

CASE STUDY UK-1

Water and Integrated Local Delivery Project (WILD) Project (UK)

BRIEF PROFILE OF THE WILD CASE STUDY

- Composed of rounded hills and steep slopes (oolitic limestone) in north with undulating lowland and pasture (clay vale) in south.
- Area is a mix of family farms, large estates and small holding, growth in short-term farming arrangements due to gravel extraction.
- Significant **Water Framework Directive (WFD)** failings due to **in-river sediment, point source pollution from agriculture and urban developments impact on biodiversity**.
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, ground and drinking water issues.
- 2010 project developed to demonstrate integrated delivery
- In 2013, 3 years of funding for WILD secured for facilitation and engagement on farm advice, community engagement and biodiversity.
- Project area 26,000, diverse delivery partners.
- Key environmental and social benefits are: **water quality, flood protection and rural vitality**
- Difficult to show progress on these environmental and social benefits but evidence of **adjusted environmental attitudes and behaviour change**.



KEY FACTORS IMPACTING THE PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

The resource system is at the headwaters of the Thames river basin, where integrated delivery of WFD objectives are being delivered through **partnership** and facilitation through new and existing **networks**. The resource unit underpinning these discussions is **water, in terms of water quality, its ecological status, and issues around flooding**, which encompasses discussions on **soil, urban development and land management**.

There is a national regulatory framework that has been adjusted locally for WFD and the WILD partnership. Advice and engagement covers regulation, Common Agricultural Policy greening, cross-compliance, Agri-Environment Support schemes in combination with WFD and local flooding issues. Identified 'Farmer Guardians' work with agencies and project partners to promote sustainable land management. A Payment for Ecosystem Services scheme developed with water company to reduce chemical pollutants in water. Partnership seen as a shared problem solving network.

EMERGING FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Water issues are key: **WFD, flooding, drinking water, sewage infrastructure, development**. Farmers critical of regulation and inspection approach, communities feel unable to resolve water issues due to complex arrangements for ditch and watercourse management. Facilitation and engagement are crucial, as are personalities: current WILD project lead is respected by farming community, Gloucester Rural Community Council is respected by local communities. Evidence of increased understanding on some issues e.g. upstream and downstream impacts of action, importance of soil and impact of coordinated action. WILD is about engagement, communication, knowledge, consistency and trust. Key aspects are **presence of facilitator, willingness of agency to 'stand-back' and engage with a wide a range of stakeholders**.

