

**This presentation is from a UK/IE LIFE Platform Meeting held in Woking in December 2015. For more presentations from this event and information on LIFE please see JNCC's LIFE webpages at: [jncc.defra.gov.uk/UKLIFE](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/UKLIFE)**



# Concluding remarks – what have we learnt?

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# Some reflections (1)

- Tendency to focus on initial challenge of application rather than the ultimate outcome ie delivering transformation
- Projects often about making a step change; implementing a new approach; dealing with an environmental pressure
- Some nature projects may appear to have solved the key change – like raising water levels; but some may need ongoing commitment eg removing invasives; regenerating vegetation;
- Environment is dynamic, with ongoing need for monitoring – early spotting of old or new pressures eg climate and other changes; and having process in place to react to these



## Some reflections (2)

- Some may become business as usual eg EA's Edoc (but too rarely)
- Some may lay foundation for longer term funding from other EU and other sources eg entry into agri-environment eg RSPB projects on farmland birds; and machair in Scotland



# Staffing

- All good project officers will be looking to leave in last year
- Talk to them about how you can keep them
- Can you retain them in the organisation
- Can you pay them a small bonus to stay; ensure they get credit - in publications, web, conferences, etc
- Capture essential experience as part of routine PPM – not long final reports; actively keep a log of lessons learned; ensuring information shared & explained; explicitly in individual job requirements etc
- Build in contingency time from start - to cope with departure, recruitment and getting new project officer up to speed – add 6 months to schedule at time of application



# Funding/Resourcing

Fewer people like to give money for ongoing commitments, unless quite special eg improving the life chances of a rare species

But:

- If you've engaged local/relevant community in project design & delivery, they may have ownership & be willing to support the after- life
- Sometimes you could be eligible for follow up – applying the learning/rolling out more widely the development of techniques – arguably Peak District MoorLIFE, RSPB Bitterns project
- Think at the start about sequencing a series of projects inc for maintenance



# Policy changes (1)

More challenging to achieve and only appropriate for some types of project eg EA's Edoc

- ➔ Engage/empower others to play more central role or deal with particular issue
- ➔ Engage local community during project so they understand – could help put pressures on decision makers eg farmers in N Ireland Duhallow project
  - Willingness to take action on invasives – ragwort pull, or Himalayan balsam removal
  - Monitoring – citizen science or local group – may lead to 'ownership'



## Policy changes (2)

- Change prioritisation/options details in follow up agri-environment schemes – so they cover maintenance
- Empowering others eg
  - Ensure learning is disseminated – perhaps to advisers or others externals that play an intermediary role.
  - Put easily accessible/usable tools/advice onto your active web site
  - Build knowledge/expertise of key partners eg farmers and build up their ability to put in place appropriate management and self/peer monitoring eg stone curlew



# What can we do better in UK

- Build expertise of NCP and applicants to mentor others – at time of preparing application – to take realistic holistic view
- Look to try to resource expansion of NCP role – from concept to outcome
- Use electronic means to routinely spread good practice eg newsletters