the ecosystem approach in their management planning.*

*Their emerging approach includes:*

- *Building a baseline of ecosystem service mapping using existing data from across partners (a cost-effective shared resource).*
- *Focusing on defining the National Park's 'special qualities' (the statutory purpose of National Parks) and the ecosystem services they provide. This will include considering the cultural heritage and services it provides.*
- *Using existing residents, adjacent communities and visitor surveys to identify what people value and think is special for them about these landscapes. This includes an:*
  - *Annual residents survey (see the box insert overleaf).*
  - *Annual visitor survey (see the following box insert).*
  - *Surveys of people who live beyond the National Park – including these beneficiaries is very unusual.*
  - *Community planning surveys – these include more than just the environment, and cover many issues, benefits and services. These can be adapted to include new questions – an efficient use of an existing process to gain new insight.*
  - *User and project based surveys of issues and need to capture specific groups of interest.*

### *3.4.6 Understanding cultural services*

Cultural ecosystem services are important yet intangible benefits that often drive people's attachment to particular place and landscapes. This is demonstrated through National Parks and AONBs, some of which have been designated for over 60 years as landscapes of national importance based on their 'special qualities' for people. They are often described as 'cultural landscapes' based on cultural and spiritual values, tranquillity and use for quiet enjoyment.

While cultural ecosystem services are particularly challenging to evaluate, taking a holistic view of what landscapes provide requires consideration of them. Economic models often fail to include these, and there are varying views from national and landscape experts about the usefulness of attempting to attribute any monetary value to them.

Qualitative assessment of cultural ecosystem services is now used in a variety of projects using a range of methods (see the examples below). Often these are based either on existing information, for example visitor surveys, or descriptive assessment. There is a widely shared view that community and

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

expert opinion is effective at providing an indication of the core cultural services from a landscape.

There is some consensus that non-monetary methods can aid inclusion of cultural services into planning and decision-making at landscape scale. However, some experts are sceptical of the benefits of any methods because they consider that the relationship people have with a place is so specific to the landscape and the person

Both national and landscape experts interviewed as part of this review also identified a need for a tool to enable inclusion of these services in decisions about land and water at the local level. A UK National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-on work package on cultural ecosystem services also concluded that such a tool is needed.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Church, A. et al. (2014) UK National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-on. Work Package Report5: Cultural ecosystem services and indicators. UNEP-WCMC, LWEC, UK. See: <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/Resources/tabid/82/Default.aspx>

## 4 Discussion and conclusions

### 4.1 Taking stock of progress

This review is based on the perspectives of a selection of people with insight into how the ecosystem approach can be applied at the landscape scale. The findings indicate that the ecosystem approach is reinforcing existing good practice in how land, water and nature are managed at this scale. It is also helping to define new good practice such as:

- Thorough collection of evidence about what that natural environment does for (and means to) people in and around the landscape area. An example is the evidence-gathering underpinning the Seven Lochs Wetland Park.
- Giving recognition to, and influencing, the array of plans that exist within a landscape area. An example is the work by the South Downs National Park on options for a new Local Plan (a type of statutory planning document).

Use of the ideas underlying the ecosystem approach for integrated landscape scale planning and action is growing in the UK. This is happening even though the term 'ecosystem approach' is used infrequently.

Application of the approach is now underpinned by clear public policy frameworks that identify the need for, and benefits of, integrated action across landscape areas. An example is the Environment Bill for Wales (expected to become law in 2016) and the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act in Wales, (which became law in 2015). Both put partnership work at the centre of policy implementation.

Many of the people interviewed for this review recognised that public policy related to the environment is increasingly focused on making more of the benefits that the environment provides for people. Nonetheless, some national experts thought that the idea of valuing nature in terms of what it does for society has yet to be widely accepted by the general public. This was exemplified in the comments that *"people understand wildlife needs habitats; they don't understand people need habitats"* and *"people won't value ecosystems and landscapes unless they see they benefit...we need to sell what ecosystems do for society"*.

In recent years, a series of nationally-driven initiatives have sought to show what specific aspects of the ecosystem approach mean in practice. An example is the Nature Improvement Areas in England, which were carefully designed to enhance ecological connectivity across landscape areas. Funding streams have also reflected and enabled integrated landscape scale projects, with the Heritage Lottery Fund specifically incorporating the ecosystem approach into the guidance for applicants to their Landscape Partnership Scheme.

There remains, however, is a need to show how application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale leads to better outcomes on a wide range of societal agendas such as health and the economy. A national expert stated that *"there is a real lack of what delivery of the policy will look like on the ground...we need landscape experts to show what integrated action really looks like and can deliver"*.

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

There is strong concern among experts working at the national and landscape scale that any loss or reduction in government action to enable uptake of the ecosystem approach could have major ramifications on its uptake and credibility. This underlines the importance of the public policy framework that has been established and the need to continue the momentum of the past few years in developing effective and coherent policy implementation. There is consensus that national input, as well as landscape scale uptake, will play a vital role in increasing the application of the ecosystem approach over the coming years.

One national expert summed this up as: "*The policy is ambitious; it was a breakthrough. But it could now become a missed opportunity; delivery so far has been a step forward, but a rather cautious and timid one.*"

### 4.2 Over-arching challenges

As well as providing a view on successes, the national and landscape experts interviewed identified four over-arching challenges in the application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale:

Challenge 1: Retrospective application of the ecosystem approach.

Challenge 2: The pursuit of adaptive management.

Challenge 3: Effective use of data and information.

Challenge 4: The meaning and purpose of 'valuing nature'.

These challenges incorporate the three focal themes in this review, namely:

- a) Integrating objectives and plans
- b) Taking a long-term view
- c) Helping people to deliberate and express their values

#### 4.2.1 Challenge 1: Retrospective application of the ecosystem approach

The integrated working encouraged by the ecosystem approach requires existing initiatives to widen their scope, working more closely with a wider range of organisations on a broader set of objectives. This broadening of perspective was seen by many of those interviewed as positive, even essential, for increasing efficiency. Nonetheless, the review identified a general concern that broadening the scope of existing initiatives and diversification of their partnerships may dilute the focus of existing landscape scale initiatives. Both national and landscape experts expressed concern that in times of reduced funding availability, many organisations involved in landscape management are withdrawing to their traditional 'core business'. They may not have the capacity to engage new partners in their work.

National experts had the following comments on efficiency and working with others:

*"We will not get efficiencies from synergy if existing plans are heavily rationalised or modified. This does require a pragmatic approach, with existing plans being incorporated or nested within a landscape scale plan"*

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

*"The thinking of either 'my organisation must lead this' or 'my organisation doesn't have a role in this' makes for siloed working and blocks integration"*

This concurred with the view expressed by a landscape expert, that:

*"Integration can help us be more efficient but we need to avoid re-inventing the wheel – none of us has the time"*

There is uncertainty about whether operational efficiency and improved outcomes for society result from integrated working across landscape areas. When taking a long-term view, many of the financial savings and improved outcomes may not be seen for years or even decades. Even in the short-term, it is not always possible to compare the *status quo* with integrated working because each will lead to different outcomes.

Despite this, the review identified that many landscape scale initiatives have been able to agree on joint objectives with a wide range of partners. The findings suggest that there needs to be a much greater emphasis on developing these into genuinely integrated and shared work across a wide area. These plans relate, for example, to spatial planning, health improvement and economic development. Case studies of this would be helpful.

National and landscape experts identified that inclusion of the economic development sector presents a particularly useful opportunity to show how people and nature are connected in a landscape. Such linkages are, however, only now being made at the landscape scale. An example is the work of the Cotswolds AONB (not interviewed in this review).

The landscape scale initiatives included in this review also demonstrate that applying the ecosystem approach can help focus and prioritise objectives and action, rather than lead to a loss of focus via a 'scatter gun' approach to planning. All the landscape experts indicated that the ecosystem approach can help address gaps in their current ways of working. These included involving people, demonstrating the benefits/value of landscapes for people, and integrating outcomes.

National experts identified that not all partnerships undertaking landscape scale activity are aiming to integrate. One summed this as, *"there is a need to differentiate between alliances of convenience for funding and genuine shared planning."*

### Suggested response

To ensure that retrospective application of the approach is considered beneficial, it would be useful to make available **detailed case studies of the benefits of integrated working at the landscape scale**. These examples would cover engagement with economic development, spatial planning and health improvement. They would be written to appeal to organisations working at the landscape scale.

The Ecosystems Knowledge Network could undertake this, within its existing role in evaluating the uptake of the ecosystem approach.

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

### 4.2.2 Challenge 2: The pursuit of adaptive management

Adaptive management involves a continuous cycle of trying out new ideas, reviewing them and implementing change. It is integral to the ecosystem approach. The findings from the review suggest that adaptive management is being used widely and effectively within landscape scale initiatives. The Holnicote Catchment Project, for example, addressed the management of the rivers with local landowners through an iterative development process. (The project did not label this as adaptive management, referring to it simply as 'developing what works locally with local farmers'.)

The view generally held by the landscape experts interviewed is that adaptive management is an effective way to achieve integrated working and plan for the long-term. It can also help to put people more at the centre of valuing what nature does for them. Iterative development and learning are important in achieving the sustainable land management outcomes set out in the Cairngorms and South Downs National Park Management Plans, both of which are included in this review.

There is a difference in perceptions of the identity and value of adaptive management between people working at the landscape scale and those working at the national scale. The perception from landscape experts is that while adaptive management approaches that place emphasis on the value of local knowledge are highly effective, they are not valued or seen as scientifically robust by some academics and protagonists of 'evidence-based' policy. One of the landscape experts commented "*National players need to allow the scope for innovation and local scale trial – and sometimes error.*"

While adaptive management is being used widely and effectively at the landscape-scale, the process is often not formally recorded. The lack of evidence of the outcomes restricts increasing uptake of this approach. Natural England's three Upland Ecosystem Service pilot projects, remain a useful example of what can be achieved through adaptive management.

According to the ecosystem approach, all forms of knowledge need to be recognised as having a place in decisions about how land and water is used. The findings from this review suggest there is a need to find ways of showing how different forms of knowledge about what nature does for people can be communicated and deliberated together. For instance, while it's important that plans can be based on people's values and local know-how, science-based methods for monitoring and evaluating outcomes remain important.

#### Suggested response

There is a need for evaluations of the benefits that arise from adaptive management. This includes showing how different forms of knowledge about what land, water and nature do for people are deliberated together over long periods.

The national organisations responsible for networks of projects that operate at the landscape scale could undertake this.

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

### 4.2.3 Challenge 3: Effective use of data and information

Despite a range of 'open data' initiatives by government in recent years, there remains a widespread view that legal, technical and financial barriers to the sharing of data and information are a major hurdle to landscape scale partnerships becoming more integrated. The review indicated that these barriers restrict consideration of natural assets, the ecosystem services they provide and people's values for them. The Holnicote Catchment Project, for example, struggled to gain access to highly relevant catchment scale data in support of its work, leading to delays in its work programme.

There is a view among landscape scale initiatives that it is difficult to ascertain which datasets are freely available, and what information they can yield. This relates in particular to which available datasets can provide effective proxies for ecosystem services.

Several landscape experts expressed concerns that applying the ecosystem approach within their locality requires the collection of additional local data. This may divert scarce resources from the delivery of core project outcomes. On the other hand, one national expert suggested that "*there are lots of data out there – the main hurdles are knowing and accessing, not producing more*".

The Scottish Environment Web and Scottish land-use data directory<sup>4,5</sup> are recognised by landscape scale initiatives as examples of good practice. Resources such as these have been designed for access by organisations directly involved in managing land, rather than solely research institutions.

Lack of monitoring data that demonstrates the benefits of partnership landscape working is also a significant concern. As one national expert observed that "*lack of good evidence to demonstrate a better outcome for [the] environment and people means people are asking 'Why bother?'*"

#### Suggested responses

Given ongoing concerns about access to the broad range of data and information required to apply the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale, it would be helpful to give more prominence to innovative use of what is already available. This includes examples of how new or existing data have been used to show causal links and positive correlations between management changes and the resulting benefits for society.

There is an opportunity for greater use of the capabilities of research institutions to process complex datasets and produce visualisation tools that can be used for involving people in understanding the future of landscapes.

Guidance could be produced on how existing readily accessible data can be used to provide new angles on how people value nature across a landscape area. The guidance should cover the capabilities and limitations of tools to gather and portray ecosystem service information. This includes how these services are valued by diverse groups of people.

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.environment.scotland.gov.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Landusestrategy/datadirectory>

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

### 4.2.4 Challenge 4: The meaning and purpose of valuing nature

Many landscape scale initiatives recognise that greater understanding of the values that people hold for places, landscapes and nature form the basis for managing ecosystem services (see [Section 3.4](#)). Some of these initiatives have started to engage with economic valuation of ecosystem services. An example is The Broads (Eastern England), which is piloting ecosystem accounting (a tool for compiling information on environmental changes and linking these changes to economic and other human activity). Others are using existing data to indicate non-monetary values, such as in the Peak District where existing resident and visitor survey results are being used to indicate use preferences.

Despite the level of interest in the notion of valuing nature, there are concerns over economic appraisal. A national expert highlighted "*universal mistrust amongst the biodiversity community, concerned that it [the natural environment] becomes an economic commodity*".

The landscape and national experts interviewed as part of this review also expressed concerns about what valuation means in practice. Despite extensive work on values and valuation in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment, there is an ongoing need for clarity as to what valuation means and how values for land, water and nature should be expressed at the landscape scale.

In addition, there are practical concerns about the level of effort, skill and resources required to undertake valuations of any kind across landscape areas. A national expert questioned monetary valuation in particular, stating that "*an assumption that it will be useful for everyone.....some projects get very involved in [monetary] valuation, but is this effort well spent?*"

Understanding cultural, health and wellbeing benefits arising from land, water and nature at the landscape scale is recognised as being increasingly important to effective integrated management. The lack of established ways of integrating this into the valuation of more quantifiable aspects of the natural environment (such as carbon sequestration) remains a barrier to landscape scale initiatives embracing the idea of valuing nature.

#### Suggested responses

- Collaboration between landscape scale initiatives and centres of expertise in environmental economics and land valuation to develop valuation tools that can be applied in this context. Understanding, recording and valuing of cultural services will be an important part of this.
- A system to record existing good practice in valuation of ecosystem services at the landscape scale, as well as identify gaps in tools used to help people deliberate and communicate values. The Ecosystems Knowledge Network is well positioned to provide this.
- The catchment based approach needs to be integrated into management at the landscape scale (i.e. across river catchments and administrative boundaries). National organisations leading landscape scale initiatives could encourage this collaboration. Policy outcomes that incorporate water quality, land condition and wider environmental outcomes at the landscape scale would help with this.

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

This work could be undertaken by organisations that support individual landscape-scale initiatives such as charities, public bodies and consultancies.

### 4.3 Conclusions

The following two conclusions bring together the findings in Section 3 and ideas in the discussion above. The ways forward that are given after each conclusion are not intended to be prescriptive. They are for consideration by all organisations that can influence the way that the UK's landscapes are protected and enhanced, including the landscape scale initiatives themselves.

The 'Suggested responses' in the preceding section (4.2) provide ideas for specific follow-up to these conclusions.

#### 4.3.1 Conclusion One

**There is a need for greater recognition of the unique position of landscape scale initiatives in applying the ecosystem approach.**

There has been significant progress in recent years in application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. Despite the broad definition of what 'landscape' is, the landscapes of the UK are seen as having an enduring character and role in society. Initiatives operating at this scale are well placed to take a long-term view and demonstrate the links between the environment and major societal priorities such as health and the economy.

Many landscape scale initiatives have long-recognised their national and international contribution to societal issues such as wildlife conservation, the rural economy and the protection of heritage. Several landscape scale initiatives are, however, now recognising the value of engaging with those who live beyond their boundaries specifically through the full diversity of ecosystem services in their area. For example, the *South Downs Way Ahead* Nature Improvement Area is using this approach to engage urban communities in Brighton.

The value of action to connect people and nature at the landscape scale (i.e. across administrative and river catchment boundaries) needs to be given greater recognition by all sectors. Valuing nature becomes more meaningful when undertaken within areas (landscapes) that have meaning and identity to diverse groups of people over many generations.

#### 4.3.2 Conclusion Two

**There is a need for further action to encourage the application of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale.**

Good know-how about the practical implications of the ecosystem approach is available within individual National Parks, AONBs and other groupings of landscape scale initiative. There is, however, a need for greater collaboration between the different types of initiative working at the

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

landscape scale, so that they can apply the ecosystem approach. This involves sharing ideas about how to engage partners that are focused on specific outcomes such as health, economic development and tourism. It means effective shared learning between AONBs, National Parks, Living Landscapes, Futurescapes, projects funded by the public sector and other 'one off' initiatives.

Inter-disciplinary research initiatives of the research councils could play a much greater part proactively supporting projects and programmes working at the landscape scale.

Integration the natural capital concept into the work of landscape scale partnerships could help them apply the ecosystem approach by highlighting the value of nature and linking with the economic development interests. There is a need to share the experience of initiatives, such as the Northern Uplands Chain Local Nature Partnership, that are already engaging with the natural capital and economic development agendas locally.

## **Annex 1 – National and landscape experts interviewed**

The following people were interviewed as part of the development of this review:

### **Landscape experts**

England:

- Joel Bateman – Communication and Project Officer, Isle of Wight AONB
- Chris Fairbrother – Landscape Strategy Lead, South Downs National Park Authority
- Nigel Hester – Holincote Catchment Project - Projects and Grants Manager, National Trust
- Simon Hooton – Head of Strategy and Projects, Broads Authority
- Amanda Nevett – Research and Programme Manager, Peak District National Park Authority
- Chris Woodley-Stewart – Director, North Pennines AONB

Scotland:

- David Anderson – Inner Forth LPS Landscape Initiative - Futurescapes Officer, RSPB
- Max Hislop – Seven Lochs Project – Programme Manager, Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network
- Hamish Trench – Director of Conservation and Visitor Experience, Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Richard Williams – Project Manager, Coigach Assynt Living Landscapes

Wales:

- Andy Bowland – providing insight into the Dyfi Biosphere Project from the perspective of Ecodyfi
- Arwel Jones – Llŷn Landscapes Partnership

Northern Ireland:

- Seán Woods – RSPB Northern Ireland

### **National experts**

- David Bullock – Head of Nature Conservation, National Trust
- Mary Christie – Strategy and Communications Manager, Scottish Natural Heritage
- Russell De’Ath – Senior Adviser, Natural Resources Wales
- Paul Hamblin – Director, National Parks England
- Brian McDonald – Senior Adviser for Nature Improvement Areas, Natural England
- Steve Spode – Head of Sustainable Futures, Welsh Government
- Ruth Waters – Principal Adviser on the Ecosystem Approach and Natural Capital, Natural England
- Kerry Waylen – The James Hutton Institute
- Stephen McCabe – Northern Ireland Environment Link

## Annex 2 – Ecosystem approach principles

The following arranges the twelve principles of the ecosystem approach (as articulated by the Convention on Biological Diversity) according to four themes identified in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment. The **KEY PHRASES** to summarise each principle are from a table that was produced for the White Paper for the Environment Bill in Wales.

### People

#### Principle 1: **SOCIETAL CHOICE**

The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choices.

#### Principle 11: **EVIDENCE**

The ecosystem approach should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.

#### Principle 12: **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The ecosystem approach should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.

### Management

#### Principle 2: **LOCALISED DECISIONS**

Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.

#### Principle 3: **ADJACENT EFFECTS**

Ecosystem managers should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems.

#### Principle 4: **ECONOMIC DRIVERS**

Recognising potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context.

### Scale and dynamics

#### Principle 7: **SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL SCALE**

The ecosystem approach should be undertaken at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales.

#### Principle 8: **LONG-TERM APPROACH**

Recognising the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterize ecosystem processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.

#### Principle 9: **MANAGING CHANGE**

Management must recognize the change is inevitable.

### Function, goods and services

#### Principle 5: **ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE**

Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the ecosystem approach.

#### Principle 6: **ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITS**

Ecosystem must be managed within the limits of their functioning.

#### Principle 10: **BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

The ecosystem approach should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.

## Annex 3 – National public policy frameworks

Public policy related to the management of land, water and the natural environment in the constituent countries of the UK varies in subtle yet distinct ways.

The Welsh policy framework has sustainable development and integrated delivery at its heart. Key elements are:

- The Environment (Wales) Bill (currently laid before the Welsh Parliament). This aims to “ensure that we have the right legislative framework to manage our natural resources in a joined-up way.... to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits for Wales.”
- *Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, 2015*. This requires a long-term approach to planning which applies across Welsh government, requiring Public Service Boards to produce Wellbeing Plans to bring together social, economic and environmental needs at the local scale.
- *Natural Resources Wales* - this public delivery agency was formed in 2013, taking on the responsibilities formerly held by the Environment Agency in Wales, the Countryside Commission for Wales and the Forestry Commission in Wales. It has a mandate to achieve sustainable development through the sustainable management of natural resources. This includes close co-operation with other public sector organisations, especially local authorities.

The English policy framework is centred around biodiversity through three key documents:

- 2010 *Making Space for Nature* – the ‘Lawton Report’ championed that investment in improving the health of nature would secure significant social and economic benefits; and that this can be best achieved through integrated action at landscape scale
- 2011 *The Natural Choice, securing the value of nature* – the HM Government Natural Environment White Paper. Its introduction states that “the value of nature at the centre of the choices our nation must make: to enhance our environment, economic growth and personal wellbeing. By properly valuing nature today, we can safeguard the natural areas that we all cherish and from which we derive vital services”.
- 2011 *Biodiversity 2020 – a strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services*. This set out the actions needed to conserve and enhance nature in England and to connect improving wildlife with improving economic and social wellbeing.

The Scottish policy framework reflects the political focus on community involvement in land and natural resource management and ownership:

- *Community Empowerment Bill* – this proposed legislation will secure the right for local communities to have the opportunity to seek ownership of land assets that they rely upon, as well as requiring new

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

approaches to community planning. It is strongly linked to the Scottish from land reform agenda.

- *The 2011 Scottish Land Use Strategy* –recognises the need for change to enable sustainable management for the long-term. This has driven different thinking at national and landscape scales
- *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy* – has strong integrated 'people and nature' policy priorities
- *National Planning Framework* – has a strong emphasis on the role of green infrastructure benefitting both urban and rural communities.

In Northern Ireland, a key document is:

- *Valuing Nature A Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020* – this sets out the ecosystem approach as the vision for action to conserve and restore biodiversity in the broadest sense of the word.

## Annex 4 – Interview guides

### A. Questions for semi-structured interviews with **landscape experts**.

INTRODUCTION	PART A	PART B	PART C
<p>About your project.</p> <p>3 mins max</p>	<p>Your work and the ecosystem approach.</p> <p>5 mins max</p>	<p>Development of integrated delivery/use of the ecosystem approach. 5 mins max</p>	<p>Integration of objectives and plans.</p> <p>10 mins</p>
<p>a. What area does your project operate over?</p> <p>The project is the part of their work we are focusing on. It may be a specific landscape project, or an element of their work e.g. National Park management planning approach.</p> <p>b. What is your role?</p> <p>c. What are the main environmental outcomes/objectives you are addressing – briefly?</p> <p>Check - looking for the range – biodiversity, water, land use, landscape, access, visitor management.</p> <p>d. which are the main communities who benefit from your project/actions?</p>	<p>a. What do you consider to be the ecosystem approach?</p> <p>b. Is the language familiar to you and your team or not? What words do you tend to use?</p> <p>Check – do you use alternative terms such as: integrated delivery; landscape scale delivery; joined-up delivery.</p> <p>c. Thinking about your work on/in the [specify the project or part of their work we have identified] <u>what parts of your work and actions</u> do you think fit with taking an ecosystem approach?</p>	<p>a. Describe how integrated delivery/use of the ecosystem approach has developed in your project over the past 5-10 years (<i>if shorter</i> since the project began)</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has there been significant change?</li> <li>- what has changed/developed?</li> <li>- why have these areas changed/developed – what has led to the changes?</li> </ul> <p>b. How has your and engagement and working with external partners/organisations changed?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has there been significant change to how partners work together?</li> <li>- has the range of partners and stakeholders changed?</li> </ul>	<p>a. How do you work with partners to share and integrate <u>objectives</u> for the area your project* covers?</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- include environment, community and economic</li> <li>- have these objectives been discussed and agreed by/with partners?</li> <li>- how did you do that?</li> <li>- do you feel your set of objectives is integrated – i.e. addresses issues across a range of interests and organisations?</li> </ul> <p>b. How do you and your partners go about planning to deliver these objectives across the area?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- do you have a formal shared plan or is it less formal?</li> </ul>

Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

INTRODUCTION	PART A	PART B	PART C
<p>About your project.</p> <p>3 mins max</p>	<p>Your work and the ecosystem approach.</p> <p>5 mins max</p>	<p>Development of integrated delivery/use of the ecosystem approach. 5 mins max</p>	<p>Integration of objectives and plans.</p> <p>10 mins</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are they RESOURCE MANAGERS – e.g. farming community/sector</li> <li>- or are they RESOURCE USERS – e.g. water customers</li> <li>- LOCALS, VISITORS or BOTH?</li> </ul>	<p>[Looking for an initial list, don't go into detail yet]</p> <p>Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if you are not familiar with the ecosystem approach, then consider what form your project fits with integrated delivery; landscape scale delivery; joined-up delivery.</li> </ul>	<p>c. do you think this has had benefits for your delivery on the ground over the same period? If so, what are they?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- this can be benefits for the landscape/environment/nature and benefits for people (inc relationships)</li> <li>- what do you think that has improved as a result of more integrated delivery?</li> <li>- have there been drawbacks and problems?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how are <u>other</u> environmental strategies and plans included and linked in? E.g. catchment plans, biodiversity plan.</li> <li>- are <u>economic</u> development strategies and plans included? E.g. LEP plans. If not why not? If so how? (ask for examples if possible)</li> </ul> <p>c. How do you think you could improve your planning?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how could you make it more joined-up and integrated?</li> <li>- this can include both objective setting and the planning process</li> <li>- do you think you have the right partners and stakeholders on board?</li> <li>- do you think the scope of your project is broad enough/too broad?</li> <li>- what are the barriers? [try to go beyond resources]</li> <li>- solutions?</li> </ul> <p>Ask about benefits of joint planning – e.g. efficiency, shared ideas and resources?</p>

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

PART D	PART E	PART F	PART G
Addressing long-term challenges 10 mins	Identifying and considering values for people of the landscape 10 mins	Gaps, barriers and solutions 5 mins MAX	Potential case study – what to focus on 5 mins MAX
<p>a. what are the long – term issues and challenges for your project* area?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- please list them</li> <li>- What are the major ones (two or three)</li> <li>- if stated - how is climate change an issue, what are the risks it poses?</li> </ul> <p><i>b. how does your project* address long-term issues + challenges?</i></p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how does your partnership discuss and identify long-term issues?</li> <li>- how do you look ahead 10 years+ e.g. do you have a vision</li> <li>- what period is your project/management plan for?</li> <li>- How does the plan address long term issues that are over a longer time span?</li> <li>- evidence</li> </ul> <p>[REQUEST EXAMPLES IF POSSIBLE]</p>	<p>a. how does your project identify and understand what people – locals and visitors – value about the landscape you work in?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we mean value in the broadest sense, from what people enjoy to financial benefits</li> <li>- looking for HOW you engage people.....resident or visitor surveys, through elected reps, through interest groups, online polls, etc</li> <li>- do you think this provides a sufficient picture of people’s values of the area?</li> </ul> <p>b. have you tried to value in a monetary way any of the benefits from the landscape?</p> <p>If so – how? If not – is there a reason why not? - it may not be relevant to the issues or landscape.</p>	<p>a. what are the main gaps and barriers for your project to be able to apply the ecosystem approach in your area?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use the language they used in Q1 - integrated delivery; landscape scale delivery; joined-up delivery, etc</li> <li>- what are the barriers <u>beyond</u> resource limitations?</li> <li>- try to tease out if these are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INTERNAL (e.g. reluctance/lack of experience of partners of EcA) or</li> <li>• EXTERNAL (e.g. beneficiaries are hard identify or engage)</li> <li>• POLITICAL barriers (e.g. local members don’t understand it; water sector partners wary of working with other interests)</li> <li>• EVIDENCE barriers (e.g. lack of data on a specific issue or benefit)</li> <li>• SKILL and KNOWLEDGE barriers (e.g. lack of understanding/awareness of benefits of an ecosystem approach)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>a. We would like to write up a short case study about your project, to include in our Annual Review.</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have they been a case study in any other projects/reports? If so is there duplication (we want to avoid this)</li> </ul> <p>b. What would you highlight in your work that could help other similar organisations or projects use the ecosystem approach?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- from our discussion then the elements of your work stand out for me are :</li> </ul> <p>LIST 2 or 3</p>

Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

PART D	PART E	PART F	PART G
<p>Addressing long-term challenges 10 mins</p>	<p>Identifying and considering values for people of the landscape 10 mins</p>	<p>Gaps, barriers and solutions 5 mins MAX</p>	<p>Potential case study – what to focus on 5 mins MAX</p>
<p>c. do you consider that your project* is sufficiently addressing the big long-term issues and challenges facing your landscapes?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are there some long-term issues you are currently not addressing or not addressing sufficiently?</li> <li>- why is this? What are the barriers? [resource? Lack of agreement? Lack of joint working?]</li> <li>- solutions?</li> </ul>	<p>c. how does the knowledge gained about what people value feed into to setting your project * objectives and priorities?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how does this feed into your planning process [refer to how they do this when asked in Q3]</li> </ul>	<p>b. What would help <u>you</u> address these gaps and barriers – beyond more resources?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LOCAL solutions – e.g. visit a similar project</li> <li>- NATIONAL solutions – improved data on a specific benefit; guidance on a topic</li> </ul>	<p>c. Conclusion + next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree key points to include in the case study.</li> <li>• Ask what information would be most relevant to develop a case study – and ask them to email it/links to it if possible.</li> <li>• Ask if they could comment on a rough draft – and indicate when this will be.</li> <li>• Ask if any questions about the Annual Review.</li> <li>• Thank them.</li> </ul>

## B .Questions for semi-structured interviews

### Interview introduction:

- This Ecosystems Knowledge Network review is about use of the ecosystem approach (or integrated delivery, or joined-up delivery – however you describe it) at the landscape scale. Interested in BOTH the local delivery view AND the national view from people involved with developing elements of the ecosystem approach and supporting local use
- Overall we want the report to show a national picture for the approach and landscape scale use, combining progress and good examples along with barriers and things to address...at both national and local scale
- Want to include case study examples – welcome suggestions of examples of NATIONAL examples
- We are talking to 12-15 landscape scale projects
- Time check – expected interview duration 45-60 mins.

INTRODUCTION	PART 1	LINK	PART 2
Your work and the ecosystem approach. 8 mins maximum.	Development of integrated delivery/use of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. 10 mins.	2 mins.	Integration of objectives and plans. 10 mins.
<p>a. How does your work/organisation fit and contribute to taking the ecosystem approach? (Or integrated delivery, joined-up delivery)</p> <p>[Looking for an initial list, don't go into detail yet]. Prompts: - if you are not familiar with the EcA then consider what form your project fits with integrated delivery; landscape-scale delivery; joined-up delivery.</p>	<p>Trying to build an overall picture of progress with integrated delivery at LANDSCAPE SCALE over the last five years.</p> <p>a. What key developments in integrated delivery/use of the Ec Approach have you seen over the past five years. What have been the big steps forward?</p>	<p>In this review of use of the ecosystem approach within landscape scale delivery we are particularly focusing on three elements or parts of the ecosystem approach relevant for landscape scale planning and delivery.</p> <p>I am interested to hear your views on how these are developing. I am also interested to hear about the</p>	<p>The ecosystem approach promotes integrated and joined-up working to address a number of outcomes and issues together in a particular landscape. This is reflected in government environment policies and by national agencies and organisations.</p>

## Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

INTRODUCTION	PART 1	LINK	PART 2
Your work and the ecosystem approach. 8 mins maximum.	Development of integrated delivery/use of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale. 10 mins.	2 mins.	Integration of objectives and plans. 10 mins.
<p>b. what is your role – and what are you focused on? Main areas.</p> <p>c. is your work at the national level only or are you working or linking to local landscape scale?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- what are you focusing on for the ecosystem approach/integrated delivery.</li> <li>- are you working with any specific landscape scale projects?</li> <li>- do you have a national co-ordination, research, advisory role?</li> </ul> <p>d. who benefits/is the target audience for your work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are they RESOURCE MANAGERS – e.g. farming community/sector</li> <li>- or are they RESOURCE USERS – e.g. water customers</li> <li>- LANDSCAPE SCALE PARTNERSHIPS</li> <li>- ACADEMICS</li> <li>- POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS – if so at what scale – national/regional/local?</li> </ul>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has there been significant change?</li> <li>- what has changed/developed?</li> <li>- why have these areas changed/developed – what has led to the changes? Request specific examples.</li> </ul> <p>b. what benefits do you think this has had over the same period?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- benefits for nature, landscapes and other environmental outcomes</li> <li>- benefits for joined up working- inc relationships and across sectors</li> <li>- benefits for people</li> <li>- drawbacks &amp; problems?</li> </ul> <p>c. How has your organisation contributed/responded – how have you developed/supported use of the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale?</p> <p>Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>what areas have you focused on?</u> E.g. partnership building, valuation, public engagement, data, mapping ecosystem services.</li> </ul>	<p>gaps+barriers for other elements of the ecosystem approach too – we will come on to that later.</p> <p>Which of the three would you like to discuss? 15-20 mins for this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of objectives and plans across outcomes and organisations (Local Planning Authority, catchment. business, biodiversity, economic development, etc)</li> <li>• Addressing long-term challenges</li> <li>• Identifying and deliberating the values of local communities and visitors (including valuation)</li> </ul>	<p>a. how effective do you think landscape scale partnerships/projects are at integrated planning and action?</p> <p>Do you have good or bad examples?</p> <p>e.g. climate change; habitat fragmentation, water quality</p> <p>b. what are the barriers to more integration at the local scale?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how much are these national? How much local?</li> </ul> <p>THEN PROMPT- and how could they be addressed?</p> <p>Are particular sectors good at this? Or not good?</p>

Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

PART 3	PART 4	PART 5	PART 6
<p>Addressing long-term challenges. 10 mins</p>	<p>Identifying and considering values for people of the landscape. 10 mins.</p>	<p>Gaps, barriers and solutions. 15 mins MAX</p>	<p>Potential case study – what to focus on. 5 mins MAX</p>
<p>a. how effective do you think landscape scale partnerships/projects are at addressing long-term issues + challenges?</p> <p>Do you have good or bad examples? e.g. climate change; habitat fragmentation, water quality</p> <p>b. what are the gaps/barriers? How could they be addressed?</p>	<p><i>Values – can be both monetary and non-monetary.</i> I mean value in the broadest sense, from what people enjoy to financial benefits they work in?</p> <p>a. how effectively do local LSS project identify and understand what people – locals and visitors – value about the landscape they work in?</p> <p>Prompts                      - HOW do they engage?.....resident or visitor surveys, through elected reps, through interest groups, online polls, etc                      - WHAT ELSE COULD BE DONE – gaps/barriers + solutions</p> <p>c. which benefits do you think are the ones that need to be focused on – that help</p>	<p>a. are there OTHER big gaps and barriers that hamper applying the ecosystem approach effectively at landscape scale? (apart from those already covered)</p> <p>Note – these do NOT have to be at local scale. May well be national gaps/barriers</p> <p><i>Interested to know where does effort and focus need to be in the next few years to help at LSS?</i></p> <p>Prompts                      - use the language they used in Q1 - integrated delivery; landscape-scale delivery; joined-up delivery, etc                      - what are the barriers <u>beyond</u> resource limitations?                      - try to tease out if these are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INTERNAL (e.g. reluctance/lack of experience of partners of EcA) or</li> <li>• EXTERNAL (e.g. beneficiaries are hard identify or engage)</li> <li>• POLITICAL barriers (e.g. local members don't understand it; water sector)</li> </ul>	<p>We will be writing up short case studies about landscape scale project, to include in our Annual Review.</p> <p>a. Are there examples of good practice or innovative solutions that have worked at national scale or across a set of projects? (ie not just at the local individual project scale)</p> <p>Would these make useful case studies in the Annual Report? The main audiences are local landscape scale delivery practitioners, national players and the 1500 Ecosystems Knowledge Network members.</p> <p>These can be from your work or what you have seen that is effective.</p>

Applying the ecosystem approach at the landscape scale

	<p>b. is valuation of the benefits from a landscape in a monetary way being used at LSS?</p> <p>If so, how? Request examples.</p> <p>If not, is there a reason why not? Identify barriers.</p> <p>- it may not be relevant to the issues or landscape.</p> <p>Look ahead to rest of interview. We have discussed three elements of the ecosystem approach. Looking more widely I am interested how you think use of the ecosystem approach /integrated delivery could be developed and supported in next five years.</p>	<p>partners wary of working with other interests)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVIDENCE barriers (e.g. lack of data on a specific issue or benefit)</li> <li>• SKILL and KNOWLEDGE barriers (e.g. lack of understanding/awareness of benefits of the ecosystem approach)</li> </ul> <p>b. What solutions to <u>you</u> think could address these gaps and barriers – beyond more resources?</p> <p>Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- POLITICAL + POLICY solutions</li> <li>- NEW PARTNERS input + involvement</li> <li>- GUIDANCE</li> <li>- EDUCATION + SHARING BEST PRACTICE</li> <li>- EVIDENCE + DATA solutions – improved data on a specific benefit</li> <li>- LOCAL SOLUTIONS – e.g. sharing BP</li> </ul> <p>c. anything else to add?</p>	<p>Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have they been a case study in any other projects/reports? If so is there duplication (we want to avoid this)</li> </ul> <p>b. What would you highlight in your work that could help other similar organisations or projects use the ecosystem approach? – <i>but may have covered already?</i></p> <p>Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- from our discussion then the elements of your work stand out for me are. <i>LIST 2 or 3</i></li> </ul> <p>c. Conclusion + next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree key points to include in the case study</li> <li>• Ask what information would be most relevant to develop a case study – and ask them to email it/links to it if possible</li> <li>• Ask if they could comment on a rough draft – and indicate when this will be</li> <li>• Ask if any questions about the Review</li> <li>• Thank them.</li> </ul>
--	--	--	--