

Ecosystem Services: policy options for sustainable peatlands



Sustainable Uplands project

What are ecosystem services?

- **Supporting services:** The services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services including soil formation, photosynthesis, primary production, nutrient cycling and water cycling.
- **Provisioning services:** The products obtained from ecosystems, including food, fibre, fuel, genetic resources, biochemicals, natural medicines, pharmaceuticals, ornamental resources and fresh water.
- **Regulating services:** The benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes, including air quality regulation, climate regulation, water regulation, erosion regulation, water purification, disease regulation, pest regulation, pollination, natural hazard regulation.
- **Cultural services:** The non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems through spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic experiences – thereby taking account of landscape values.

Ecosystem Services Project, 2010

Current and future pressure

EU Water Framework Directive



Common Agriculture Policy reform



Global population growth and food security



Ongoing climate, cultural, social and demographic change



Difficult Choices...



...identifying priority ecosystem services

Peatlands are changing: how should we respond?



Current peatland policy: international context

- Few countries have specific policies for peatlands
- No single authority in the UK
- International policy
 - Kyoto Protocol
 - EU directives
 - Common Agricultural Policy

Current peatland policy: national context



What policy instruments and options are open to us?

- Information provision
- Capacity building
- Classic regulation (e.g. prohibition and permits)
- Direct state control (i.e. state owned land)
- Financial instruments (e.g. taxes and subsidies)
- Creation of new markets (e.g. for water/carbon)

1. Link agricultural payments more effectively to provision of ecosystem services



2. Remove policy barriers to facilitate peatland restoration via carbon markets



3. Re-consider a levy on extractive uses of peat



4. Establish a national partnership of upland researchers, policy makers and practitioners to share knowledge and develop a shared agenda for future research



Contact

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