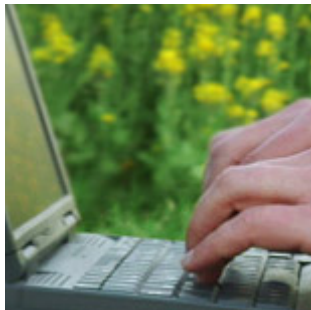


Relu news



July 2010

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1. New Relu projects launched

Relu's 4th round "Adapting Rural Living and Land Use to Environmental Change" - a joint call with the Living With Environmental Change programme – was launched at a stakeholder event in Manchester on 1 July. The new projects are:

- Building Adaptive Strategies for Environmental Change in River Catchments
- Linking Evidence and Policy for Managing Biodiversity in the Agricultural Landscape
- Sustainable Uplands: Transforming knowledge for upland change
- Managing Environmental Change at the Rural-Urban Fringe
- Market-Based Mechanisms for Protection of Water Resources
- Collaborative Conservation in Agri-Environment Schemes
- Flood Management in Borderlands
- Sustainable Cultivation of Upland Environments
- Rural Communities Adapting and Living with Climate Change

Project descriptions may be found on the Relu website

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/Fourth%20wave%20of%20Relu%20projects.html>. Read about it on the Relu blog at www.roamingrelu.blogspot.com

2. The challenges of implementing the European Water Framework Directive

Implementing the European Water Framework Directive will pose challenges for the UK. Relu's latest briefing paper "Water Framework: Implementing the Water Framework Directive" examines some of the problems and the evidence from Relu projects that could help to make this legislation work at local level. Download a copy from the Relu website

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/briefings/BRIF11/BRIF11.pdf> or email relu@ncl.ac.uk for hard copies.

3. Research takes centre stage in CRC uplands report

Recommendations from several Relu research projects feature in an independent report to the government about the future management of our hills. Researchers are urging the government to develop a more coherent policy for uplands that rewards farmers for the full range of goods and services that they provide. The Commission for Rural Communities report 'High ground, high potential – a future for England's upland communities' summary report can be found at:

www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk. One of the Relu projects that have informed the report is *Sustainable Uplands: Learning to Manage Future Change*. Catch up with the project's videos exploring potential scenarios for the future of our uplands on via the their website

<http://homepages.see.leeds.ac.uk/~lecmsr/sustainableuplands/>. Policy and practice note no 17 looks at some of the scenarios the project has investigated. It may be downloaded from the Relu website <http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/policy%20and%20practice%20notes/ReedHubacek17/PPN17.pdf> or email relu@ncl.ac.uk for hard copies.

4. Deer provide pointers on managing natural resources

Can collaboration assist in the management of natural resources and how can it best be achieved?

Relu's *Collaborative Deer Management* project has been investigating these issues, using wild deer as a case study. Download it from the website

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/policy%20and%20practice%20notes/Irvine%2018/Irvine.pdf> or email relu@ncl.ac.uk for hard copies. The team has now been awarded a new grant from Relu for a knowledge transfer project (subject to contract agreement) which will help to get participatory methods into estates and agencies concerned with rural resource management.

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/projects/SecondCall/Irvine.htm>

5. Rural workers could show immunity to E. coli O157

Researchers at Bangor and Aberdeen universities working on the *Reducing E. coli O157 risk in rural communities* project are investigating levels of immunity to E. coli in different sectors of the community. Livestock farmers and abattoir workers are likely to come into more contact with the organism. The researchers will be analysing levels of antibodies against the bacterium in over 200 blood and saliva samples from farmers and abattoir workers and comparing these with samples from the same number of members of the public to see whether frequent exposure to low levels of the pathogen builds immunity. Samples will be taken in the Grampian region of Scotland, which has one of the highest incidences of E. coli O157 infection in the world, and in north Wales, where infection is comparatively rare. Results will help to inform UK authorities in assessing and managing the risk of E. coli infection. Anyone interested in taking part in the study should contact Dr Prysor Williams on 01248 382637 prysor.williams@bangor.ac.uk.

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/projects/Third%20Call/Strachan.htm>

6. Researchers lead Defra workshop on catchment modelling with stakeholders

The *Catchment Management for Protection of Water Resources* team led a workshop on “Modelling with stakeholders as part of an analytic-deliberative approach to catchment management” for at the Defra Innovation Centre in Reading in May, attended by around 50 representatives from Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England, independent consultancies, water companies, and third sector and academic organisations. The objectives were to develop an outline strategy for a modelling approach, to assemble tools and analyses needed for the Defra Demonstration Test Catchment project and to develop policy and practice for integrated catchment management.

7. Integrating scientific and local knowledge

Relu researchers from the *Sustainable Uplands: Learning to Manage Future Change* project are evaluating mechanisms for integrating different types of knowledge used for environmental management. In a recent paper they present a series of questions, and use these as a basis for comparing three environmental management projects in the UK, Solomon Islands and Australia that aimed to integrate local and scientific knowledge. They conclude that there is no single best approach for integrating local and scientific knowledge and argue for a shift from the development of knowledge integration products to more problem-focussed, knowledge integration processes.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2010.03.023>

8. Researchers comment on draft Animal Health Bill

The *Governance of Livestock Disease* project has submitted a detailed response to the Government’s consultation on their draft Animal Health Bill. Their full response is available on the Relu website at <http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/Consultations/GoLD%20Consultation%20on%20Draft%20AH%20Bill.pdf>

9. Collaboration to prevent river pollution from dairy cattle

Danyel Hampson, researcher on *Modelling the Impacts of the Water Framework Directive* who is working on on land use change modelling has collaborated with Philip Jones (Nutrition Driven food policy project), investigating the implications of different land use management strategies on river pollution. Their research suggests that the installation of streamside fencing in intensive milk producing areas may be the single most effective land management strategy to reduce riverine microbial pollution. Results were presented at the the International Water Association, Water Research Conference, Lisbon in April to an audience of microbiologists.

<http://www.waterresearchconference.com/news.asp>

10. OECD official praise for floodplains team

Kevin Parris, from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, has praised the work done by the *Integrated Management of Floodplains* project team carried out for OECD. He said: “The reports you provided greatly enriched the study and it has been a pleasure to work with you all.” The reports may be found at

http://www.oecd.org/document/55/0,3343,en_2649_37401_44753399_1_1_1_1.00.html

11. Relu on catchment management at CIWEM

The *Catchment Management for Protection of Water Resources* team led by Laurence Smith gave a presentation “Sinking or Swimming? Surveying community based catchment groups” at the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management’s annual conference in April. Joe Morris and team from *Management of Floodplains* also presented the work they have done for the OECD on the role of agriculture in mitigation of and adaptation to flooding in the context of climate change.

http://www.ciwem.org/events/annual_conference/2010_outputs.asp

12. What next for responsibility and cost sharing in animal health?

Relu researchers Wyn Grant and Amy Proctor and Relu visiting fellow Stephen Hunter were invited to the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) near York in May to attend a presentation by Gavin Ross, Defra's Programme Manager for Responsibility and Cost Sharing. Gavin addressed an audience of Fera's Policy Network regarding the future prospects for the responsibility and cost sharing agenda. Read Relu's Policy and Practice Note no 16 "Policymaking for animal and plant diseases: a changing landscape?"

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/policy%20and%20practice%20notes/Wilkinson%20no%2016/PPN16.pdf>

13. Regulating plant diseases: the role of stakeholders in governance?

Around 30 stakeholders from Government, agencies, industry and NGOs, and Relu researchers from *Assessing the Potential Rural Impacts of Plant Disease* took part in a workshop in May exploring the role of stakeholders in governance of plant diseases, with presentations on *Phytophthora ramorum* (Stephen Hunter, formerly Plant Health Division), *Dickeya solani* (Gerry Sadler, SASA) and Bluetongue (Tonima Saha, Exotic Disease Policy Programme, Defra). <http://www.relu.ac.uk/events/2010/Workshop%20plant%20disease.docx>

14. Btb workshops

The *Governance of Livestock Disease* project held two well attended and successful workshops on bovine tuberculosis in May. The first day had a social science emphasis and the second one a natural science emphasis, but many delegates attended both days. Read Relu Communications Manager Anne Liddon's blog from the workshops at <http://www.roamingrelu.blogspot.com/>.

15. New project on infectious disease builds on Relu

Norval Strachan and Ken Forbes (*Reducing E coli Risk in Rural Communities*) at Aberdeen have been awarded an Environmental and Social Ecology of Infectious Diseases catalyst network grant on gastrointestinal pathogens in the environment -joint initiative between the MRC, NERC, ESRC) and BBSRC as part of the Living With Environmental Change programme. It involves a number of the existing Relu E. coli partners as well as other academics, government researchers and stakeholders. The new project builds on the Relu work as it will be linking natural and social science under the umbrellas of environmental change, food security and ongoing changes in agriculture.

16. Advising local authorities on rural inequalities

Meg Huby and researchers from the *Social and Environmental Inequalities in Rural Areas* project have had discussions with East Yorkshire Unitary Authority about potential uses of the project's data set in policymaking and have also provided advice and data to the High Wealds Area of Outstanding National Beauty. <http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/projects/Third%20Call/Huby.htm>

17. Relu People:

Clinton Devon Estates has won in the Sustainable Development category of the Queen's Award for Enterprise for the second time. **John Varley**, Estates Director, is a long standing stakeholder to the Relu programme and member of the People and the Rural Environment Forum.

Klaus Hubacek who co-led the *Sustainable Uplands: Learning to Manage Future Change* project will be moving to the University of Maryland as a professor in the Geography department, developing a new research centre on the 'Human Dimensions of Global Change'. Klaus's wife, **Christina Prell**, who also worked on the project, will be taking up a post at the Sociology department at the University of Maryland. They move to their new jobs in January 2011.

Helen Taft joined the Relu project *Reducing E. coli O157 risk in rural communities* in April 2010. She will be calculating the economic cost of proposed mitigation strategies to reduce E. coli O157 risk in rural areas.

Dugald Tinch, PhD student on the *Sustainability of Hill Farming* project has gained his doctorate from Stirling University and is about to start a 5-year post doc there on valuing marine and coastal ecosystems.

Steve Emery gained his PhD on farmers' values and upland change. Steve worked on the *Angling and the Rural Environment* project.

Colette Jones who is working on Relu's *Reducing E coli Risk in Rural Communities* project has been awarded a media scholarship from the British Science Association. She will undertake a three week placement with the Scotsman newspaper, working alongside their environment correspondent.

Wyn Grant gave the keynote address on 'Biopesticides: strategies for improving uptake' at a joint conference of the Association of Applied Biologists and the International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association held at Grantham in April. **David Chandler** talked about 'Biopesticides: changing our perspectives'. Both worked on the Relu project *The Role of Regulation in Developing Biological Alternatives to Pesticides*.

Philip Lowe, Relu Director, gave addresses at Cornell and Penn State universities on "Why Social Scientists should engage with Natural Scientists" during a visit to the United States. He drew extensively on the experience of Relu and much interest was shown in learning from the programme.

The latest report from the People's Trust for Endangered Species focuses on invasive mammals, and has been written by **David Macdonald** and Dawn Burnham at Wildlife Conservation Research Unit. http://www.ptes.org/files/908_sobm_2010.pdf

Mark Reed is looking for case studies for two new meta analyses: Involved: what makes stakeholder participation in environmental management work? <http://homepages.see.leeds.ac.uk/~lecmsr/involved/> and Environmental Consequences of Participatory Governance: A Comparative Meta-Analysis of Case Studies in Environmental Decision-Making <http://www.edge-project.eu/ecopag/home/>. Case studies with information about implementation of outputs and the impacts on environmental quality would be particularly useful. Contact m.reed@abdn.ac.uk.

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