

Biodiversity governance characteristics and values



Report on a workshop held in Edinburgh, February 2018

Paula Novo, Anja Byg, Scott Herrett & Michela Roberts



Table of Contents

Summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Workshop outline	4
3. Workshop outcomes	6
3.1 Additional governance mechanisms.....	6
3.2 Desirable governance characteristics	7
3.3 Values wheel.....	9
3.4 Values grid	10
3.5 Trends in biodiversity governance	11
4. Next steps	12
Acknowledgments	12

Summary

This report summarises the discussions and outcomes of a workshop held on the 16th February in Edinburgh. The workshop presented on-going research on biodiversity governance in Scotland and focused on what would be desirable governance characteristics and values associated with different governance forms. Participants highlighted key desirable governance characteristics, which were engagement with different stakeholders, ease of monitoring and evaluation, governance structure and process and other general aspects to consider were effectiveness and uncertainty. In this sense, mechanisms such as collective actions and partnerships were generally recognised as ‘good’ governance mechanisms when evaluated against these criteria. In terms of what values would be better to promote biodiversity conservation, participants indicated that different sets of values can appeal to different people and while universalism, benevolence and self-transcendence seem a natural fit with motivations for conservation, other values such as security, conformity, achievement, power, hedonism and self-direction may also play a relevant role. In general, most current governance mechanisms appeal mainly to values related to self-enhancement and conservation. This recognises the economic impact on land managers. However, there are some larger scale mechanisms, such as collective actions and partnerships, which are not appealing to extrinsic values, such as those associated with financial wealth. Participants also indicated that current trends in biodiversity governance emphasise the need to work across a range of mechanisms but that resource limitations might result in a larger role for partnerships, with clear implications in terms of what and whose values to appeal.

1. Introduction

This report presents a summary of a workshop held in Edinburgh in February 2018. The workshop was organised by researchers from Scotland's Rural College and the James Hutton Institute and was part of a larger research project on biodiversity governance funded through Scottish Government's Strategic Research Programme (2016-2021) and carried out by Scotland's Rural College and the James Hutton Institute.

In 2015, Scotland published its Biodiversity Strategy entitled 'Route Map to 2020' outlining Scotland's ambitions in relation to halting and reversing biodiversity loss. Much has already been done but in order to realise these ambitions (for and beyond 2010) it will be necessary to improve existing measures and/or introduce other ways of encouraging management which safeguards and promotes biodiversity. In order to support the improvement and development of biodiversity management, this research project aims to document experiences with existing governance measures as well as novel measures which are currently not widely employed in Scotland and to what extent they are a reflection of different values sets. In addition to policy instruments such as regulation and subsidies, these also include other mechanisms such as private and community initiatives which influence biodiversity. To discuss these issues we are engaging in a series of workshops with different representatives and practitioners from agriculture, forestry the environmental sector and the wider public to learn about their views and experiences.

Results from the work are being fed back to Scottish Government and government agencies and are also made publicly available through reports and scientific publications.

2. Workshop outline

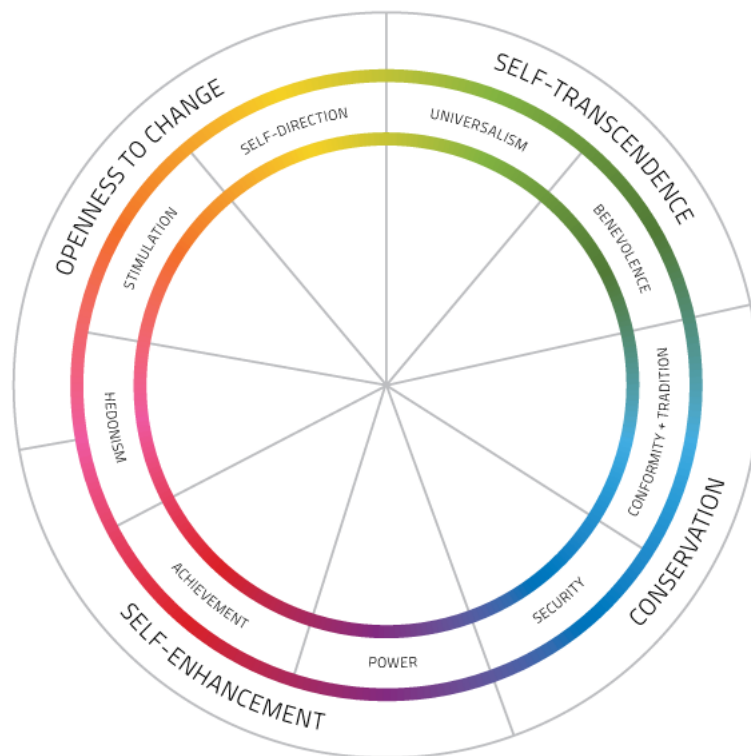
The workshop was held in Edinburgh between 9.30am and 1.00pm on Friday 16th February 2018. The initial part of the workshop consisted of a brief introduction to the workshop and current research and it also included an introductory round of the participants. The presentation of the research and fieldwork done so far included a 'governance mechanisms map' and preliminary results from in-depth interviews with people involved in implementing different kinds of biodiversity measures in Scotland. During this presentation, participants were asked to add any 'missing' governance mechanism to the map. Participants were then asked to think about desirable characteristics of biodiversity governance and write them down. These were then shared with the group and each participant explained what they had written and why they thought particular characteristics were desirable. This then led to a discussion focusing on the extent to which existing governance mechanisms meet these criteria.

The next activity started with a short presentation of a typology of values illustrated in the form of a wheel (Holmes et al., 2012¹). These are a consistently occurring range of values that guide and shape human attitudes and behaviour. Values can be placed into four different value groups (these being self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement and oneness to change values) and arranged on a circular diagram, as shown in Figure 1. Values in the wheel are organised on a proximity basis,

¹ Holmes, T., Blackmore, E., Hawkins, R., Wakeford, T. (2012) *The Common Cause Handbook: A Guide to Values and Frames for Campaigners, Community Organisers, Civil Servants, Fundraisers, Educators, Social Entrepreneurs, Activists, Funders, Politicians, and everyone in between*. Public Interest Research Centre, UK. Available at: <https://valuesandframes.org/downloads/>

meaning that people are more likely to place similar emphasis at the same time on values the closer they are to each other. It is worth noting that research has shown that all people are capable of holding all these values, but that there are antagonistic relationships between opposing sets of values. Following the presentation, participants were asked to think about what values or groups of values can best be used to promote biodiversity conservation. For this purpose, each participant was given a simplified version of Schwartz's values wheel where they could indicate which values can help promote biodiversity. Participants then shared their views and discussed what values organisations try to appeal to.

Figure 1 Schwartz's value wheel. Source: from Holmes et al. (2012)²



The next activity consisted of a grid exercise in which each participant was allocated a number of governance mechanisms and asked to place them on a grid with the x-axis ranging from 'self-transcendence' to 'self-enhancement' and the y-axis from 'openness to change' to 'conservation'. Once the participants had placed their governance mechanisms they were asked about the implications for appealing to these values and whether this creates any conflicts or unintended outcomes. For the final activity, participants were asked to discuss what the current trends in biodiversity governance are and how they compare to the identified governance characteristics' criteria and values.

To wrap up the workshops, the researchers explained the next steps in the project and the participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide additional comments.

² Holmes, T., Blackmore, E., Hawkins, R., Wakeford, T. (2012) *The Common Cause Handbook: A Guide to Values and Frames for Campaigners, Community Organisers, Civil Servants, Fundraisers, Educators, Social Entrepreneurs, Activists, Funders, Politicians, and everyone in between*. Public Interest Research Centre, UK. Available at: <https://valuesandframes.org/downloads/>

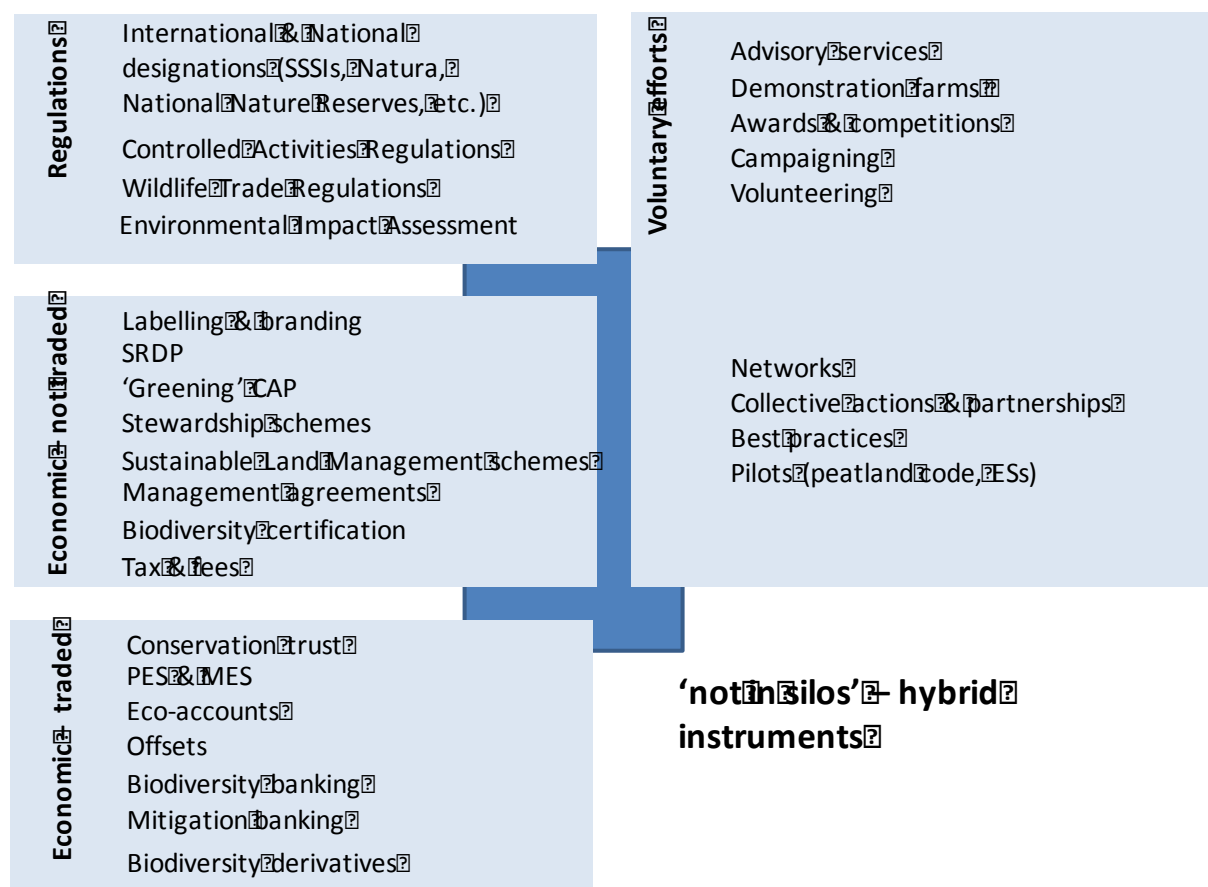
3. Workshop outcomes

Altogether, four people participated in the workshop. Most of the participants had some connection to the conservation or farming sector and/or were involved in a government organisation or NGO.

3.1 Additional governance mechanisms

In this activity, participants were asked to fill any gaps in the ‘governance mechanisms map’ presented in Figure 2 and showing mechanisms grouped according to different categories, such as regulations, economic instruments or voluntary efforts. Although mechanisms have been included in separate categories, in practice most of them go across different categories and are closely interrelated.

Figure 2 Governance mechanisms maps



Participants took a few minutes to look at the map and try to identify any gaps. Overall it was difficult to identify gaps in governance mechanisms as participants felt that they normally did not have much time to actually consider ‘governance’ itself, as they were too busy dealing with what was in front of them. One of the participants indicated that the categories used to classify the governance mechanisms were not intuitive to practitioners as they would not normally put things into categories which are mainly academic.

In terms of specific mechanisms, one of the participants suggested to add the ‘Wildlife and Countryside Act’. It was also not very clear whether strategies should be considered as governance mechanisms or not. Participants generally thought that strategies were a box ticking exercise, and

often do not include how changes could be implemented. For example, Scotland’s Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) is a driver for action, but it is difficult to see how the governance is happening. The general assumption is that because action is happening this must be delivering SBS.

Some other issues participants raised in relation to governance mechanisms are the lack of benchmarking to know how well outputs are achieved and how far we are from the standard. In this regard, one of the participants identified a lack of standardised measures at landscape level. However, another participant pointed out that biodiversity is not standardised, and therefore it would be hard to create a standard measure of biodiversity. In terms of indicators, one of the participants added that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) would normally take the lead on values of measures.

3.2 Desirable governance characteristics

In this activity, participants first took a few minutes to write down on individual post-its what would be desirable governance characteristics and then shared them with the group. In general, participants considered the question from different perspectives and scales. Table 1 shows the different characteristics mentioned by the participants.

Table 1 Desirable governance characteristics mentioned by participants

<i>Characteristics related to...</i>	<i>Detailed governance characteristics</i>
Stakeholders	Engaged land managers
	Respected by stakeholders
	Relevance to human sensitivities, e.g. iconic species
	Valued by all
	Encourage rather than penalise
Monitoring & evaluation	Relevance to ecological processes
	Comparability with indicators of social wellbeing
	SMART targets and objectives
	Defined outputs (workable at catchment / landscape scale)
	Evidence based
	Allow to be monitored
Governance structure / process	Accountability – e.g. reporting requirements to ensure those involved / leading deliver
	Governance structure available to see – often don’t know what it is unless closely involved
	Defined leads for delivery
	Needs clear link to resourcing
	Mainstreamed
Broader topics	Joined up
	Ambitious
	Effective
	Allow for uncertainty

The following bullet points summarise the narratives developed by the participants to explain their choice of desirable governance characteristics:

1. Governance needs to be sensitive to ecological and human processes. In addition, it needs to allow for uncertainty and irreversibility and be comparable to other social wellbeing measures. It also needs to allow monitoring.
2. From a process perspective, the governance structure is often impenetrable. However, if people understand better who is involved and how to get involved it becomes more relevant. Smart targets are another important element to ensure that actions happen on the ground, but they need to be well defined and articulated (e.g. what is a mechanism trying to achieve, who is going to do it, etc.) rather than being a box ticking exercise. Accountability, reporting and motivation are also important to ensure that things actually happen. Finally, specific resources need to be linked to tasks.
3. From a practitioner perspective, joined up action across the different stakeholders is a key desirable characteristic. At the moment, land managers get pulled into different directions and there is a general lack of clarity about objectives and excessive paperwork. In addition, land managers need to be more effectively engaged to promote a sense of ownership (rather than being policed and penalised). For this, it is important both to engage but also to understand their underlying motivations.
4. From a top level perspective, effectiveness and ambitious action plans are two desirable characteristics, although they can become box ticking exercises. Biodiversity needs to be mainstreamed and evidence based.

This activity finished with an open discussion in which participants highlighted that in general biodiversity needs to be better integrated and mainstreamed into policy making across different sectors. For example, a previous organisation (FRAG – Farming and Wildlife Advisory groups) used to work as a bridge between different government organisations and land managers. Although this may be coming back, integration needs a large upheaval and support at the top reaches.

In terms of what governance mechanisms perform better against the different desirable characteristics, one participant indicated that collective actions and partnerships stand out as good governance mechanisms. In partnerships decisions are made collaboratively and different stakeholders have a voice in the overall plan. In this line, another participant suggested that cluster farms have been successful in England. Farmers can identify their conservation goals and have more ownership of the process. This is something that should be bottom up. Designated sites are also well respected and easily understood by stakeholders, but it is unclear how effective they are in terms of enhancing biodiversity. Participants had mixed views around offsets. One of the participants indicated that they are generally seen by NGOs as a cop-out / license to degrade existing biodiversity, while other participant suggested it may be better to do something than nothing. The general perception was that offsets have only become part of the planning recently and that mixed views exist around them. Offsetting comes with certain risks, e.g. related to the uncertainty of the restoration outcomes, and therefore some areas need to be kept outside offsetting policies. Finally, one of the participants highlighted the lack of monitoring in PES and agri-environmental schemes.

Cancellation

3.3 Values wheel

This activity started with a presentation of Schwartz’s values wheel (see Figure 1). Afterwards, participants indicated which values they thought would be better to promote biodiversity conservation.

Table 2 presents a summary of what values participants think should be represented in biodiversity conservation and governance. It is worth noting that some of these values are often coupled. For example, one of the participants mentioned that general engagement in partnerships is often motivated by a sense of achievement and power but also by self-direction and benevolence. In general, there are multiple ‘personality types’ for partnerships.

Table 2 Values and rationales highlighted by participants

<i>Value / group of values</i>	<i>Rationale(s) linked to the value</i>
Universalism / benevolence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural fit with motivations for conservation • Belief that there is more than our individual selves • Stewardship, passing down to the next generation • Most relevant value for NGO supporters
Self-transcendence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of endangered species/habitats for own sake
Security / conformity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action motivated by a sense of impending threat (e.g. climate change) though also dangerous if people become numb to it • Maintaining good health in landscape, making a return on biodiversity • Encourage people to conform to regulations (conformity & security) • Doing the right thing attitude, protecting biodiversity and being a self-evident good person
Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen to be doing right, e.g. farmers want to be seen to be doing right • Making a return on biodiversity
Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social recognition (tied with universalism)
Hedonism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulation, beauty of nature and appeal
Self-direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community projects and people taking responsibility over the local environment • Sense of ownership (of the solutions) increases engagement

In terms of what values different organisations appeal to, one of the participants recognised that there is a huge cross section due to the variety of work. In addition, they do not appeal to people with different attributes but people with all the different values shown in Table 1. In this sense, it is important to determine how to motivate people. For example, the participant’s own motivation is hedonism linked to bird watching, but that also motivates volunteering and professional approaches. The discussion also focused on regulation. Participants suggested that regulation requires conformity, but there is a penalty if someone does not conform, so may be less arduous than appealing to people on different levels. In general, participants recognised the importance of finding out what motivates people to do things. Even if the end goal is biodiversity conservation, the

underlying motivation that needs to be appealed to might be related to something else, e.g. profit, safety.

3.4 Values grid

In this activity, participants were asked to place the biodiversity governance mechanisms on a grid showing the different groups of values. Figure 3 shows the final output from this activity and Table 3 provides an overview of where the different mechanisms were placed on the grid.

Figure 3 Results from values grid activity

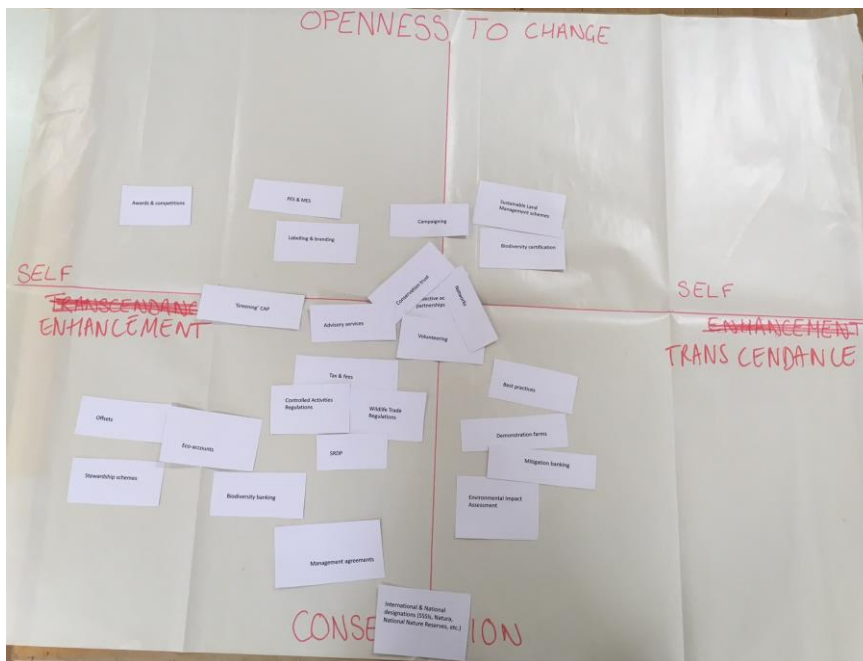


Table 3 Summary results from the grid activity (as shown in Figure 3)

Position	Governance mechanism
1 st quadrant: Self-transcendence, Openness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Land Management schemes • Biodiversity certification
2 nd quadrant: Self-enhancement, Openness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labelling & Branding • PES & MES • Awards & competitions
3 rd quadrant: Self-enhancement, Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory services • Tax & fees • Controlled Activities Regulations • Wildlife Trade Regulations • SRDP • 'Greening' CAP • Eco-accounts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offsets • Biodiversity banking • Stewardship schemes • Management Agreements • International & National designations
4 th quadrant: Self-transcendence, Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices • Demonstration farms • Mitigation banking • Environmental Impact Assessment
Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation trust • Collective action / partnerships • Networks • Volunteering
Openness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigning

The results from the grid show that there is a cluster around self-enhancement and conservation values. In the discussion participants indicated that this might be because mechanisms are generally dominated by regulations and those that appeal to economic motivations. This recognises the economic impact on land managers, who have the largest influence on biodiversity management. Even though most mechanisms do not appeal to the universalism recognised as being important in the earlier exercise, there are some larger scale mechanisms, such as collective actions and partnerships, which sit more centrally because they are not as reliant on economic values. Some other reflections participants made specifically regarding the location of mechanisms on the grid are:

- Branding and rewards appeal both to self-interest and openness to change as they are generally done by people with an open mind, not obliged to do these things but see the competitive advantage of them.
- Stewardship schemes may appeal to self-enhancement, in such as providing a form of social recognition within peer groups.
- SRDP was placed towards 'Conservation' because it is very established and not flexible. Participants recognised it needs to be more open to change.

Issues of time and spatial scale were also discussed. For example, taxes and fees may prevent a damaging activity, while other mechanisms, such as partnerships, that take more time are better for (biodiversity) enhancement. Although it was acknowledged that longer term mechanisms are much harder to be made sustainable. The cluster of mechanisms that call upon conservation and self-enhancement values may encourage implementation on shorter/smaller time and spatial scales.

3.5 Trends in biodiversity governance

The workshop finished with a discussion on current trends in biodiversity governance. Overall, participants agreed on the need to continue to work across a range of mechanisms, but that as resources get tighter, there will be a larger role for partnerships. For example, some of the actions included in Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy depend already on the 3rd sector. This involves a movement towards more coordination, networking and openness in biodiversity governance. Participants suggested that although community partnerships are more expensive in the short term,

they are more cost effective long term and increase the chances of getting external funding and creating economies of scale. In addition, they can incorporate a range of objectives as everyone is brought into the system rather than being imposed upon, increasing the sense of ownership.

4. Next steps

The workshop was part of a larger research project on biodiversity governance funded through Scottish Government's strategic research Programme (2016-2021) and carried out by the James Hutton Institute and Scotland's Rural College. The results of this work will be fed back to Scottish government, other stakeholders and national and international academic audiences. Before publication, this report has been made available to the workshop participants for their feedback. For further information about the research, please contact Paula Novo (paula.novo@sruc.ac.uk) or Scott Herrett (scott.herret@hutton.ac.uk).

Acknowledgments

This research is funded by the Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services Division of the Scottish Government, as part of the 2016 -2021 Strategic Research Programmes. This workshop report corresponds to deliverable D1.2ii within the project formed by Research Deliverable 1.3.4 Objective 1.2. Authors are grateful to workshop participants for their time and contributions.