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1 Results now available from the Sustainable Intensification Platform

Producing more food without damaging the environment is the “holy grail” of agricultural production. Over the past three and a half years the Sustainable Intensification Platform (SIP) multi partner project, supported by Defra and the Welsh Government, has been bringing together farmers and other stakeholders in collaborative research and practice to investigate this challenge. The project has a wealth of information available, [including a series of policy and practice notes on relevant topics](#) from the role of cover crops in sustainable soil management to maintaining trace elements in grazing sheep. Visit the website www.siplatform.org.uk or contact SIP2@exeter.ac.uk.

2 Farm advisers could play a key role in facilitating landscape scale collaboration

Collaboration between farmers is not new. There is potential for sustainable intensification beyond the farm scale to increase yields, while also protecting the environment and maximising natural resources such as biodiversity, pollination services, water resources, iconic landscapes and carbon storage. But who is going to take the lead on planning these developments? Farm advisers, as independent practitioners working with farmers across geographical areas, have the potential to play a key role. In a workshop facilitated by [Landbridge](#) as part of the Sustainable Intensification Platform and hosted by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, thirty advisory professionals gathered to reflect on the key issues and challenges of coordinating landscape-scale sustainable activity. Findings from the event provide recommendations on the role of advisers in coordinating landscape-scale activity and how to do this effectively. For more information from Landbridge contact Amy Proctor amy.proctor@ncl.ac.uk.

3 New tool aids sustainable intensification decision making

SIP's new [Dynamic Landscape Tool](#) uses data from the Landscape Typology for England and Wales to determine how beneficial outcomes such as increased crop yields, biodiversity or rural employment can be achieved through sustainable intensification. The tool is dynamic, as it allows stakeholders to select and weight data layers according to perceived importance and in relation to local and national

priorities; it shows areas of similar opportunity and risk; and it enables the targeting of advice and incentive schemes. [A webinar](#) explaining the tool and its use is available on line.

4 After SIP, what now? Link up with other people interested in sustainable intensification

Want to share ideas for engagement and collaboration on sustainable intensification of agriculture? The [Sustainable Intensification Research Network](#) has set up an information sharing tool. If you would like to make contact with others interested in this topic you can register using the link below. The information provided will be available on the website and you will be able to filter registrations by academic discipline, research area and capability, countries and funding opportunities. The form is easy to complete but you will need to agree with the terms and conditions. Please register your expertise [here](#) and soon you will be able to view a [list of registered partners](#).

5 Researchers welcome new industrial strategy looking to rural as well as urban growth

The UK government's new industrial strategy that takes into account not only the contribution of urban areas to our economic growth but also the important role played by rural businesses. "[Building a Britain fit for the future](#)", focuses on many of the same themes as [Rural Enterprise UK's](#) recent publication "[What's holding rural businesses back?](#)" Professor of Rural Development Jeremy Phillipson said: "The Strategy's enhanced coverage of the contribution of rural areas alongside our cities and towns is a welcome improvement on the earlier Green Paper. Much now rests on the development of local industrial strategies, sector and growth deals that are as relevant and accessible to rural as to urban areas. Taking into account the evidence set out in the Relu Policy and Practice Note "[What's holding rural businesses back?](#)" may require business policies and programmes that are specifically tailored to addressing significant differences in the plans, obstacles and use of support by rural and urban firms in order to encourage them to thrive and grow."

6 £4.9 million awarded to increase sustainability of UK food system

The UK's Global Food Security programme is funding £4.9 million of interdisciplinary research to increase resilience and sustainability of the UK food system. [Five projects have been awarded funding to ensure greater resilience of the UK's food supply](#) in its response to global shocks, environmental and demographic changes, and threats posed by pests and diseases. The projects bring together researchers and food producers, manufacturers and retailers working in several areas; from understanding the role of phosphorus as a key nutrient in crop and livestock production to better understanding of how different landscapes affect crop pollinating insects.

7 Researchers work with industry to increase resilience of dairy farming in GFS project

Researchers from Newcastle, Leeds and Liverpool universities are working with Nestle, Business in the Community, the Rivers Trusts, Innovation for Agriculture, 3Keel, Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, Catchment Sensitive Farming, FirstMilk and other stakeholders in the dairy industry and Government on [a major new project that aims to make the UK dairy industry more sustainable and resilient](#). The £1.7 million project is being funded by BBSRC, ESRC and NERC as part of the Global Food Security programme. The team will be looking in particular at issues around environmental impact, animal health and farmer incomes in the post Brexit UK.

8 Could women make a bigger contribution to the agri industry?

[Research commissioned by the Scottish Government](#) has found that women make a significant contribution to the farming industry and often bring a fresh perspective but could play a bigger role, if more opportunities were made available. In a [Relu Policy and Practice note](#) researchers make recommendations about how the industry could begin to close this gap. The Scottish Government has set up a [Task Force](#) to address the issue. In her inaugural lecture in November 2017 Professor Sally Shortall, who was PI on the project, drew on this research as she explored the different dimensions of the farming family – both positive and negative, from inheritance patterns and innovation to farming accidents. [The lecture is available on line on the Newcastle University website](#)

9 Protecting marine ecosystems for wildlife and fisheries

It is clear that because of Brexit our fisheries legislation is going to be a major body of work for many years to come and will reopen debates on how we protect our marine ecosystems. This debate now involves many stakeholders, civil servants, fishing sector interests, managers and NGOs. Brexit provides the opportunity to develop our own fishery legislation and management regime but what direction will it take? Join the debate at the Coastal Futures 2018 conference 17-18 January 2018. [The programme is available on the website](#) and bookings made be made [online](#).

10 What lies ahead for UK agriculture?

[Early results about potential effects](#) of different Brexit scenarios are beginning to emerge from the project “How might UK agriculture thrive or survive?” which is being led from the Centre for Rural Economy at Newcastle University. The UK agri-food system will be one of the sectors most seriously affected by the UK’s departure from the European Union. Not only is the sector reliant on trade relations within and beyond the EU, it is also heavily dependent upon migrant labour and is currently heavily subsidised and regulated under the Common Agricultural Policy. The project is part of the ESRC funded [UK in a Changing Europe](#) programme and aims to provide policymakers with information for decision making in the future. Principal Investigator Dr Carmen Hubbard said: “We are investigating the implications of different arrangements for trade after Brexit and in each of these there are likely to be winners and losers, particularly depending on whether sectors are net importers or net exporters and will vary across different types of farm. We are also looking at the potential effects on ‘sensitive segments’ of the industry such as hill farming.”

11 Complexity theory and invisible mechanisms

In evaluating policy, complexity theory and a realist philosophy of science are sometimes seen as being incompatible because they seem to offer different understandings of causation. In [a seminar in the Centre for Complexity Across the Nexus regular webinar series](#) on Wednesday 31 January 2018, 09:00-10:00 (UK), Gill Westhorp from Charles Darwin University in Australia will argue that there are two linked ways in which these understandings of causation might be bridged and will discuss the implications for evaluation across the nexus.

12 Creating new opportunities for sustainable production in Asia and Africa

[A case study from the Knowledge Transfer Network](#) shows how KTN support has helped Russell IPM develop innovative pest control technologies that reduce the need for conventional pesticides in soft fruit production. The Agri-food Team helped Russell IPM build relationships with key academic collaborators and provided support which enabled them to secure new collaborative projects. Dr Nayem Hassan, Head of R&D at Russell IPM said, “Support from Innovate UK and KTN has been essential in growing our R&D capabilities for the development of new products for emerging markets.”

13 Natural England recruiting for Northern Uplands Lead Adviser posts

Natural England is recruiting 20 Northern Upland Conservation Lead Advisers to deliver their Northern Uplands Programme. These are fixed term appointments to July 2019 and will be based in Cumbria, Yorkshire, Lancashire and Derbyshire. Further information and details of how to apply are available on the [Civil Service website](#). For any other queries contact Michael Woodhouse by email michael.woodhouse@naturalengland.org.uk or telephone 07833 500908. The closing date for applications is 29 January 2018.

14 Brexit & Environment network

What does Brexit mean for the environment, agriculture and fisheries? Whatever type of Brexit is delivered there will be significant implications for policy, politics and governance in the UK. Formed in 2016, Brexit & Environment has recently revamped its website <https://www.brexitenvironment.co.uk> to provide an even more extensive source of independent research. The website, funded by the ESRC, is a hub of information on how Brexit affects the environment and related sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and climate change.

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