

Environment Secretary shares further information on funding split for future farming schemes

Speaking from Lannock Manor Farm for the Groundswell Agriculture Show Environment Secretary, George Eustice, confirmed from 2028 an even-split of funding between the future farming schemes.

The government's new Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Schemes will provide the main delivery mechanism for projects that mitigate the impacts of climate change and support both nature recovery and sustainable farm businesses.

Now the UK has left the EU and is no longer bound by the bureaucratic Common Agricultural Policy, the Government is introducing a new system that is tailored to the interests of our farmers. It is the most significant change to farming and land management in 50 years, designed to deliver a renewed agricultural sector and the Government is taking steps to develop and co-design each element of the future system in partnership with industry.

The Environment Secretary also stated that farmers are increasingly charting a new course with farming methods that seek to improve and enhance the environment. He reaffirmed his commitment to regenerative farming in developing future farming policy, with the aim that 70% of farms will take part in environmental land management schemes by 2028. And unlike the old EU pillar structure, where a budget was trapped in one pillar and could not be transferred, these future schemes will complement one another and work to the best interest of farmers.

The Environment Secretary said that regenerative techniques will be further encouraged by the Government's new agri-environmental schemes. Examples of these techniques include:

- Topsoil regeneration and the use of winter cover crops – fast-growing plants such as Phacelia, Buckwheat, Fodder Radish, Crimson Clover or Rye – which are established very soon after harvest and create a green, living cover for the soil. These techniques reduce soil erosion risks and prevent nutrients from being washed out of the soil, helping to retain living roots and improve soil microbiology.
- Integrated pest management – for example, growing flower-rich areas alongside or within arable crops to attract predators for pests
- Mixed agriculture – cultivating crops alongside rearing livestock to fertilise the soil.

During his speech at the Groundswell Agriculture Show, the Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said:

Everyone recognises that we need to change our approach to tackle the environmental challenges both on climate change, but also on biodiversity. Leaving the European Union gives us a great opportunity to show the world how we can do this, through a seven year transition to reorder farming incentives so that we support a regenerative agriculture.

That is precisely what we want our future policy to do.

Over this Parliament, the government has committed to maintaining the current levels of investment in farming of £2.4bn per year, on average. Unfair and ineffective Direct Payments are being gradually phased out to move to a fairer system, where money will be redirected back to farmers through new environmental land management schemes which will incentivise sustainable farming practices alongside profitable food production, and reward farmers for producing public goods such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, or measures to reduce flooding and tackle the effects of climate change. Next week the Government will publish an update to the [Agricultural Transition Plan](#) which will cover plans for an early rollout of the Sustainable Farming Incentive in 2022.

The [Sustainable Farming Incentive](#) will reward actions taken at farm level to support sustainable approaches to farm husbandry to deliver for the environment. These include actions to improve soil health and water quality, enhance hedgerows and promote integrated pest management.

The Local Nature Recovery scheme, which will pay for actions that support local nature recovery and deliver local environmental priorities, will continue to be developed this year through Tests and Trials, with further piloting starting next year, and will be focused on delivering the right things in the right places. This will factor in the views of local people and local nature recovery strategies being developed under the Environment Bill.

Landscape and ecosystem recovery will be delivered through the Landscape Recovery Scheme. These will be long-term land use change projects to restore, where appropriate, wilder landscapes, large-scale tree-planting and peatland restoration. Proposals include consideration of applications for sites of an unprecedented scale – between 500 and 5,000 hectares. The agreements and payments will be bespoke and long term, with engagement to start this summer and, subject to feedback, project development funding applications to open in the autumn with a view to commence in early 2022. This will help deliver the Government's commitment to launch at least ten landscape recovery projects over the next four years to deliver at least 20,000 hectares of restored habitat.

Together, these future farming schemes are the next step in the Government's landmark plans for a renewed agricultural sector.