

Spatial coordination in payment for ecosystem service schemes: an integrated ecological and economic perspective

Funded PhD opportunity, University Of Glasgow (Scotland) – September 2019 start.

Payment for Ecosystem Service (agri-environment) schemes aim to deliver conservation benefits by paying landowners to change their land management in a way in which ecosystem quality and biodiversity outcomes are enhanced. Entry into a PES scheme is voluntary, and payments are intended to be conditional on the delivery of additional environmental benefits over time. For some kinds of ecological objective, having neighbouring patches of land (e.g. adjacent farms) enrolled can deliver higher benefits than having enrolled patches scattered on the landscape. Examples of such objectives include species re-introductions, wetlands restoration, invasive species management and the creation of wildlife corridors. However, such spatial coordination is unlikely to emerge from most PES scheme designs under standard contract designs unless the opportunity costs of conservation and the ecological benefits of site management are strongly spatially correlated in a particular way. For many landscapes, we are unlikely to be able to rely on this spatial correlation pattern to generate “enough” coordination.

This PhD will integrate ecological and economic principles and modelling to investigate specific research questions related to spatial coordination of conservation actions, with a focus on agri-environment policy. It will be supervised by an economist (Nick Hanley) and an ecologist (Kirsty Park) as part of the IAPETUS network of PhD students. The application deadline is January 18th. The network can only fund UK and EU students.

More details from: Nicholas.Hanley@glasgow.ac.uk and from:

http://www.iapetus.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/IAP2-18-09_Glasgow_Hanley.pdf