



PRACTICE ABSTRACT No 11

Keywords

Results-based approach, Payment by Results, Policy Innovation, Policy Design

Lessons learnt regarding Scheme Administration based on Farmers' Perceptions of a Results-Based Pilot Scheme (UK)

A selection of farmers participating in the UK's Pilot Results-Based Scheme in Grassland Habitats were interviewed regarding their perceptions of this innovative approach. Based on their responses, we identify some key recommendations in scheme administration for policymakers to consider.

Bureaucracy: Some of the most frequently mentioned issues with existing schemes related to paperwork. The forms, rules and administration processes were considered far too complex. This acts as a significant barrier to scheme uptake. In contrast, the paperwork associated with their pilot results-based contract was much simpler to understand and manage.

Advice: Consistent support and training from locally based officers was instrumental in farmer engagement with the results-based pilot scheme and its success. National rollouts of similar schemes must strive to reach farmers through well-established networks and provide reliable support and training through approachable local officers.

Measuring success: policymakers should explore carefully the most effective and fair way to measure and reward good results. Assessment of habitat indicators should be flexible. It should consider issues outside of the farmer's control, such as extreme weather. Otherwise, the perceived vulnerability to such factors and associated risk may be a barrier to results-based scheme uptake. Scoring systems should also be flexible to accommodate proxy habitat features which provide similar benefits to the target species. An effective illustrative example was one farmer's use of nettles (*Urtica dioica*) to provide cover for ground-nesting birds rather than rushes (*Juncus* spp.).

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A results-based approach could reduce barriers which deter farmers from participating in environmental schemes. The incorporation of results-based schemes has therefore much potential for future agri-environment schemes if thoughtfully and effectively executed in policy.

For more infos read our [full report](#) regarding Farmers' Experiences of Results-based contracts in Wensleydale.



Haybarns in Wensleydale
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ABOUT CONTRACTS2.0

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Contracts2.0 aims to develop innovative contract-based solutions, which increase the motivation for farmers and land managers to produce more environmental public goods and allow them to reconcile the profitability of their farms with sustainability objectives. To do so, 28 research and practice partners closely cooperate to co-design and evaluate the novel contracts. Lessons learned from successfully tested contracts will also provide support for policy makers on local, national and EU-Level.

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Research partners



Action partners



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All Practice Abstracts prepared by the contracts2.0 project can be found here: <https://www.project-contracts20.eu/practice-abstracts/> & <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/contracts20-co-design-von-innovativen>