

## **Discussion session: institutional innovation in agri-environment - new approaches to support the provision of public goods by farmers**

This discussion session includes three 20-minute papers examining recent innovations in institutional approaches to enhance the ways in which farmers can be encouraged and supported to deliver public goods.

Mary Ryan and Cahal O'Donoghue's paper frames the context of AESs within the economic theory of the provision of public goods, drawing on lessons from historic scheme design and farmer participation. The paper examines the evolution of past scheme design to more novel approaches such as the Burren LIFE project and EIP Agri approaches, in relation to spatial targeting of measures towards areas of environmental concern and scheme effectiveness.

Nico Polman will present a co-authored paper analysing the now mainstreamed Dutch collective approach to agri-environmental provision, in which farmer co-operatives contract directly with the government to provide a range of environmental goods and services via their farmer membership. His paper looks in particular at the implications of a collective approach for transaction costs, effectiveness and efficiency.

Steve Chaplin's paper will present and discuss the results of Natural England's 3-year pilot of a results-based approach to agri-environment provision, in Yorkshire and the East of England. He will aim to identify what these reveal about the practicalities and performance of this frequently-advocated, novel approach to design and delivery.

Janet Dwyer will then facilitate a discussion in plenary, aiming to identify points of agreement and points of contrast between these examples, and thinking about future research needs on this topic.