

Lunan Water catchment survey

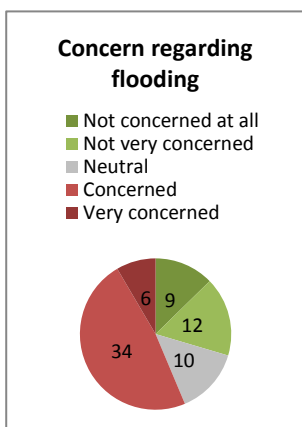
Preliminary results

A survey was implemented in the Lunan Water catchment area in July and August 2017 to measure quantitatively the support to the “water for all” project, which proposes the installation of a tilting weir and a flow restrictor at the outskirt of Balgavies loch for water management. The preliminary results presented herein are currently being complemented by qualitative interviews.

Method

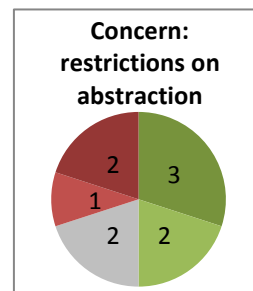
The postal survey was sent to 60 farmers and 200 residents from the Lunan Water catchment. 5,000 leaflets were distributed in mailboxes and advertised in the catchment area to advertise the online version of the survey. 12 farmers and 61 residents responded, for a total of 73 responses. Elderly men over 55 are over-represented in our sample when compared to the average age and gender balance in Angus. We therefore are now trying to collect more data to reach a representative sample. Hence, the results presented herein are still at a preliminary stage.

Concerns reported in the survey



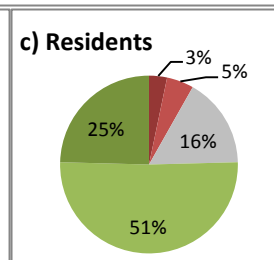
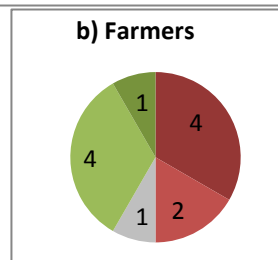
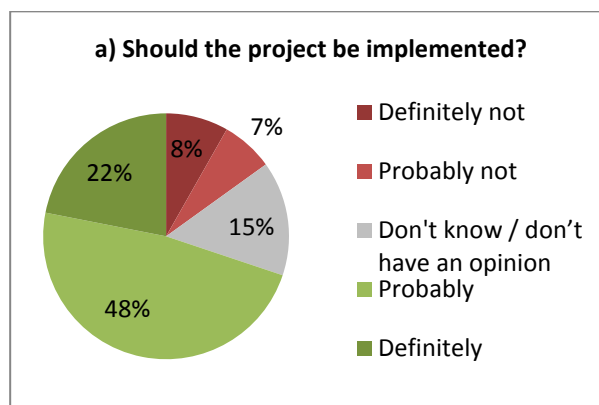
Despite most respondents reporting not having previously experienced flooding in the Lunan Water catchment area, more than half stated being concerned or very concerned by this issue. However, most farmers are not concerned about restrictions on water abstraction. This is probably

because none of them has ever experienced restrictions.



Support and governance

Overall, the project received a good level of support, with disparities between residents and farmers. The farming community appears particularly divided on this question.



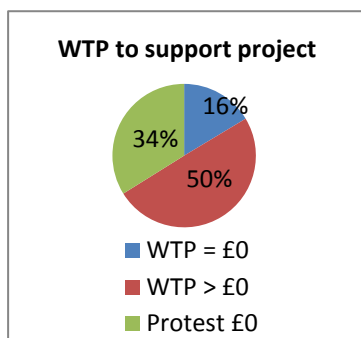
Respondents would prefer the water management strategy to focus mainly on flood control; wetland preservation should be in the top two priorities for half of the respondents while most respondents would give a lower priority to abstraction issues.

In order to identify the level of support to the project, we used a willingness to pay (WTP) approach through a contingent valuation. Respondents were asked their willingness to pay to support financially the implementation of the project under 3 different governance scenarios:

- The first one is that of a management of water levels by the local government, Angus council, with funding levied through an increase in the household council tax during 10 years,

- The second one proposed the management of the weir by a business run by local stakeholders who would buy shares once (and for 10 years),
- In the last scenario, a charity would be in charge of the weir management, while funding would come from donations. In this last scenario, respondents were asked to state their WTP in the form of an annual membership to the charity for the next 10 years.

Overall, half of the respondents state that they would be willing to pay to support the maintenance and operation of the weir after the end of the research



project. 16% state that would not pay for it and 34% of the respondents correspond to protest answer. These protest zeros emerge when respondents, who actually support the project and would perceive benefits from its implementation, but state a null WTP as they disagree with the method of preference elicitation used or are concerned about fairness of the payment. The average WTP of about £9.6 per year per respondent over 10 years (SD: £11.1), including the null WTP but not the protest responses.

The preferred option is a management by the local government funded through the household council tax. The business governance is mostly ranked second, while the charity is the least preferred option for most respondents.



Preliminary conclusions

The results highlight support to the project with 70% of respondents stating that the project should probably or definitely be implemented, but also identifies 2 types of concern:

- About the project itself, with 25% of non-protest stated WTP being null,
- And about its governance, illustrated by the high level of protest zeros, due to either the lack of confidence that the project will be managed correctly under the proposed governance mechanism, a belief that others should fund it and/or a preference for another way of funding.

The preferred governance scenario appears to be that of a local government management, even though the differences in preferences need to be analysed further through (i) the analysis of open ended questions and (ii) the in-depth qualitative interviews.

Any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact the research team:

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<http://www.hutton.ac.uk/research/projects/payments-ecosystem-services-lessons>.

