

SCaMP - sustainable catchment management programme

SUMMARY The Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP) is a conservation initiative in the north of England by United Utilities, specialized in water supply and waste disposal. It has been developed in association with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and is aiming to secure multiple benefits at a landscape scale. The land management approach seeks primarily to reduce water quality risk. It was introduced in order to work closer together with tenant farmers and other land users to manage the land owned by United Utilities in a more sustainable manner. SCaMP is an integrated approach to catchment management incorporating sustainable upland farming.

Contract Type



Land tenure

Public Goods

CLIMATE REGULATION

SOIL

WATER

BIODIVERSITY

Field of action



Basis of Payment



Action-based

Involved contract takers



Individual

OBJECTIVES

- Protect and improve water quality
- Reduce rate of increase in raw water which will reduce future revenue costs
- Reduce or delay the need for future capital investment for additional water treatment
- Ensure a sustainable future for the company's agricultural tenants
- Enhance and protect the natural environment
- Help moorland habitats to become more resilient to long-term climate change
- Allow healthy upland peat moors to absorb significant volumes of carbon from the atmosphere

CONTRACT DETAILS

Participation, involved parties & requirements for participation

SCaMP is a partnership of United Utilities, RSPB and a number of key UK stakeholders, including OFWAT (The Water Services Regulation Authority), environmental agencies, drinking water inspectors, Natural England, DEFRA, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), the Forestry Commission, national park authorities, environmental groups and local stakeholders, as well as tenants, farmers and other land users. The program is aimed at catchment areas owned by United Utilities - which can be seen as a limiting factor for participation in the programme.

Nature of cooperation & payment

United Utilities' land was previously farmed by tenant farmers without direct intervention of the landowner. Within SCaMP United Utilities, farmers and other land users now work closely together. Long-term agreements with tenant farmers have been implemented, defining management plans that are consistent with the programme's objectives. The management plans include the modernisation of agricultural infrastructure and the introduction of low impact farming systems.

Funding mechanism The funds to finance SCaMP are provided by United Utilities with the approval of OFWAT, the water industry financial regulator. The approval allows funding through the AMP Investment Program, a five-year asset management plan used in the English and Welsh water industry. The AMP sets permissible price increases for privately owned water companies. Furthermore, the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI), the Environment Agency and Natural England supported the inclusion of further funding for catchment management.

Program measurements Among the restoration measures applied are

- Rewetting of the peatland to improve its ecological status
- Replanting of eroded bare peat to restore extensive bog vegetation, reduce sediment loss and improve water quality
- Reduce grazing pressure through stock reduction, removal or seasonal changes in grazing
- Regime for the improvement of vegetation in terms of its diversity and cover.
- Improvement of forest cover, including the removal of non-indigenous trees and shrubs
- Hay meadow improvements through management changes

Environmental monitoring & control To determine the extent to which the measures adopted under the SCaMP project are effective a monitoring programme was set up to check the environmental and economic efficiency of the project. For the environmental effectiveness selected botanical and hydrological parameters are examined by external consultants. The RSPBs carries out bird monitoring in selected areas of the operational plans.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The success is mainly due to the large land holdings of United Utilities. Here the organisation has a direct benefit from the protection of ecosystem services. United Utilities as landowner is able to overcome the market failure through direct negotiations with farmers and other stakeholders and also coordinates the use of agri-environmental payments.

Further information:

www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/responsibility/environment/catchment-management/

Tinch, R. (2009): Assessing Socio-economic Benefits of Natura 2000 - A case study on the ecosystem service provided by the Sustainable Catchment Management Programme. https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/scamp_case_study.pdf

