

World news story: British Ambassador Visits Project for the Protection of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve

The Ambassador met with representatives of the National Forestry Institute (INAB), the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP), the environmental police (DIPRONA), the Ministry of Agriculture (MAGA) and other local and international partners that are working with the UK Space Agency (UKSA) in implementing this new technology.

The project uses space technology such as remote sensors and the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) to monitor Guatemala's forests from space through the use of an application installed in cell phones or tablets.

Deforestation, fires, extensive cattle ranching and ungovernability are some of the threats to the Mayan Biosphere Reserve (MBR), where the project will provide its first results. The programme seeks to gather evidence using information from space technology to help the authorities in the decision making process of forest administration and in the fight against illegal exploitation of resources.

Among other benefits that this project will have, is the strengthening of human resources, the use of software and technological equipment, and technological innovation to fulfil the institutional functions of the sector. As a result it is expected this will provide greater transparency in the forestry sector and hence attract foreign investments.

Later, Ambassador Davidson travelled to the Wildlife Conservation and Rescue Association (ARCAS) to take a tour of its facilities and learn about some of the schemes used to protect the MBR. Among these is an Environmental Education Centre, which will receive funds from the project, to sensitize local and foreign students and visitors about the problems of the MBR.

The project FMAP (Forestry Management and Protection) is scheduled to last 3 years starting from December 2016 with an investment of some Q50 million that will also cover areas of Alta and Baja Verapaz.

To mark her visit to Petén, Ambassador Carolyn Davidson said:

The United Kingdom is very clear that climate change is a global threat, not only for issues of conservation and preservation of natural resources, but also as an element of impact on the national security of countries. We wish the project success.

Guidance: Higher Tier manual for 1 January 2018 agreements: Countryside Stewardship

Updated: Passed 10 July deadline for late revenue claims and amendments.

Use the manual to understand the rules and conditions that apply to Higher Tier agreements.

Use the options, supplements and capital items document:

- to understand the rules for each option, supplement and capital item
- for advice on carrying out options, supplements and capital items

Use the [Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) forms](#) to support your agreement.

The manual has been designed with portrait and landscape pages. To make sure these print correctly, select 'auto rotate' in your printer settings before you print.

Overlap of CS options with Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)

In 2018, you can overlap the following CS options with EFAs declared on your Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2018 application:

- [AB1 Nectar flower mix](#)
- [AB3 Beetle banks](#)
- [AB4 Skylark plots](#)
- [AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew](#)
- [AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble](#)
- [AB8 Flower rich margins and plots](#)
- [AB9 Winter bird food](#)
- [AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants](#)
- [AB15 Two year sown legume fallow](#)
- [AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix](#)
- [HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation](#)
- [OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture](#)
- [SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land](#)
- [SW3 In-field grass strips](#)
- [SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land](#)
- [SW6 Winter cover crops](#)
- [SW12 Making space for water](#)
- [WD3 Woodland edges on arable land](#)

- [WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land](#)

Your CS options that share land with BPS claims (known as 'double funding') will receive a reduced payment rate. You can find the rate in the page for each listed option, under 'How much will be paid', and in the manual (section 3.3.1).

From 1 January 2019, you will not be able to overlap the 19 CS 'double funding' options with EFAs declared for BPS. You can place the options and EFAs in the same land parcel but they cannot overlap.

You can include hedges in both CS options and EFAs without payment deductions.

Revenue claims

The deadline for Natural England to receive late revenue claims and amendments was 10 July 2018. Natural England will not accept any further revenue claims in 2018.

Contact

Contact Natural England if you have queries:

Enquiries

Natural England
County Hall, Spetchley Road

Worcester

WR5 2NP

Email
enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Telephone
0300 060 3900

Opening times: 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Find out about call charges at www.gov.uk/call-charges.

Guidance: Mid Tier manual for 1 January 2018 agreements: Countryside Stewardship

Updated: Passed 10 July deadline for late revenue claims and amendments.

Use the manual to understand the rules and conditions that apply to Mid Tier (including water quality capital items) agreements.

Use the options, supplements and capital items document:

- to understand the rules for each option, supplement and capital item
- for advice on carrying out options, supplements and capital items

Use the calculator to work out the value of your agreement on the basis of your application. The total value of your agreement may be less if you've received correspondence from Natural England indicating that:

- information included in your application is incorrect
- options included in your application are ineligible so will not form part of your agreement

Use the [Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) forms](#) to support your agreement.

The manual has been designed with portrait and landscape pages. To make sure these print correctly, select 'auto rotate' in your printer settings before you print.

Overlap of CS options with Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)

In 2018, you can overlap the following CS options with EFAs declared on your Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2018 application:

- [AB1 Nectar flower mix](#)
- [AB3 Beetle banks](#)
- [AB4 Skylark plots](#)
- [AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew](#)
- [AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble](#)
- [AB8 Flower rich margins and plots](#)
- [AB9 Winter bird food](#)
- [AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants](#)
- [AB15 Two year sown legume fallow](#)
- [AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix](#)
- [HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation](#)
- [OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture](#)
- [SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land](#)

- [SW3 In-field grass strips](#)
- [SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land](#)
- [SW6 Winter cover crops](#)
- [WD3 Woodland edges on arable land](#)
- [WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land](#)

Your CS options that share land with BPS claims (known as 'double funding') will receive a reduced payment rate. You can find the rate in the page for each listed option, under 'How much will be paid', and in the manual (section 3.3.1).

From 1 January 2019, you will not be able to overlap the 18 CS 'double funding' options with EFAs declared for BPS. You can place the options and EFAs in the same land parcel but they cannot overlap.

You can include hedges in both CS options and EFAs without payment deductions.

Revenue claims

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Guidance: Hedgerows and boundaries grant manual 2017: Countryside Stewardship

Use the manual to understand the rules and conditions that apply to hedgerows and boundaries grant agreements.

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enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

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0300 060 3900

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Press release: Environment Agency issues permit to Southern Water for Bewl reservoir

The Environment Agency has issued a temporary winter drought permit to

Southern Water Services Limited, to help refill Bewl Water reservoir in East Sussex.

The water company made an application on 5 January stating it needed to take more water from the River Medway to help refill Bewl Water, which was only 42% full at the start of the year.

Despite a wet December, the autumn was very dry. There was also lower-than-average rainfall across south east England during the previous winter. This prolonged dry period across the region has left many groundwater supplies and some reservoirs lower than normal for the time of year.

Bewl Water is the largest reservoir in the south east of England and can hold 31,000 million litres of water. It is an important source for Southern Water, which manages the supply of water to over 2.5 million customers across south and south east England. Southern Water already routinely takes water from the River Medway to fill the reservoir. The change to the permit will allow the company to abstract additional water until the end of March.

The change will mean Southern Water can take water when river levels are lower than the previous limit. The water company has requested the change as part of its plan to secure public water supplies for the upcoming summer.

In determining the drought permit application, the Environment Agency has taken into account the very low rainfall, the impact this has had on water supplies, as well as considering the response to the recent public consultation.

Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Director, said:

Although it has been wet over the past few weeks, overall this winter across south east England there has been lower-than-average amounts of rain. Consequently, we now need above average rainfall for the remainder of the winter to replenish our water resources.

The Environment Agency has to balance the water needs of people, businesses and wildlife so we have carefully considered Southern Water's application. We have decided to grant this temporary change to the existing licence, helping the company to refill the reservoir at a time of year when there will be less impact on the environment. We will carefully monitor any effects and take action if needed to ensure the environment is protected.

We encourage people to follow advice from their water company about saving water. Using water efficiently will help ensure we have enough water for people, businesses and the environment.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743. Or email
southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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