

## CASE STUDY UK-3

### SUSTAINABLE UPLANDS: NORTH PENNINES MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP (UK)

#### BRIEF PROFILE OF THE CASE STUDY

The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NPAONB) covers just under 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is a wild and remote area of England comprising high open moorland and broad enclosed valleys, known as dales. The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural and cultural heritage.

The case study focuses on the Allen Valleys Landscape Partnership Scheme (AVLPS) which aims to conserve and restore important heritage assets, to make them accessible for learning, training and recreation, and develop capacity within the community to conserve and use these heritage assets for a more sustainable future. The AVLPS is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and delivered by the NPAONB Partnership. A key area of interest for the NPAONB is the social capital delivered by, and required from, farmers and other landowners in the area and its links to natural and cultural capital as typified by the presence of High Nature Value (HNV) farmland.

The farming community, mainly based around full-time farmers but also a significant number of smallholders, is the main actor involved in managing the enclosed farmland of meadows and pastures. The gamekeeping community, working for the grouse shooting estates, is the main actor managing the open moorland.



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#### KEY FACTORS IMPACTING THE PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

The main environmental and social benefits identified were **rural vitality, landscape character and cultural heritage, species and habitats, water quality, carbon sequestration and storage and food security**. Rural vitality was seen as the most important benefit as many of the other benefits were dependent upon it. The environmental and social benefits generated from HNV farming are strongly influenced by the **management practices of the farming and gamekeeping communities** and the **management policies of the large landed estates**. A major threat to HNV farming is the **economically marginal nature of upland agriculture** characterised by low returns from agricultural enterprises, high dependence CAP Pillar I and II support, limited opportunities for diversification and an aging farm population.

The HLF Landscapes Partnership programme supports **landscape-scale projects** where agencies and NGOs have to come together to jointly undertake activities with the local community. Through the AVLPS, the NPAONB Partnership is seeking to influence upland farmers, land managers and grouse shooting estates to enhance the appreciation and provision of environmental and social benefits. The AVLPS seeks to **enhance the social and economic resilience of local communities** and **increase the appreciation of these benefits** both locally and among tourists who visit the area. Engagement with farmers, land managers and the local community is achieved through **individual projects**.

#### EMERGING FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS



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Action situations aimed at maintaining and enhancing the provision of environmental and social benefits from HNV farming should encompass both the land managers and the broader communities on which they depend. An important feature of the AVLPS is the inclusion of elements to enhance the social and economic resilience of local communities as well as working with farmers and land managers to maintain and enhance the provision of environmental and social benefits.

The NPAONB Partnership has built considerable expertise in delivering positive environmental outcomes from its partnership approach and facilitation skills. A lack of regulatory power has encouraged it to think in creative ways to achieve its aims. The NPAONB Partnership has been able to add value to agri-environment schemes (AES) by deploying additional resources in the form of advice and guidance to farmers and land managers. AES have been particularly important in enhancing environmental and social benefits provision in the area.



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