

Summit to Sea - O'r Mynydd i'r Môr Project

Restoring flourishing ecosystems and a resilient economy in mid-Wales



Submission to the Endangered Landscape Programme by
Rewilding Britain – Programmatic Lead
Woodland Trust – Finance Lead

Table of Contents

1. Restoration Diagnostic2
2. Theory of change (TOC)2
3. Logical Framework Matrix13
4. Work plan17
5. Evidence base17
6. Testing interventions18
7. Team management22
8. Monitoring Plan24
9. Communications Plan25
10. Community Engagement Plan30
11. Capacity development37
12. Business plan for social enterprise37
13. Re-introductions and translocation41
14. Land purchase42
15. Harmonisation and scaling-up43
16. Exit strategy and sustainability46
17. Budget47
18. Risk assessment48
19. Socio-cultural impacts and safeguards assessment54
20. Environmental impacts assessment58
21. Due Diligence assessment60

Supporting Documents60

1. Restoration Diagnostic

See attached excel document Wales_Restoration Diagnostic

2. Theory of change (TOC)

As we stated in our previous application, the Cambrian Mountains, lowlands and coastline are blessed with a rich linguistic, cultural and natural heritage, developed through a long history of working with the land and sea. But more recently the area has suffered both ecological and economic decline. The diversity and abundance of wildlife has plummeted, while traditional, productive industries no longer sustain robust employment and incomes.

It is generally accepted that ecological decline can only be reversed by action at a land/seascape scale. In the words of Sir John Lawton, this requires an approach that is “bigger, better and more joined up” aimed at re-establishing naturally functioning ecosystems. Mid-Wales is an area where local people have lived off, shaped and been shaped by the land and sea over hundreds of years. They have deep ties to the land and sea as well as pride in the area’s linguistic, cultural and natural heritage. Any changes to land/sea use practices which enable long-term ecosystem restoration must therefore come from a shared vision developed with, and for, local people which supports both flourishing ecosystems and a more diversified, resilient economy.

Over the last 30-40 years the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy has locked landowners into a high dependency on subsidies with little control over the way they manage the land. For sea-users the recent changes in the Common Fisheries Policy have been progressive but the problem here has been of implementation. With Brexit we have reached a ‘tipping point’ where change is inevitable. In combination with recent shifts in the UK and especially the Welsh policy context this has provided an unprecedented moment of opportunity to demonstrate a rural economic model that allows both people and nature to thrive.

The success of the Summit to Sea (S2S) project depends on community buy-in and engagement. Recognising the strong cultural pride and values of these communities is a priority. Effective mechanisms are needed by which landowners/sea-users can take collective responsibility for and engagement in better managing the area’s natural resources for the future. This is not a single-dimension project, it is a combination of land/sea uses and activities that evolve over time taking into account the needs of the entire community and also the nature and wildlife of the Summit to Sea area. Supportive policy and legal frameworks are also needed to provide incentives and stability.

It is these elements which form the fundamental basis of Summit to Sea’s project approach - summarised in Diagram 1: S2S Long-Term Project Approach. The mechanisms by which this approach will set in motion a cascade of ecological and social feedback loops that reverse deterioration in the landscape - our Theory of Change - is summarised in Diagram 2.

Over the last few months we have further tested out both our project approach and Theory of Change (ToC) through a series of workshops with projects partners, stakeholders and those with relevant expertise. These have explored different elements of the approach including:

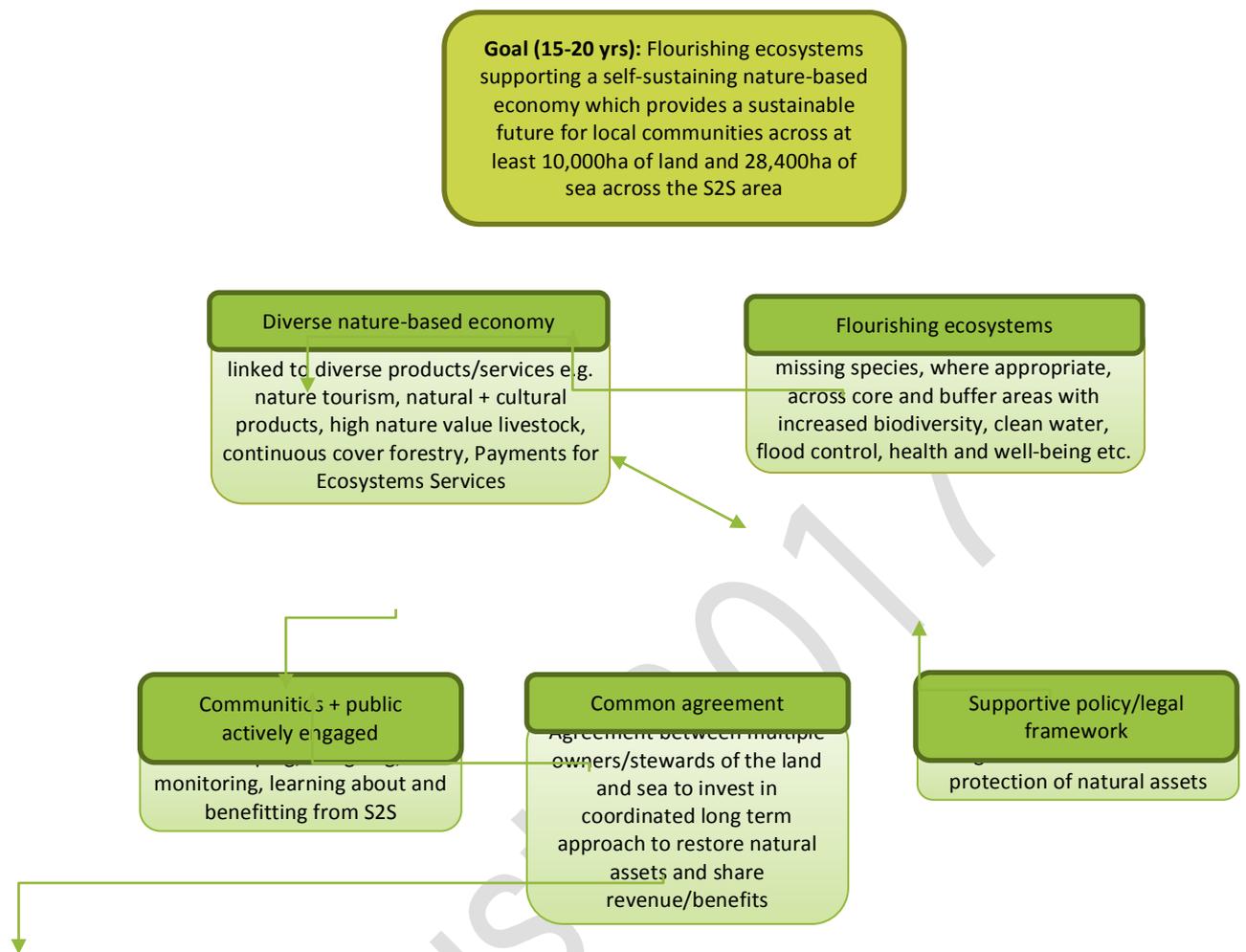
- Ecological restoration – all project partners
- Case for a nature-based economy – project visits with business representatives (Eden Project, Pukka Teas, TYF Adventure), project design workshop hosted by Arup and local expert workshop
- Community engagement and governance – local workshops with project partners and stakeholders with both local and external expertise.

Through this process the fundamental premise of the ToC has held true while 1) we have gained useful inputs into the detail of the project’s design and 2) we have increased the sense of broader engagement in and ownership of the project. One comment has been:

“Not only has it the potential to facilitate the rewilding of a large tract of land, but it will also demonstrate that there are models of working with the natural world, environment and ecology that can be innovative, inspiring and importantly, can be made to work in the real world... with real people.” (Dave Harland, Chief Executive Officer, Eden Project International Limited).

In support of the ToC in the following sections we will develop the basis for the theory further. We will also address the three questions raised by the ELP panel.

Diagram 1: S2S Long-term Project Approach



Question 1: The project outcomes are quite heavily dependent on a reform of agricultural/environmental payments post-Brexit. The project plan should include a fuller risk assessment, and show (in brief) what alternative strategies might be adopted if the expected payment scheme doesn't materialise.

Summary points:

- Changes to trading arrangements are likely to cause particular challenges for Welsh sheep producers.
- Direct support will be phased out across the UK, probably between 2020 and 2025.
- The Welsh Government is committed as a matter of both law and policy to introduce a scheme for paying farmers and land managers for the delivery of public goods, including ecological restoration.
- The majority of farmers are likely to buy into this, though the ability of each individual farmer to do so may be constrained by the basis on which they occupy the land.
- Other options will be available instead of or as well as public goods payments, the main ones being forestry, tourism and diversified food and natural products.
- Both reductions in funding and political change are risks to the direction of travel, but in neither case are they significant.

Context of the current rural economy:

The rural economy of mid-Wales has a significantly larger share of employment in agriculture (11-16% compared with 3%) than the national average. Other key employment providers for the region are the public sector (26%), forestry (public and private), fishing and tourism. The overwhelming majority of farms currently do not provide non-family employment opportunities although they do use local contractors for specific tasks. Under the current CAP system of Basic Payments and agri-environment schemes (Glastir in Wales) there has been a high dependency on subsidies and little immediate incentive to diversify. The average farm business income is declining.

- Welsh farming output is heavily focussed on livestock and livestock products (86% of total output)¹ - in upland areas predominantly sheep on 'Less Favoured Area' land.
- The Project area, covering parts of Powys and Ceredigion, is one of the most sparsely populated in Wales and is characterised by about 350 small and medium sized farms (some with extensive upland grazing areas). In the upland areas there are a combination of tenants and owner occupiers engaged in extensive sheep production, with beef production in the lower valleys in comparatively small-scale farm businesses, making modest incomes. There is some common land.
- Income from CAP subsidies often provides the largest contribution to farm business income: for example, in 2013-2014, an average of 74%² and up to 80-90% for some upland farms.
- Sheep meat is Wales' largest agricultural export by both volume and value. 40% of sheep meat produced in Wales is exported with three quarters of it to the EU³.
- Aside from farming, the Summit to Sea landscape includes a range of forest units of differing scales and levels of isolation or connectivity. The economic models underpinning much of the upland forestry within the project area use a spruce plantation clear-fell and restock management system.
- Tourism is important to the economy of mid-Wales, with 11.3% of all employment in the region being in the tourism sector, the highest proportion of any region in Wales.⁴
- In Cardigan Bay, the majority of fishing activity is small-scale and coastal. There are also recreational and tourism operations, e.g. dolphin watching and associated tourism activity in New Quay generated £4.9 million during the 2013 season.
- Some landowners have already utilised opportunities to diversify their revenues through renewable energy. Hill sheep farms, for example, earn on average £2,140 per year from renewable energy generation.⁵
- The major urban population in this region is the university town of Aberystwyth with nearly 19,000 people.

Assessment of relevant post-Brexit policy reforms:

The short and long-term future of subsidies post-Brexit is still uncertain but there are some likely trends. Under the Wales Act 2017 both agriculture and environment policy are devolved matters within the competence of the Welsh Government. What we do know is that:

- The UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan states that the current Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) is to be phased out and replaced with 'a system of public money for public

¹ *Research Briefing: The Farming Sector in Wales*, p2.

² *Farm Diversification*, Wales Government, available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/farm-diversification/?lang=en>.

³ <https://seneddresearch.blog/2017/03/27/understanding-welsh-exports-a-look-at-the-latest-regional-trade-statistics/>

⁴ *Regional Tourism Profiles: Mid-Wales, 2014*, Welsh Government, available at:

http://cadair.aber.ac.uk/dspace/bitstream/handle/2160/42813/Garcia_Olga_upd.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y

⁵ *The Farm Business Survey in Wales*, Aberystwyth University, available at: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/research-and-enterprise/fbs/booklets/> see 2016-17 p7.

goods'. The phase out in Wales will begin in 2020⁶ and is likely to be under great pressure to reduce over time beyond that.

- In a survey of farming households, 27% stated that they would be “likely” or “highly likely” to leave farming if subsidies from current EU schemes continued to fall. 75% of farmers stated their farm businesses would be “vulnerable” if subsidies continued to fall.⁷ 40% said they would pursue various strategies of diversification, economies, agri-environmental schemes, alternative enterprises and retirement⁸.
- Changes to post-Brexit trading arrangements are likely to cause particular challenges for Welsh sheep producers considering their high dependency on the export market. If there were no trade deal, the default position would be tariffs on all main commodities of between 5%-40%. Combined with a reduction in subsidies this could prove catastrophic to upland sheep producers who currently have few alternative income streams.
- The Welsh Government is clearly committed to an ambitious programme of environmental delivery as evidenced by the:
 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016: which aims to ensure a “joined up” approach to the “Sustainable Management of Natural Resources” (SMNR), linked to the development of a low carbon, green economy. These will be enacted through locally specific ‘Area Statements’ which will lay out the risks, opportunities and priorities that are specific to a place, ensuring local collaboration to make the most of natural resources.
 - Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2016: which integrates sustainability into the work of public bodies through establishing 7 well-being goals and establishing Public Service Boards (PSBs) to coordinate delivery.
- The Welsh Government’s “Natural Resources Policy”⁹ launched in August 2017 contains a number of significant relevant commitments, amongst them to comply with international environmental obligations, to “reverse the decline in biodiversity across Wales” and to use a post-Brexit agricultural policy to do so.
- The Welsh Government is committed as a matter of both law and policy to introduce a scheme for paying farmers and land managers for the delivery of public goods, including ecological restoration. This was confirmed by Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths in her speech to the NFU conference on 26 February 2018. One of five principles she mentioned was ‘*And so my third principle is that our new policy should centre on Welsh land delivering public goods for all the people of Wales*’.
- It seems highly likely that if direct payments are abolished, Welsh farmers, as a whole, will engage with a replacement system based on payments for public goods, if only because there are currently few alternatives.
- Clear mechanisms for delivery of public goods have yet to be developed. This is an opportunity to propose to Welsh Government pilot projects which can achieve the kind of transformation it seeks to stimulate, demonstrating how the sustainable management of natural resources can be delivered in practice and how the new legislative framework in Wales is adding value. This could include piloting a group contract between multiple landowners for the delivery of public goods as a key part of a transition economy.
- There is a possible risk if there is political change following the Welsh Assembly elections in 2019. However, the risk is small as all parties have included references to supporting payments for ecosystem services or public goods in their manifestos.

⁶ <http://www.fwi.co.uk/news/basic-payment-scheme-phase-out-to-start-in-2020-in-wales.htm>

⁷ *A survey of farming households in Wales*, Wales Rural Observatory, available at: http://www.walesruralobservatory.org.uk/sites/default/files/SurveyFarmingHouseholdsWales2010_0.pdf, p3.

⁸ <http://businessdocbox.com/Agriculture/70821572-A-survey-of-farming-households-in-wales.html>

⁹ <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/170821-natural-resources-policy-en.PDF>

- In the highly unlikely event that the public goods payment model does not materialise, S2S will prioritise the percentage contribution of other economic alternatives e.g. tourism, forestry, natural products etc. (see next section). The take up of landowners may however be at a slower rate and the transition phase will therefore take longer.
- In relation to International nature legislation, irrespective of the UK's departure from the EU, the UK remains a signatory to a number of international agreements committing it to ecological restoration, e.g.:
 - Article 8 (f) of The Convention on Biological Diversity requires parties to "Rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species". Target 3 of the Aichi Targets states that "By 200, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied". The 'Nature Recovery Plan for Wales'¹⁰ published in 2015 sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
 - Goal 15 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is a commitment to "Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss"¹¹
- Moreover, under the Withdrawal Bill, the UK Government has committed to transpose all directly applicable EU law into UK law. This includes both the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.
 - Article 3 (1) of the Birds Directive provides "Member States shall take the requisite measures to preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Article 1."¹²
 - Article 2 (1) of the Habitats Directive states "The aim of this Directive shall be to contribute towards ensuring bio-diversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" and under Art 1 conservation is defined as "a series of measures required to maintain or restore the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable status"¹³.
- Accordingly, under both international and EU law, the Welsh Government is committed to ecological restoration. These obligations continue post Brexit.

¹⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/gb/gb-nbsap-v3-p4-en.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/>

¹² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147>

¹³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043>

Question 2: The proposal doesn't currently provide much evidence of the extent to which diversification can reduce or remove the need for subsidies. Neither does it explain why it believes that the proposed 'collective' approach would be economically viable (but hasn't previously been adopted). The project plan should expand on these aspects.

Summary points:

- Initial assessments indicate that a nature-based economy could provide improved and stable revenue opportunities compared with the current situation and future alternatives.
- Delivery of payments for public goods, if it is to be effective, will most likely need to be on a collective basis, bringing together a number of holdings.
- Collective mechanisms can provide effective models for the long term stewardship of natural, productive and cultural resources
- There are, as yet, no precedents at this scale in Wales so it will be important to learn from experiences and models used elsewhere.

Case for a diversified, nature-based economy linked to ecological restoration:

We have shown that the current rural economy in the S2S landscape is more heavily reliant on agriculture than in other parts of Wales and is largely supported by subsidies and trade in sheep meat. This makes local livelihoods highly vulnerable.

Set against a backdrop of economic and political uncertainty related to 'Brexit', alongside traditional agriculture and forestry S2S aims to inspire and foster new forms of land use that transition local socio-economies to be less dependent on subsidies by generating higher levels of business orientated income. With the rich and diverse natural assets within the S2S area the project is proposing to support the establishment of a 'nature-based economy'. This is one that is supported by income and employment opportunities largely associated with natural uses of the land and sea.

This would see the diversity and abundance of nature being restored, supporting the diversification of the local economy. Linked to the creation of S2S as an iconic destination are the opportunities provided by nature tourism, continuous-cover forestry, some high-nature-value livestock husbandry and the harvesting of natural products. Project partners have already committed to restore more naturally functioning ecosystems across at least 5,000ha in the S2S area. Providing an economic incentive for other landowners as well as sea-users to do the same could vastly increase that area and is a key element of our Theory of Change.

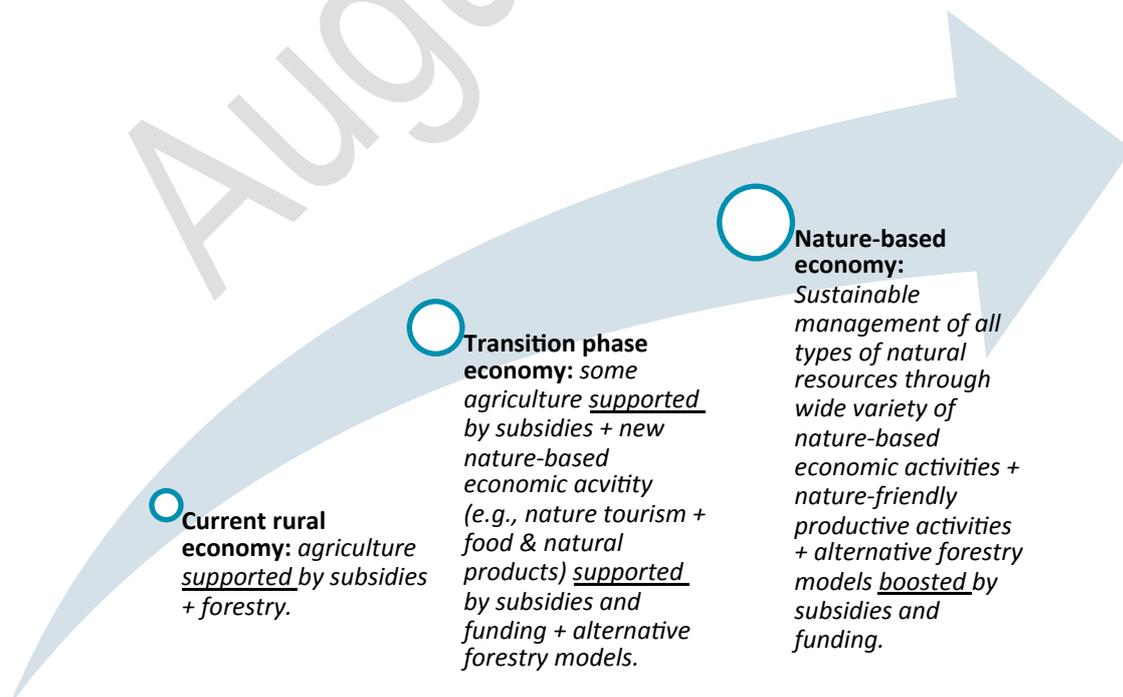
S2S commissioned Conservation Capital to carry out an initial assessment - *An Economic Assessment for a Nature-based Economy in Mid-Wales*. This explored the overall potential for landowners and communities to transition to a new, growing, more stable, less subsidy-reliant nature-based economy that still retains agriculture and forestry at its core. Its overall assessment, was that, for agricultural landowners in particular, a nature-based economy '*would provide improved and stable revenue opportunities*'. This includes:

- **Land management:** it can be estimated to generate around **£10m** each year in income through farming in the S2S area. At least **£7.5m** of this income is directly linked to subsidy contributions from programmes linked to the EU (or, an average of more than £20,000 per farm). If the current subsidy levels fall by 40%, the total income generation from farming for the region could decrease by nearly £5m. If the subsidy levels decrease by 80%, the size of the farming economy could almost be a third of what it is today. It is highly likely that subsidy income will continue in the short term but be re-orientated towards public goods providing an important transition income for landowners in the S2S area. In the longer term it is realistic to assume that 1) incomes would continue to be boosted by a combination of public payments and private sector payment for ecosystem services (i.e. **20-30%** of farm business income) rather than be dependent on them

and 2) the shortfall in income can be replaced by income through tourism, high nature-value food and natural products.

- **Tourism:** it can be estimated that tourism currently contributes about **£21m** to the region each year and provides more than **400** jobs based on 300,000 overnight tourist visits a year. If tourism numbers and average spend per tourist continue to grow at the same rate as they have grown in recent years, then tourism may contribute about **£37.5m** and nearly **800** jobs in ten years' time. With further investment linked to a recognised brand this could accelerate, mirroring the UK wide trend that tourism now generates more revenue and provides more employment for the rural sector than farming. Tourism in the UK is not universally welcomed by local communities, as it can be very seasonal, employment can be low paid and casual and it can negatively affect local housing provision while the benefits flow to those with capital assets such as accommodation providers. The project needs to be mindful of these risks and to seek to develop eco-tourism at a level which provides additional opportunities but doesn't negatively impact on local communities.
- **Forestry:** it is roughly estimated that forestry generates an income of around £1.55 million per annum in the Summit to Sea region. There are currently no subsidies for forestry management. It is hard to draw robust conclusions but this could remain stable over the long term under alternative silvicultural practices such as irregular forest management (including continuous cover forestry (CCF) and Low Impact Silvicultural Systems) by rebalancing objectives of productivity with those of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience
- **Food and natural products:** there are increased opportunities through creating a regional "brand of quality" that links increased food quality with increased environmental benefit. A 2016 study has shown that such methods of farming can be more profitable (typically between 22% and 35%) even on the smaller yield such farming brings because some consumers are willing to pay more for the product. There are also opportunities for commercialising wild products such as herbs, mosses and seaweeds.

Any shift from the current economy to a nature-based economy could not happen overnight. There will be a clear transition phase the timeframe of which would vary depending on a range of factors including the outcomes of the Brexit process, market conditions and the level landowner/ community interest.



Based on this initial assessment we have held a number of meetings and workshops to further test out whether there is 1) a genuine business case for a 'nature-based' economy and 2) whether there is local interest in exploring it as a viable land/sea management alternative. Those involved have included Eden Project, Conservation Capital, Arup, Pukka Teas, Business Wales and Farmer's Union for Wales as well as project partners. All agree that there is potential for a nature-based economy in the area and support the proposal to move to a full feasibility and design phase based on building a shared vision that respects local values and aspirations. We have included an assessment of the risks and risk reduction strategies associated with this in the Risk Assessment section.

Taking a collective approach

A key element of S2S's ToC is that some form of common agreement will be required to coordinate both ecological and economic actions over multiple landholdings and the marine area. A collaborative model offers an alternative in which local people – both land and sea users, and the wider community – can help shape a local future on their own terms and based on shared values. Whilst there are historical precedents for communities working collectively in the area, more recently the individualised farm business model based on subsidy payments has provided little incentive to do so. It has already been demonstrated that such a collective approach, with clearly defined codes of use, can outperform individually-focused models of state and market governance in the stewardship of natural, productive and cultural resources¹⁴.

Future subsidy payments to farmers and land managers will in all likelihood focus on the provision of public goods. Delivery of this will be more effective on a collective basis, bringing together a number of holdings. This places the S2S Partnership in a position to build a common platform, agreeing group contracts for the delivery of ecosystem services and securing additional income. One of the ways of achieving this change is through "farm clusters"¹⁵ with groups of farmers coming together to appoint a facilitator to co-ordinate delivery at scale. The Welsh government is already providing facilitators to support these clusters to submit bids to the Sustainable Management Scheme.

With sufficient community buy-in, further options are being explored for establishing a mechanism/structure to coordinate governance and decision-making across the S2S area. We have commissioned initial scoping studies by Shared Assets¹⁶ and Conservation Capital¹⁷ to look into the potential governance and management options learning from other experiences both in the UK and further afield.

They have suggested that no one single model of governance, decision-making and management is likely to provide the solution but that a blended approach of different 'nested' structures tailored to local circumstances may be a more sustainable approach. This would see stakeholders including individuals, landowners, businesses and natural resource managers forming a commitment to restore the land/seascape for nature and wildlife whilst agreeing to an element of revenue and benefit sharing. A constituted S2S partnership structure, governed by a board drawn from partners and local stakeholders, would then help coordinate activities including:

- Facilitating engagement of communities and other landowners with the programme using enterprise as a tool or lever;
- Supporting local entrepreneurs to develop conservation focused enterprises of their own;
- Forming effective linkages between all conservation enterprises and landowners in the region who have or could be committed to the programme;

¹⁴ E.g. Ostrom, E. (1999) 'Coping with tragedies of the commons' and Raworth, K (2017) *Doughnut Economics*.

¹⁵ <http://www.fwi.co.uk/news/how-the-farmer-clusters-conservation-system-works.htm>

¹⁶ <http://www.sharedassets.org.uk/>

¹⁷ <http://www.conservation-capital.com>

- Raising finance for these conservation enterprises – in the form of grants, loans and investment.

Question 3: The proposal is presented based on the contribution that the project makes to connecting mountain summits to the sea. However, ecological linkages in this regard are mostly assumed rather than described. The project plan should explain these linkages in more detail and show how planned interventions – on land and at sea – will enhance connectivity and outcomes in the respective landscape/seascape elements.

Water, its quantity, flow rates and quality, connects most of the land in the project area and in turn the estuary and the marine environment. The lakes, streams and estuary have naturally low nutrient levels. Historically, both intentionally and un-intentionally, management and land use has resulted in the high annual average rainfall of 2600mm being collected and channelled downhill and out to sea as fast as possible, while picking up nutrients, sediment and other pollutants on its journey.

This starts in the uplands where soil compaction and reduced vegetation structure, largely due to sheep grazing, has caused increased run-off rates. Land drainage means that what water does soak in is quickly shed through peat and grasslands. The peat is negatively affected by the reduced water levels and the natural vegetation struggles to compete with purple moor grass which thrives over moving water.

As you move further downhill the streams and small rivers are affected by acidification from conifer plantations, pollution from old mines, nutrient run-off from farmland, sediment from soil disturbance by forestry, agriculture and livestock, man-made barriers to fish associated with old mills and canalisation towards the coast. Many of the restoration elements of the project will take place on the land (drain and ditch blocking, reduction of grazing, changes to forestry practices, woodland creation) but they are also intended to have a positive impact on the freshwater habitats. For example, through reducing pollution entering the streams and eventually the sea, and the rate of run off. In turn this will reduce the flood risk to communities at the bottom of the catchment.

The intention is to initially focus coordinated land, riparian, estuarine and marine restoration activities around the Leri river, a single sub-catchment of the Dyfi, in order to demonstrate the impacts of a catchment wide 'summit to sea' approach. Initially barriers to fish will be removed, land use pollution in the headwaters will be reduced and riparian habitats restored. At the estuarine end of the catchment is the 650ha Cors Fochno raised peat bog, a National Nature Reserve managed by Natural Resources Wales. This area has received part of £4 million grant from the EU LIFE programme for work involving hydrological restoration and invasive species control. In the longer term the aim is de-canalise the final stretch of the Leri river that leads across the 650ha Cors Fochno raised peat bog to the Dyfi estuary and out into the sea. There are a number of species which use the marine environment and the freshwater or upland habitats in the project area which we hope will be strengthened through the restoration work planned.

Diagram 2: Summit to Sea Theory of Change

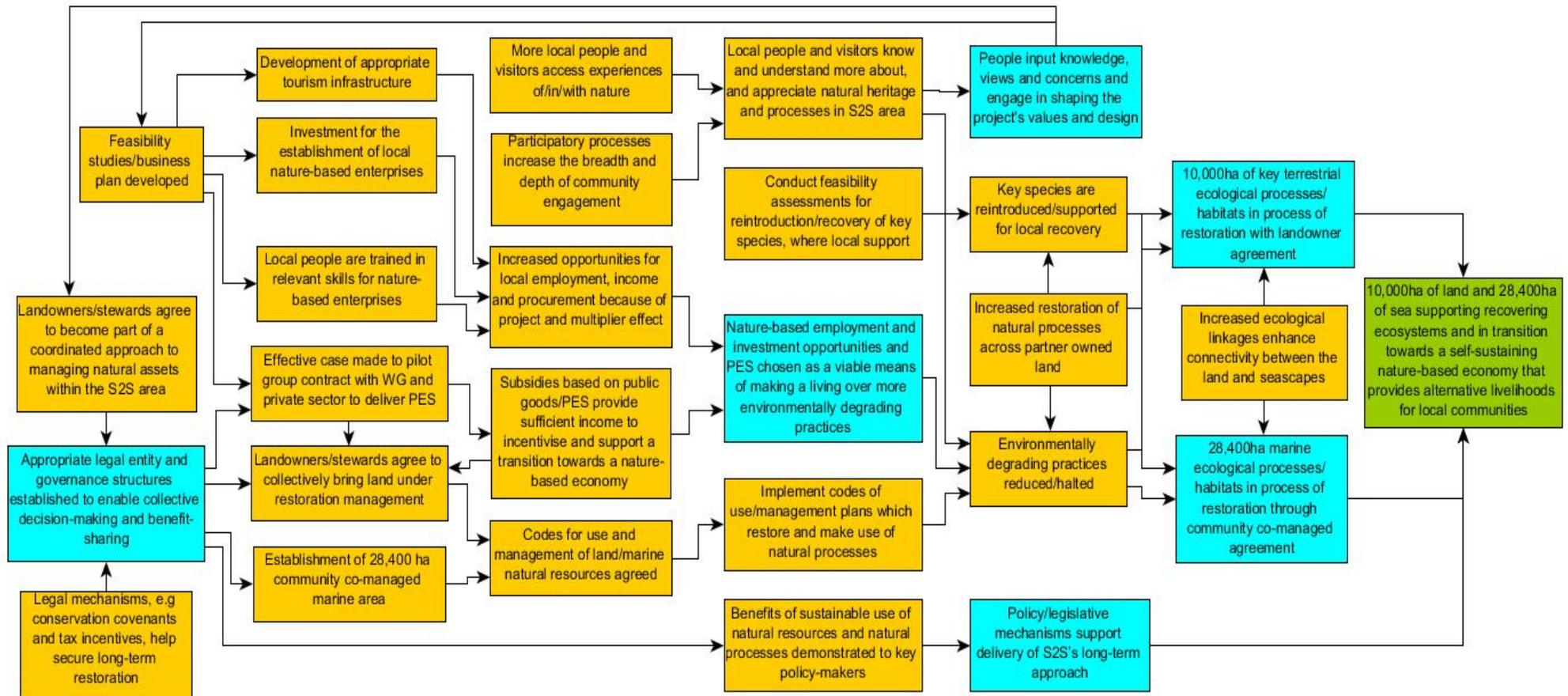


Diagram key: green box = goal; blue boxes = outcomes; yellow boxes = outputs

3. Logical Framework Matrix

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Goal/Impact: 10,000 ha of land and 28,400ha of sea of the Summit to Sea (S2S) area supporting recovering ecosystems and in transition towards a self-sustaining nature-based economy that provides alternative livelihoods for local communities			
Outcome 1: 10,000ha of land and 28,400ha of sea in process of ecological restoration either as core or buffer areas with collective agreement of owners/stewards.	Area of land/seascapes where natural processes are in process of restoration.	Baseline monitoring, remote sensing etc.	Project attracts additional partners/owners with significant land holdings and/or is able to purchase parcels of land.
Outputs:			
1.1 Agreement of owners/stewards to transition towards 5,000 ha core area and 5,000 ha buffer areas	No. of landowners in agreements (individual or collective) to undertake specific management actions.	Management agreements / contracts. Database of owners/users involved.	Some form of Post Brexit rural support / payment for public goods is available at least in a transition phase to enable land owners to carry out restoration work.
1.2 Ecological restoration underway on 3-4 demonstration core areas of at least 5,000 ha	Area of land where habitat under process of restoration. Populations of common birds and butterflies Recovery of plant species diversity Improvement in freshwater ecology Ecological connectivity Diversity from acoustic monitoring Flood risk reduction Change in carbon storage	Baseline monitoring, remote sensing etc	Owners agree to coordinate and extend restoration interventions.

1.3 Establishment of a 28,400ha community co-managed marine area where seabed is in recovery	Co-management agreement in place No. sea-users engaged in agreement Area of sea where habitat in process of restoration through community agreed management actions. Changes in the distribution and abundance of crawfish and carpet mussel beds	Collective agreements and log of actions. Seasearch surveys	Sea users are motivated to participate. Their combined actions lead to seabed recovery.
1.4 Feasibility assessments and plans in place for the reintroduction / recovery of key missing species where there is local support	Key species identified and baseline populations established	Report on status of key species. Feasibility and consultation reports.	Pine marten recovery programme continues to be successful/accepted locally.
Outcome 2: Phase 1 nature-based enterprises and infrastructure established linked to an iconic S2S destination providing alternative income streams as part of a transition economy	Changes in the contribution of nature-based enterprises to the local/regional economy	Annual surveys of incomes and revenue.	Recovering nature is sufficient to drive revenue before benefits of fully restored ecosystems are available
Outputs:			
2.1 Feasibility studies and an integrated Business Plan developed for the S2S area attracting investment for the establishment of local nature-based enterprises	Finalised feasibility studies and Business Plan. Amount of inward enterprise investment secured.	Business plans and investment figures.	Local businesses choose to associate with Summit to Sea
2.2 Tourism infrastructure designed and constructed e.g. community-run bunkhouse in the upland area; visitor's hub in the lowland area; walking tracks to connect the two.	Increase in high quality infrastructure in place linked to S2S. No. of and levels of satisfaction of people using infrastructure created.	Visitor number and satisfaction surveys	Capital costs covered and visitor numbers sufficient to cover running costs
2.3 Diverse range of nature-based productive and service enterprises established linked to S2S vision and brand which bring new economic opportunities to the area.	Number, turnover and investment into nature-based businesses associated with S2S brand.	Survey and data collection from enterprises	Collaboration with local initiatives to avoid competition on branding. Nature based business development advice and investment available.
2.4 Increased local employment prospects through investment in relevant training as well as procurement of local goods/services	Number and diversity of income opportunities created for local people.	Surveys of local employment related to Summit to Sea.	No net loss of existing employment opportunities due to project

2.5 Mechanisms in place to generate alternative and transition income streams for landowners, farmers and fishers through public and corporate Payments for Ecosystem Services.	Level of income generated through payments for public goods/PES schemes	Business turnover – revenue surveys and government statistics.	Some form of Post Brexit rural support / payment for public goods is available at least in a transition phase to enable land owners to carry out restoration work.
Outcome 3: A S2S partnership established between owners/stewards and key stakeholders with effective governance mechanisms for collective decision-making and sharing revenue/benefits.	Number of institutions (including local government, NGO, private sector, community based organisations) participating in the project.	Records of partnership meetings. Evidence of management / strategic decisions made.	
Outputs:			
3.1 Effective team established to manage and organise S2S enterprise development and ecological restoration.	Measure of change in the team’s capacity and effectiveness.	Meeting minutes and performance reviews.	Partners have staff capacity to contribute effectively to team
3.2 Interested owners/stewards have agreed to become part of a coordinated approach to managing natural assets within the S2S area.	No. of landowners in agreement/s to undertake specific management actions.	Records of meetings/focus groups/ 1:1 interviews. Database of owner/uses involved.	S2S is able to develop a business offer to land owners which is better than the alternatives post Brexit.
3.3 Appropriate legal entity and governance structures established which enable collective decision-making and provide effective mechanisms to share revenue/benefits.	Collective agreement in place between landowners/sea users to agree management across specific project areas.	Records of legal entity, governance meeting minutes, database of owner/uses involved.	Appropriate legal entity/governance mechanisms are found and are workable.
3.4 Codes for the use and management of land/marine natural resources agreed through mutual consent/interest.	Codes in place and number of stakeholders signed up to them.	Management agreements and logs of process of decision-making	It is possible to design such codes to be meaningful and acceptable to land owners
Outcome 4: Local communities and wider public engaged in informing, shaping, monitoring, learning about and benefitting from S2S	No. of people participating in decisions, activities and events relating to the S2S project		Enough different sectors of the community see benefits in engaging.
Outputs:			
4.1 Increased knowledge, awareness and understanding of the cultural/natural heritage of the area and of S2S’s collective vision for the future.	Increased no. of people accessing information on S2S and cultural/natural heritage Level and quality of interaction with and	Social media analysis, records of attendance at events Social surveys, CVM workshops.	Collaboration with other local initiatives with overlapping aims to reduce stakeholder fatigue.

	use of the land / seascape		
4.2 Participatory mechanisms in place for local people to input their knowledge, views and concerns to engage in shaping the project	No. of people inputting their views into local forums, community panels, stakeholders workshops. Extent to which vision and values of project shared between community/ stakeholders	Evidence of attendance at engagement events/ working groups. Interviews, observations, CVM workshops etc.	Enough different sectors of the community see benefits in engaging.
4.3 Projects for local people, schools, communities and cultural groups to actively engage and to volunteer in the project.	No. of volunteer hours contributed to the project. No. of people involved in citizen's science, community monitoring projects etc	Records of volunteer hours and people's involvement.	Partners see benefit in broadening their outreach work to include wider Summit to Sea project.
4.4 Increased access to experiences of nature and wildlife that improve health and well-being (youth at risk etc).	Level and quality of interaction with and use of the land / seascape	Visitor number and satisfaction surveys.	Enough different sectors of the community see the benefits of engaging.
Outcome 5: Policy/legislative mechanisms in place which support delivery of S2S's long-term approach			
Outputs:			
5.1 S2S approach incorporated into Welsh Government Marine and Mid-Wales Area Statements as well other supportive policy and delivery mechanisms.	Changes in national or regional policy and delivery mechanisms which support the S2S approach.	Records, e.g. of area statements consultations and outcomes.	NRW and Welsh Government are committed to delivering on the commitments in the new Environment and Well Being Acts.
5.2 Pilot approach in place working with Welsh Government and owners/stewards to establish a group contract to deliver public goods at a catchment scale.	Number of landowners with group contracts in place and area covered.	Government records.	Welsh Government has control over some form of post-Brexit rural support / payment for public goods.

4. Work plan

See document attached - Wales_4. Work Plan

5. Evidence base

See document attached – Wales_5. Evidence Base

August 2017

6. Testing interventions

Title:

Comparing vegetation restoration trajectories under standard conservation grazing regimes and under zero grazing.

Description of the intervention:

What are your objectives? What exactly is the technique or approach that you want to test? What is your hypothesis?

We want to test whether a period of 5 years of zero grazing on previously grazed semi-natural habitats (heathland and bog) is preferable for ecological restoration or whether continuous low level “conservation grazing” really is a better option. We will compare plant communities in conservation grazed sites, in sites where grazing is removed early in the project or 10m x 10m grazing exclosures and also on sites that have been under no grazing regimes for longer periods and control sites under conventional grazing management.

The hypothesis is that allowing a rest period of zero grazing for several years or even several decades on previously overgrazed sites on poor soils and in the uplands will enable ecosystem recovery to happen faster and the increase in biodiversity to be greater than under standard conservation livestock grazing regimes.

We anticipate passive restoration and naturalistic grazing to be prominent interventions, but applied to varying degrees in core and buffer zones. We are also fortunate to have several sites in the project area where grazing has been removed some years before the project started. We will test how these interventions influence vegetation recovery against control sites in our study region.

Relevance of the intervention and issue to landscape restoration

Is it a common restoration intervention of widespread relevance?

Grazing by domestic livestock is a widespread conservation management approach used in the UK. Removal of livestock altogether is a much rarer management decision. In part this is because many of our remaining habitats are the product of historical agricultural land use (habitats that couldn't survive grazing tend to have been replaced with something that could) so it is assumed that what has survived centuries of grazing represents the best that those sites could be and so continued control of natural succession becomes the aim. It is also partly because of the cultural attachment to what we know and partly the genuine desire to avoid rural depopulation and to support continued agriculture in order to prevent that.

Why is understanding this issue important?

There is still disagreement between different ecologists and between ecologists and farmers about whether grazing by livestock is essential/helpful or harmful for restoration and maintenance of natural habitats in the absence of native wild herbivores. Upland sites and sites with poor soils may respond better to zero grazing than lower sites and those with better soils or higher artificial nutrient levels which are more likely to become dominated by coarse vegetation such as bramble and bracken if grazing is removed. Taking better land out of grazing is also more challenging because in an area of generally poor agricultural land (mostly grade 4 and 5) those are the sites where food production is more viable economically. This study will focus on upland/poor soil sites where removal of grazing will have least impact on food production and where more positive biodiversity

impacts are anticipated. This part of Mid-Wales is unusual in that it has no established deer population although roe deer are starting to be seen slightly more often in the last 5 years. Much of the SSSI's and quite a lot of other land in the project area is subject to a conservation grazing regime as part of agri-environment schemes. More detailed information on the areas covered by conservation grazing both within and without SSSI's will be sought.

Is it common for initiatives to fail because this issue is not understood?

While this testing of an intervention isn't focused on SSSI's, that is where most interest has been in terms of the debate around grazing and conservation outcomes. Most SSSI's in Wales are still in unfavourable condition despite years of subsidised conservation grazing. There are a few (5) known sites in and around the project area – both designated and non-designated which have not been grazed for between 3 and 40 years¹⁸. Ecologists are generally enthusiastic about the rates of lower plant, heath and bog community regeneration on these ungrazed sites although some government ecologists responsible for SSSI management and many farmers remain largely unconvinced about the environmental benefits of reducing or removing grazing and farmers often comment that it has allowed *Molinia caerulea* (purple moor grass) to expand which is not considered useful either for farmers or wildlife. It is important to note that removal of grazing from unenclosed hill land and especially from common land is complicated where flocks of sheep have been hefted to a particular part of the hill over many generations because once they are removed it is not easy to replace them in the future and this contributes to the reluctance of farmers to go down this route. For this reason it will be necessary to construct exclusion plots on some sites but there also are some sites where grazing is being removed or has already been removed and some of these could be included.

Who will be interested in your results – and how will the results be shared?

We think that ecologists, both government and non-governmental will be interested in the results and farmers who are keen that their conservation management does deliver benefits and is recognised for that. We also think that Welsh Government will be interested if it has the potential to help bring more designated sites back into favourable condition. We will share the results with partners, government, farmers, farmers' representatives and ecologists via a research paper and a more accessible summary paper in partners' newsletters and on the project website.

Are you sure that the question has not already been answered?

Review papers indicate that there has been some work in this area but the scientific debate is clearly not settled and work hasn't been done on zero grazing in the project area. There is also still considerable debate locally about whether grazing is essential or indeed damaging for upland sites.

Review references:

- The Conservation Evidence page on removing grazing reports mixed results and concludes that more evidence is needed: Dicks, L.V., Ashpole, J.E., Dänhardt, J., James, K., Jönsson, A., Randall, N., Showler, D.A., Smith, R.K., Turpie, S., Williams D.R. & Sutherland, W.J. (2018) Farmland Conservation Pages 245-284 in: W.J. Sutherland, L.V. Dicks, N. Ockendon, S.O. Petrovan & R.K. Smith (eds) **What Works in Conservation 2018**. Open Book Publishers, Cambridge, UK. <https://www.conservativevidence.com/actions/150>
- Stuart, G.B. & Pullen A.S. (2008) **The relative importance of grazing stock type and grazing intensity for conservation of mesotrophic 'old meadow' pasture**. The Journal for Nature Conservation 16 pages 175-185

¹⁸ 2 sites 40 years, 1 site 22 years, 2 sites 10 years, plus one site 3 years – then 6 ponies in 350 acres were added this year.

Experimental design

The size and structure of the investigation:

We will create a database of sites that could be used with details of management (and management history where possible) and habitats before selecting specific sites. We will explore how the reduction of grazing affects vegetation community structure and plant diversity in upland sites and other sites with poor quality soils. Specifically, we will investigate how currently heavily grazed sites respond to two treatments: 1) low-level conservation grazing regimes, and 2) zero-grazing. These sites will be compared against control sites that remain at high grazing pressure. We will also explore vegetation structure and species diversity in sites that have not been grazed for longer periods (between 3 and 40 years) to assess the likely long-term implications of reducing grazing pressure.

Number of treatments/replicates:

Two or three paired sites – one of each pair being under standard NRW SSSI conservation grazing levels for that habitat and one of each pair being newly ungrazed. These can be either similar sites under different management or using fenced exclosures on otherwise grazed sites. If separate sites are used we will establish three 10mx10m plots on each site, if using exclosures on grazed sites we will establish six, paired 10x10m plots (so three pairs of plots), and fence one plot of each pair to exclude grazers. Vegetation within five quadrats in each plot will be monitored each year.

Additionally we will establish 15 vegetation sampling quadrats on one or two long term ungrazed sites and one or two traditionally grazed sites. We will need to control as far as possible for altitude, aspect, slope, exposure, drainage and soil/geology type.

In upland areas with poor soils that have recently been heavily grazed, three sites that implement conservation grazing regimes and three sites that implement zero-grazing will be selected. At each of these sites, three pairs of 10 x 10m sampling plots will be situated. Large herbivore exclosure fencing will be placed around one of each pair. Ideally it would be placed around both to account for any impact of the fencing itself and also on officially ungrazed sites to test whether stray livestock or rabbits are having a significant impact, but this is not essential. The vegetation structure of each plot will be mapped either using systematic ground measurements or a hand-held LiDAR device or SfM (Structure from Motion) using simple hand-held digital photography and appropriate software such as AGISoft. Within each 10 x 10m plot, five 1m² fixed quadrats will be randomly distributed. Within each quadrat, plant species will be identified and their cover recorded on the Domin scale. We will use these data to establish how the vegetation community in terms of structure and diversity responds to conservation grazing and zero-grazing management strategies. Fifteen 10 x 10m samples will also be established in sites that have not been grazed for 3 years or more. There may be opportunities to establish additional exclusion plots on sites that are currently more heavily grazed but the exact details of what is possible will need to be worked out once the project is fully operational.

Use of controls:

The controls will be the sites managed under standard conservation grazing regimes for a known period of time. These will be compared with sites where grazing has been removed at a known point in the past and where grazing is removed during the period of the project. In the case of fenced exclosures the vegetation will be surveyed before the fencing is completed as a baseline. Control sites will be established in areas of higher grazing pressure where management practices haven't changed as a result of the project.

Randomization:

Sites will be selected using a stratified random approach. Site shapefiles will be entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and random co-ordinates will be generated for each plot.

These co-ordinates will be entered into a hand-held GPS device to be located on the ground. Plots will be at least 200m apart from each other.

Location:

At this stage it isn't possible to locate all the sampling sites because outside partner owned land it will depend on landowner permission but we have several partner owned sites under a range of grazing regimes in the lowlands and in the uplands. See map of partner owned land for details.

Timetable Fixed point sampling sites will be established in each study region prior to the commencement of interventions to allow baseline data to be collected.

Each plot will be established (including the construction of enclosure fencing) and baseline vegetation structure and plant species diversity data will be collected in the summer of year one (2019). Sampling will be repeated every other year (or every year if MSc/ MRes students can be involved in data collection). Reports will be produced after each data collection period to monitor the trajectory of ecological recovery.

Analysis (use of statistics):

Species diversity indices will be calculated for each quadrat in each treatment. An ANOVA will be used to compare the species diversity between the two treatments (conservation grazing, zero grazing) and the control (heavy grazing). An ANOVA will also be used to compare the structural diversity (standard deviation of vegetation height) of the vegetation between the plots of the two treatments and the control sites. We will consider use of Principle Controlled Analysis (PCA) in addition.

Budget:

- Design, quality control, analysis and write up: 10 days @ £750 plus travel and subsistence = £8,500
- Fencing of enclosures: £365 each (x6 plots =£2,190, x9 plots =£3,285) in year 1
- Monitoring of quadrats: £150 / plot (x 12 plots = £1800, x 18 plots = £2700) to be done in years 1, 3 and 5 = £5,400 - £8,100
- Total cost: £19,885 (this may be reduced if MSc students can be involved in some of the work).

Responsibilities

Who will be responsible for conducting the investigation and carrying out the analysis?

Dr Chris Sandom of Sussex University will design the experiment, oversee the research and carry out the analysis.

Recording outcomes, write up and communication:

Local ecologists will be employed to collect field data and write up the results. The project communication staff will be responsible for sharing the results.

7. Team management

Overall responsibility and oversight for the S2S project lies with Rewilding Britain as programmatic lead and Woodland Trust as finance lead.

The S2S project partners, who have all been actively involved in designing and developing the project proposal, are jointly responsible for its implementation. They bring a combination of practical expertise as well as the land ownership required to ensure its effective delivery. These partners are: Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Wales Wild Land Foundation, The RSPB, Woodland Trust, Vincent Wildlife Trust, Marine Conservation Society, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau SAC, ecodyfi and The Waterloo Foundation.

A partnership **Steering Group** has been established with one lead person from each partner organisation. It has a strategic role to guide and review the development of the project and monitor its progress. The group will meet once a quarter to review progress, provide advice, troubleshoot where necessary and input into strategic decisions. As the project develops new partners may come on board who bring additional skills to the project at the discretion of the Steering Group.

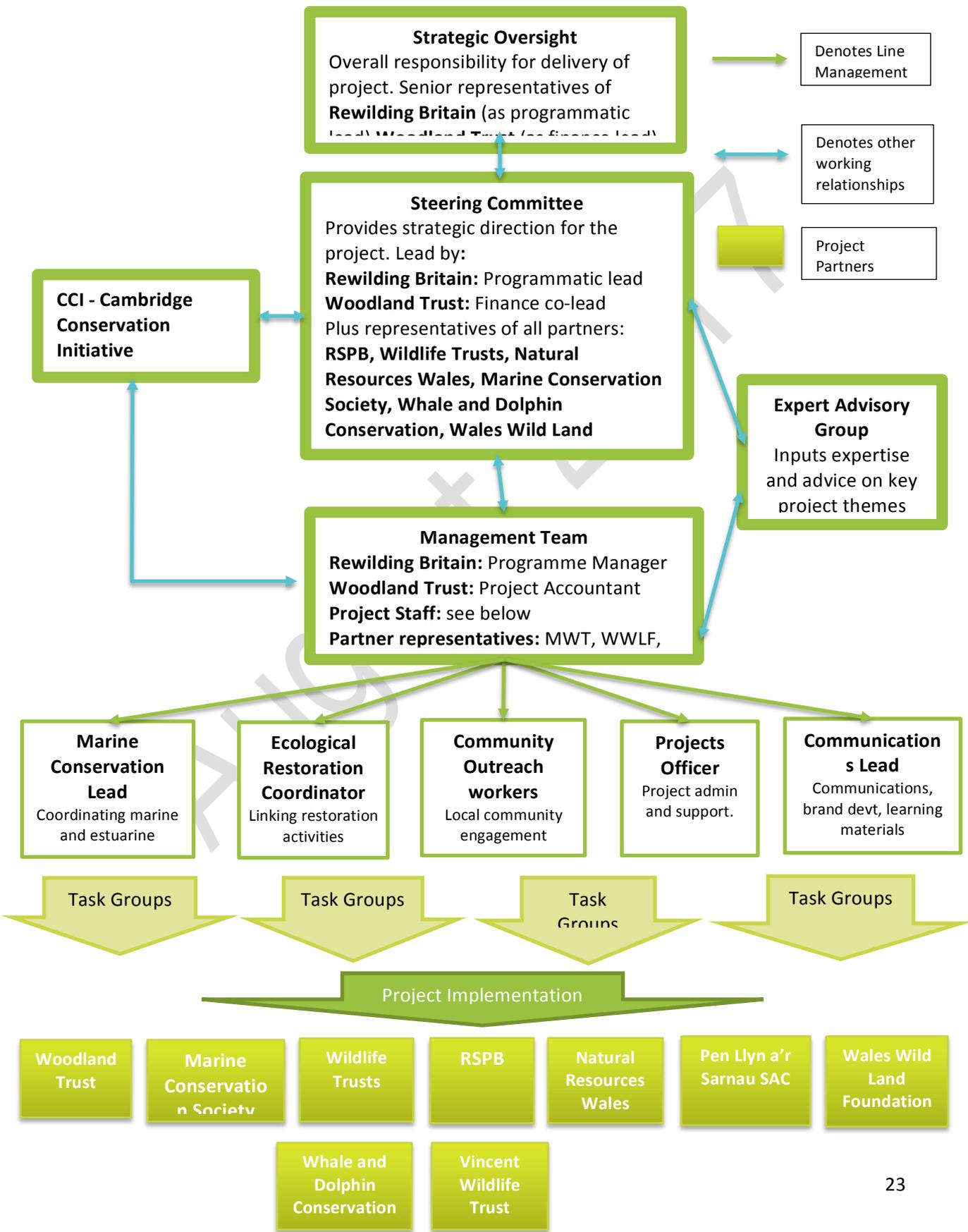
A **Management Team** has also been established to be led by the S2S Programme Manager recruited by Rewilding Britain. In close coordination with Woodland Trust's Director for Wales and Project Accountant, the role of this smaller group is to lead and coordinate the project's delivery. The team will be expanded through recruiting or seconding in an enterprise development specialist, community outreach workers, ecological restoration coordinator, communications lead and a Projects Officer. The team will also have a couple of partner representatives.

The division of initial responsibilities between the Steering Group and Management Group is described in the following table. These responsibilities will be further defined and a terms of reference agreed once the project team is in place.

Steering Group	Management Group
Members: All project partners – one lead person from each organisation	Members: Rewilding Britain Programme Manager, Woodland Trust Director for Wales, MWT, WWLF, NRW plus project staff.
Responsibilities: Review and sign-off project design. Agree Terms of Reference as group develops Review and sign off quarterly expenditure – financial oversight. Sign off and coordinating communications against agreed protocol/statements Report back to respective organisations Discuss and coordinate associated funding bids Risk management Consensus decision-making wherever possible – vote at organisation level if not possible	Responsibilities: Lead on and coordinate the delivery of the project. Ensure coherence and coordination of project activities across partnership. Coordinate Task Groups Report to the Steering Group Develop communications protocol Troubleshooting and opportunity spotting. Coordinate input from officers/contractors Discuss and coordinate associated funding bids Consensus decision-making wherever possible – if not refer up to Steering Group
Frequency of meeting:	Frequency of meeting:

Once a quarter	Monthly, can be by video conference
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The overall structure for the projects governance and management is described in the diagram below.



Rewilding
Britain

ecodyfi

Other future
partners/
landowners

As the project progresses, different partners will lead on different aspects, drawing on their own resources and expertise. **Task Groups** have been established to lead on specific thematic aspects of the project. For example, a Marine Task Group led by Marine Conservation Society, Whale and Dolphin Conservation and the Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau SAC are coordinating the marine elements of the project. A Monitoring Task Group will lead on monitoring and research with experts from Aberystwyth, Bangor, Exeter, Leeds and Sussex Universities. Other Task Groups will focus on business/economic development, community engagement/governance and species reintroductions. A **Grants Panel** will be established to ensure accountability and the effectiveness of sub-granting to partners.

The project will also benefit from the support of each partner's wider organisational capacity, for example practical expertise in ecological restoration, joint fundraising, communications and combined land acquisition strategies.

An **Experts Advisory Group** is also being established to provide reference group of people from across a range of disciplines who can contribute their knowledge and experience to guide the project. The Eden Project and Arup Engineering have offered technical support for business design. Shared Assets and Conservation Capital are providing advisory support on the development of governance models and business investment mechanisms for conservation. Rewilding Europe, Wild Europe and Tompkins Conservation are advising on international best practice. We are also inviting a number of senior, respected figures from within the Welsh policy and political environments.

8. Monitoring Plan

See document attached – Wales_8. Monitoring Plan

9. Communications Plan

Communication objectives

Vision:

S2S is a high profile demonstration of large scale ecological restoration in action, and inspires landowners, statutory bodies, local communities and policy makers to embrace this alternative model for land use and conservation.

Communications Outcomes:

1. S2S is embraced and supported actively in the local area, along with key partners and their supporter-base
2. Developing nature based enterprises and iconic low impact/ high yield tourism destination are increasingly recognised locally and nationally.
3. Welsh Government recognises and acknowledges the value of S2S in demonstrating and delivering national and international policies and commitments and policy/legislative mechanisms are in place which support delivery of S2S's long-term approach

Communications Objectives:

- A communications package and series of approaches, which present the elements of Summit to Sea (S2S) in a compelling, balanced and bilingual way, appropriate for target audiences and which inspires trust and optimism.
- A common brand and identity approach for S2S, appropriate for multi-stakeholder environment, and aligned with high profile partner brands, which creates a win-win situation in communications terms.
- Further audience analysis/understanding, and further message testing for external communications;
- Trusted messengers/champions; key messages; stories and images that support the vision of a workable model for conservation and land use.
- Digital and traditional media strategy (note light touch media in early phase)
- Establish a multi- stakeholder communications group to agree: overall approach; brand; activities; products, and do joint communications and media work

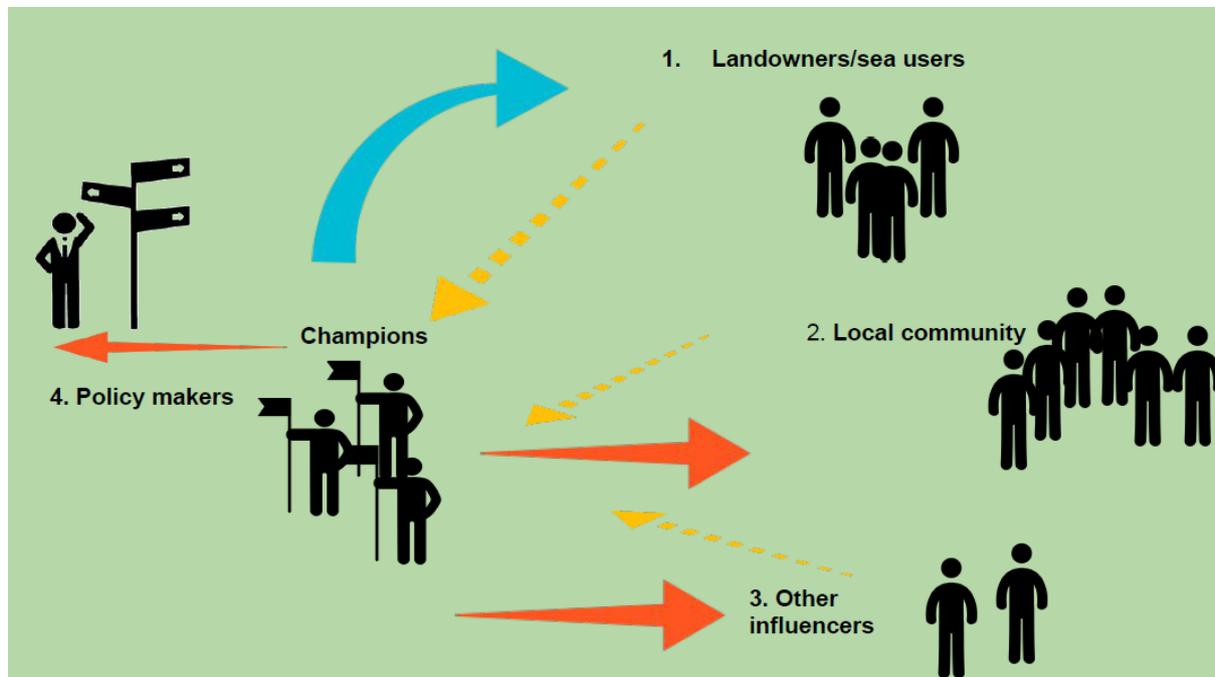
Target audiences (internal and external) and the makeup of each audience

- Primary audiences: landowners; farmers; tenant farmers; local fishers; people living and working in the pilot area
- Secondary audiences: Welsh/UK Government (policy makers); statutory bodies, and local influencers (councillors; local media etc.); staff and supporters of partner organisations; wider public and visitors to the area
- Local influencers e.g. media, local councillors, local entrepreneurs, existing local nature tourism attractions and events/conservation initiatives and low impact local accommodation; local ecologists/environmentalists etc.

A clear understanding of key stakeholder groups' values and personal needs/local challenges, as well as their existing commitments/activities, hopes and desires for the surrounding area is required in

order to engage and strengthen the target groups' commitment to collaborative work with Summit to Sea. Audience analysis and further message testing is required.

The supporter journey of these key audiences is illustrated in the following diagram:



Purpose of the communication for each audience

Empowering and engaging communications with farmers and fishers, alongside the wider local community is integral to the success of 'Summit to Sea'. Community involvement from the very beginning with peer-to-peer design from the bottom up across target audiences will play a key role in developing this initiative, and champion voices will have the potential to profoundly shift local support for this pioneering restoration project.

- **Farmers:** Brexit provides a timely opportunity to demonstrate a locally shaped approach to land management where wildlife; local economies and culture thrives
- **Fishers:** coastal communities face a very uncertain future, Summit to Sea could be of UK national significance for marine management, as well as economic regeneration. Join us.
- **Residents:** local employment and the future for communities are highly vulnerable, Summit to Sea will diversify local jobs and income streams, and celebrate a varied, living landscape, where food production; wildlife; tourism and Welsh culture thrives
- **Partners and their supporters:** by working together we can demonstrate a workable living land and seascape to reverse the decline in plants and animals, and restore the ecological functions on which we all depend
- **Influencers:** our community is experiencing increasing economic and cultural impoverishment, including insufficient employment to keep young people in the area and low incomes, with farming and fishing communities facing an uncertain future post-Brexit. Summit to Sea offers an opportunity to change this, and pioneer the way for other rural communities across the UK.

- **Policy Makers/Statutory Bodies:** demonstration of effective mechanisms for delivery of government policies such as Well-being of Future Generations Act. Potential for the model to be extended to other areas of Wales/UK.
- **Wider public:** a positive message of hope that our native ecosystems can be restored at a large scale in a way that benefits both people and nature.

Key communication messages and the content of the message

The call: By working together as a community, and with leadership from farmers and fishers, we can create wildlife-rich zones that complement existing farming and fishing practices, and provide additional opportunities for people living and working in the area.

Top line messaging:

- Our rural economy, culture and wildlife is facing a serious threat. Let's bring life back to our communities, land and sea!
- Despite significant efforts to restore habitats and secure local livelihoods, existing top-down blanket schemes have not been effective with farming and fishing communities having little say in the way they manage the land and sea.
- Summit to Sea is a flexible, nature-driven restoration of land and sea initiative, with the expertise of farmers and fishers at its heart. A 10,000ha area of land and 28,400ha of sea will create a naturally functioning ecosystem from the top of the highest mountain, Pumlumon, to the bottom of Cardigan Bay where wildlife is in abundance, while farming, fishing, and the wider local economy and culture thrives.

Tone: conservative; trustworthy; confident; empowering; respectful; inclusive; optimistic and balanced

Information sources

- Participatory video processes: provides a forum for local people to express and share their views about the project, their stories of the land/sea and their aspirations for the future.
- Project monitoring and testing intervention reports: provides real data linked to the S2S area of changes brought about by the project
- Other rewilding projects: trusted voices and stories from other nature based enterprises / nature driven restoration projects and communities living within iconic low impact tourist destinations.
- Research reports: demonstrating clear benefits to local economy, landowners, fishers and residents, as well as approach to key dependencies and risks e.g. impacts on local infrastructure.
- Land and marine management reports on restoration of ecological functions.

Communication milestones and measurements of success

Outcomes	Indicators/measures
<p>1. S2S is embraced and supported actively in the local area, along with key partners and their supporter-base</p>	<p>Reach and engage number of farmers, fishers and landowners in the project area.</p> <p>Number of farmers, fishers and members of the local community leaders embrace 'Summit to Sea' and become the messengers and local champions for functioning ecosystems that benefit all.</p> <p>A communications package and series of products/materials developed and disseminated e.g. website; descriptive case studies/visual storytelling; leaflets, newsletter, as well as film, community-led videoing etc.</p> <p>Local and Wales-wide media plan developed - light touch initially leading to high profile across UK. No. of: news clippings; radio and TV appearance per year; features and op eds; blogs</p> <p>Digital communications plan developed and active, with facebook groups; linkedin group plus digital engagement strategy</p> <p>No. of community meetings with local champions and visitors from other European rewilding projects (e.g. trusted voices of farmers, local residents)</p> <p>Community participatory design process is demonstrated via exhibition in venues with accompanying public meetings and participatory videos/screenings</p>
<p>2. Developing nature based enterprises and iconic low impact/ high yield tourism destination are increasingly recognised locally and nationally.</p>	<p>Mapping of existing enterprises and nature based activities/attractions securing visitors to the area achieved and celebrated via video/exhibition</p> <p>Community participatory design process is demonstrated with photography and community voice videos screened</p> <p>Build a brand and identity approach for S2S, which engages external and internal audience. Demonstrates multi-stakeholder environment, with high profile partner brands.</p> <p>Marketing Strategy developed and delivered</p>
<p>4. Policy/legislative mechanisms in place which support delivery of S2S's long-term approach</p>	<p>Organise exchange visits to successful rewilding projects in other countries for key influencers (e.g. local decision makers/journalists, Welsh celebrity)</p> <p>Launch research report on local economic benefits, with topline killer fact summary</p> <p>Secure champion influencers with public statements of support and face-to-face meetings with decision makers</p> <p>Roundtable panel discussions with Welsh Government; Welsh Tourism; Business networks etc.</p> <p>Media and digital engagement strategy if required. One high profile national media moment per year. Increased likes and followers on social media.</p>

August 2017

10. Community Engagement Plan

Over the last 18 months the project team has opened a dialogue about the potential of the Summit to Sea project with a wide range of stakeholder groups and individuals. For example, in July 2017 we brought a wide range of stakeholders together for a workshop to explore the possible benefits and costs of S2S and to begin to develop a shared vision. This workshop demonstrated broad interest in and support for the project's vision and for working together to continue to shape its design. It led to the establishment of the project's Steering Group.

We have spent the last 12 months following up with each participant to explore mutual areas of interest and gain further input into the project's development. Six subsequent partner/stakeholder workshops have been held as part of the participatory, stakeholder-led approach to the project.

One of those workshops was specifically focussed on engaging stakeholders in developing the project plans for community engagement and governance. This brought together those with experience of what works locally and those with external expertise to co-design a locally appropriate approach (see the end of this section for a list of those involved). With this group we carried out a broad stakeholder/community analysis. We then went on to define the principles of our approach, learning from what has worked locally, and to develop a more detailed engagement plan for the four key community/stakeholder groups including its objectives, methodology and timeline. These are described in the following sections.

Analysis of community groups and other stakeholders

The following table lists and describes local stakeholders according to the priority with which S2S should engage.

Stakeholder/ community	Description
High priority communities/stakeholders	
Landowning/farming families	Strong cultural identity. Concerned about and highly vulnerable to changes to their future livelihoods post-Brexit. Strong knowledge of local wildlife and cultural heritage. Openness to explore viable economic alternatives that provide income streams on + off-farm. Important to understand and respect the roles of both women and men in the family economy. There will be differences in priorities and ability to engage or commit to long term depending on whether landowning, tenant or commoner. Most farming families also have off farm employment, contract work or some form of on farm diversification such as renewable energy or B&B accommodation.
Young farmers groups	Same as above but tend to have less influence over the farm business model than older generations. More likely to have been away to college and/or to have travelled and worked abroad. Can bring new/different ideas and aspirations for future revenue generating opportunities.
Farmer representative groups	Represent and offer specialist advice to local farmers. Important stakeholder for reaching farmers, ensuring relevance of project for local landowners and gaining wider interest and support of members.
Fishers bodies	Represent local fishers and sea-users. Important stakeholder for ensuring relevance of project and gaining wider interest and support of members.
Dyfi Biosphere Reserve/	Other regional/partnership initiatives in the area with similar goals.

Cambrian Mountains Initiative	Important to ensure that there is synergy and coordination.
County Councils	Remit for local community engagement and consultation and for delivering on relevant government policies, e.g. Well-being of Future Generations Act.
Welsh Government	Critical to providing a supportive political environment which embeds S2S in the political landscape of mid-Wales and provides a framework for finance and delivery of key project goals. S2S can offer a pilot to demonstrate an effective delivery mechanism for key policies, e.g. Well-being of Future Generations Act.
Public sector	Critical to providing a supportive policy environment and delivery mechanisms to embed S2S. S2S in turn can help provide a pilot to demonstrate effective delivery of social, environmental and economic targets.
Economic development organisations	Focused on reaching out to the business community and supporting business development in the area, e.g. Chambers of Commerce
Community Councils	Local decision-making bodies. Community Councils have limited powers but important to involve to boost local involvement in decision-making. Councillors are usually well known in the community and can help to reach others in the community.
River fishing/angling community	Potential supporters of S2S because of their interest in river health and restoration (e.g. steady flow, insect life, fish stocks)
Key individuals with influence/champions	Important to get on board respected local people to act as champions and advocates for S2S from across community.
Elected representatives	Important to get their support as they are elected and mandated by local people. Can help boost sense of local ownership to the project.
Welsh language groups	Welsh cultural identity is extremely important to the area and these groups can help ensure that the project is sensitive to this and contributes to celebrating and strengthening this identity.
Tourism and outdoor activity fora/providers	There are many existing tourism initiatives and providers who could contribute towards and benefit from S2S as a destination
Visitors	This is a diverse group – from local day trippers to international tourists. It will be important to understand their profile and behavior – both current and potential. Recent work collated by Dyfi Biosphere indicates that visitors tend to come to the area repeatedly, tend to be older and often have friends or family living locally. Only 16% are coming for outdoor activities like mountain biking.
Existing community groups	There are many local community initiatives, such as the Clettwr Community Café, that S2S could link with and learn from.
Conservation NGOs	There are many land-owning conservation NGOs in the area who are already involved in ecological restoration activities. They are all actively involved in the project as partners and through the S2S Steering Group.
Medium priority communities/stakeholders	
Youth groups/forums	Apart from Young Farmers groups there are also many of the usual groups for children and teenagers such as scouts and guides, cadets, forest schools camp, Gwerin y Coed (the Welsh version of Woodcraft Folk) and groups connected with various sports including canoeing, sailing and horseriding. The Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme uses the project area for older groups doing silver or gold awards where they undertake long distance walks

Schools/higher education/local universities	All education provision is around the outer edges of the project area where there are larger population centres. Aberystwyth University, with its Institute of Biological, Environmental & Rural Sciences and Department of Geography & Earth Sciences has strong ecological interests. There are five secondary schools in the wider project area and 14 primary schools as well as pre-school/play groups. One of the high schools and several primary schools are Welsh medium schools and some are bilingual. There are also informal education providers such as forest schools.
Local rural and urban residents	Population centres, like schools are all around the outer edge of the project area. There is one medium sized town (Aberystwyth (population 18,000)), five much smaller towns (Machynlleth – 2,000; Llanidloes 3,000; Aberdovey- 1,300; Borth – 1,400 and Tywyn – 3,250) and up to 30 villages and hamlets. Apart from these the rest of the area is sparsely populated with farms, smallholdings and cottages. Many have lived in the same area for generations, especially amongst the farming communities. There are also a significant number who have moved into the area either with families for work or to retire. Most have a strong affinity for their immediate environment and a strong concern for the resilience of the local economy and society. The Western half of the project area has a much higher percentage of Welsh speakers than the Eastern part and it is strongest in the farming communities across the area.
Well-being/NHS	There is increasing interest in health/social prescribing linked to the natural environment providing an opportunity for S2S, and also in encouraging greater use of the natural environment by those not currently in the health/illness care system. The several providers of outdoor well-being services are loosely grouped together with NHS and other professionals in the Dyfi Biosphere Nature Based Health Network.
Utility/water/energy companies	Welsh Water are the most significant, with a treatment works at Bont-goch and a complex distribution system. Also present are Severn Trent, SSE, Statkraft (Hydro power) and various wind farm companies. Welsh Water and Statkraft own land and water resources in the area.
Nature/ wildlife/ heritage groups and enthusiasts	RSPB and Wildlife Trusts have volunteering groups, and there is a Conservation Corps at Aberystwyth University. There are many enthusiasts, and some lead walks etc at Caffi Cletwr in Tre'r Ddol. This group is mainly likely to be positive about the project and maybe able to contribute through volunteering in various aspects of the project.
Hunters/fox hunting groups	Fox hunting in the area is mainly done by farmers on foot or in vehicles with jointly managed packs of hounds or with lights and guns at night so relationships with them will be primarily through the farming sector. There are some pheasant and partridge shoots including one large one and a group on the estuary that shoot geese and ducks with voluntary controls. There isn't generally recreational hunting of wildlife.
Lower priority communities/stakeholders	
Second home owners	There are a lot of small areas of land linked to second homes in the area so there is some potential for engaging owners to undertake restoration activities on their land.
Transport sector	This group could benefit significantly from increased tourism in the area.
Remote supporters	These are people who might have a huge interest in the S2S vision and values and want to support it even if they never intend to visit.

Objectives

A vision of the scale of Summit to Sea requires a collective effort between landowners, communities, fishers, public bodies, NGOs, businesses, relevant experts and a wide range of the stakeholders identified. For the project to succeed it is essential that there is buy in from and ownership by local people – stewards of the land and sea, as well as the wider community – and that they help shape the project’s vision and values as well as having an on-going role in decision-making. A locally-led S2S Partnership will initially manage the project. By the end of the first 5 years this will be set up as a legal entity which has effective governance mechanisms, allows revenue and other benefits to be shared and can be self-sustaining in the long-term.

Our overall objective for community engagement is to see local communities and the wider public actively engaged in informing, shaping, monitoring and learning about S2S. The overall focus for the first 5 years will be to see:

- Participatory mechanisms in place for local people to input their knowledge, views and concerns to engage in shaping the project
- Increased knowledge, awareness and understanding of the cultural/natural heritage of the area and of S2S’s collective vision for the future.
- Projects to engage local people, schools, communities and cultural groups actively and volunteer in the project.
- Increased access to experiences of nature and wildlife that improve health and well-being

Community engagement plan

The core principles of our approach, learning from what works and doesn’t work locally, are:

- Take a gradual and personal “tea and cake” approach to building trust. Accept that this takes time and requires an active local presence.
- Explore what people want the future to look like to build up a vision for the area based on shared values that benefits both people and nature
- Don’t present a ‘done deal’ but do provide a clear proposition and provide locally appropriate and flexible incentives over the long-term
- Ensure that the approach is respectful of local cultural heritage and is bi-lingual in Welsh and English using the local dialect
- Deal openly and transparently with problems and conflicts or that arise and find mutually agreeable solutions.
- Work with and learn from other local/regional initiatives and expertise wherever possible.

Focused on four key stakeholder groups the methodology and timeline of activities of the community engagement plan are described in the Table: Community Engagement Plan that follows. Some aspects of this plan will need further development and will be extended to other stakeholder groups as the project develops.

Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for coordinating community engagement across the S2S Partnership will lie with the S2S team. Community Outreach Worker/s will be recruited with the specific purpose of building relationships and trust in the community and implementing the engagement plan. We will also work with other local initiatives, such as the Dyfi Biosphere Partnership, Cambrian Mountains Initiative and tourism fora, to ensure that there active collaboration and synergy with their work. We will also engage local expertise wherever possible and build local capacity to provide a lasting skills base. The work will be coordinated through a Community Engagement Task Group so that the different contributions and expertise can be coordinated effectively.

Those with specific responsibilities include:

S2S Programme Manager	Strategic oversight and coordination with other elements of S2S project
S2S Community Outreach Worker/s	Building relationships and trust in the community, partnership coordination and implementing the community engagement plan.
Project Partners	Partners all have valuable experience of community engagement. Each will be involved through the S2S Steering Group and will input specific experience as the plans develop.
Marine Conservation Society	Lead on use of the Community Voice Methodology
Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC Officer	Lead on community outreach activities with sea-users
Insight Share	Lead on participatory video techniques and training.
Shared Assets	Advisory support on governance mechanisms
Conservation Capital	Advisory support on governance and community benefit sharing mechanisms.

In addition those who have had an active involvement in shaping the community engagement plan (e.g. participating in the design workshop) and an on-going role in its implementation include:

- Alicia Leow-Dyke (Welsh Beaver Project Officer, Radnorshire Wildlife Trust);
- Alison Hargrave (Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau SAC Officer);
- Andy Rowland (Ecodyfi);
- Arwel Jones (Regional development consultant)
- Bruce Stanley (Local innovation coach);
- David Bavin (Vincent Wildlife Trust);
- Emyr Davies (Farmers Union for Wales);
- Sue Ling (Powys County Council);
- Linda Ashton (National Resources Wales);
- Esther Wakeling (Cambrian Mountains Initiative);
- Fiona Walker (RSPB);
- Hannah Gardiner (Shared Assets);
- Huw Denman (independent forester);
- Iolo Ap Gwynn (Dyfi Biosphere Partnership, Chair);
- Jane Powell (Dyfi Biosphere – education, people and food programme);
- Kim Williams (Wildlife Trusts);
- Neil Birnie and Glen Jeffries (Conservation Capital);
- Peter Richardson (Marine Conservation Society);
- Sara Asadullah (Insight Share);
- Sophie Wynne-Jones (WWLF and Bangor University);

Table: Community Engagement Plan

Key Community/ Stakeholder Group	Methods of Engagement		
	Initial contact (first 6 months)	Active participation (years 1-3)	On-going engagement (years 3-5)
For all groups	Develop simple, compelling narrative for S2S for early messaging – building on strong cultural identity and local stories, bi-lingually in Welsh and English	Establish website, facebook pages and other social media channels to act as portals for regularly sharing information as the project develops	Ensure on-going opportunities for local people to feed in ideas and concerns are built into S2S governance mechanisms.
Farmers/landowners	Raise awareness and share information about S2S through farming union newsletters. Continue to hold one-to-one on farm conversations to introduce S2S, build consensus and discuss any dissonances Start to work with specific groups (e.g. young farmers) to explore and record their perspectives on key themes of S2S through participatory video	Develop clear business case to present S2S income generating opportunities Meet with interested landowners and support the development of on-farm business plans Build trust through frequent, consistent, accessible contact between farmers/landowners + S2S outreach workers Extend the participatory video project for local groups to explore & express their connection with the land, producing 3 short films, and a screening event Support farm clusters to enable local farmers to work collectively towards an agreed vision.	Actively involve local project ‘champions’ in on-going engagement activities Access long term business development support and training Ensure farmers + representative groups have strong voice within S2S governance mechanisms, e.g. feeding their views in through farmer clusters.
Fishers/sea-users – marine and freshwater	Build on initial one-to-one meetings with sea-users and their representative bodies to discuss S2S and develop relationships	Carry out Community Voice Method with sea-users to explore shared values and inspire deeper engagement. Extend the use of the CVM approach to a freshwater river catchment.	Develop on-going sea-user engagement through agreeing co-management of marine area to support seabed recovery.
Schools, community groups, residents	Raise awareness of project through multiple local channels. Develop links with schools, schools + cultural outreach programmes, community groups to co-develop engagement activities. Start to document and share people’s stories and hopes for the area and its wildlife, e.g.	Develop on-going dialogue with and through community councils as project develops. Engage with people in creative industries locally to develop events/materials to help tell the story. Develop schools/universities outreach projects/education packs and engage them in	Provide training and capacity building in participatory video techniques to leave a lasting skills base Work to boost on-going local engagement in decision-making, e.g. through community councils. Establish on-going events, e.g. annual

	<p>videos</p> <p>Develop links with community councils and other representative bodies</p>	<p>project activities, e.g. citizen's science.</p> <p>Engage wider communities in specific campaigns linked to project, e.g. litter picking/beach cleaning, to raise awareness and sense of local ownership.</p> <p>Include local groups as part of participatory video project (see above)</p> <p>Provide training for up to 12 local people in participatory video facilitation.</p>	<p>S2S festival, to continue people's involvement</p>
<p>Tourism providers and tourists</p>	<p>Develop suitable name/branding that resonates and inspires both locally and nationally/internationally in English and Welsh</p> <p>Use existing channels of communications - e.g. tourism fora – to share information about S2S</p> <p>Build links with tourism organisations and providers</p>	<p>Work with tourism fora and providers to develop coordinated destination and infrastructure development planning</p> <p>Ensure that tourism offer both informs and inspires local and national/ international tourists about the S2S vision and narrative</p>	<p>Develop and agree a tourism charter linked to the vision and values</p>

August

11. Capacity development

The Summit to Sea team is yet to be fully established and therefore it is difficult to define priority areas for capacity development at this stage. Once the team is in place a skills audit will be carried out and key capacity development areas defined. The team commits to producing a capacity development plan and will submit this to ELP within the first 3 months of the project's start date.

12. Business plan for social enterprise

Overview of business development process

The development of a clear business model/case for a nature-based economy which provides stable revenue opportunities compared with the current situation and future alternatives is a key element of the Summit to Sea project. To scope the feasibility of this approach S2S commissioned Conservation Capital to carry out an initial assessment of the potential for landowners and communities to transition to a new, growing, more stable, less subsidy-reliant nature-based economy that still retains agriculture and forestry at its core. Its initial assessment, was that, for agricultural landowners in particular, a nature-based economy *'would provide improved and stable revenue opportunities'*¹⁹. This would be based on the following market elements:

1. Food and natural products – including high nature value livestock production, harvesting and commercialising natural products
2. Tourism – linked to an iconic, exciting, outdoors tourism regional destination with integrated marketing and business planning across the land and seascape.
3. Forestry - under alternative silvicultural practices such as irregular forest management (including continuous cover forestry (CCF) and Low Impact Silvicultural Systems)
4. Payments for public goods/ecosystem services (PES) - to capture the benefits derived from environmental services and channel them to natural resources managers who generate these services

Based on this initial assessment we have held a number of meetings and workshops to further test out whether 1) there is a genuine business case for a 'nature-based' economy and 2) there is local interest in exploring it as a viable land/sea management alternative. These have included:

- Site visit with Eden Project, TYF Group, Pukka Teas plus Natural Resources Wales and an interested local farmer to discuss the business potential of Summit to Sea.
- Workshop hosted by Arup with staff from across their disciplinary teams to discuss the business/economic model
- Design Workshop with local partners/stakeholders to develop and design the business planning process for Summit to Sea including Cambrian Mountains Initiative, Farmer's

¹⁹ See Section 2: Theory of Change for more detail on this assessment

Union for Wales, Business Wales, Natural Resources Wales, County Council, ADAS and Conservation Capital²⁰

It was generally agreed that Brexit is likely to have a significant negative impact on local livelihoods – particularly in relation to the future of farm subsidies and sheep production if there is no access to the single market. Future farm subsidies are highly likely to be orientated towards the provision of public goods²¹. The area is also facing significant local government cuts (potentially affecting the 26% of the population employed by local government), centralisation of services often to bigger centres outside of the area and the out-migration of young people to find work. It was also agreed that the area has amazing natural and cultural assets of which local people are rightly proud. They have strong local knowledge of the wildlife and cultural traditions.

Within this context there was broad support for exploring potential scenarios for a largely nature-based economy where this could provide diverse, resilient, alternative livelihoods that support local communities and culture. Participants highlighted a number of key factors in its success:

1. Local ownership – by building a shared vision that respects local values and aspirations and advocates for locally appropriate solutions.
2. Strong brand/narrative – based on a clear values proposition that blends local cultural identity/language with a suggestion of future that ‘remains to be made’ in a way that excites and inspires people beyond the S2S area.
3. Collaboration – by dovetailing with existing government and private sector initiatives, partnerships and businesses whilst bringing in new enterprise/investment potential.

It was agreed that the next stage will be to carry out full feasibility studies and market research to explore different scenarios linked to the four market elements identified. Some of the questions identified by participants in the design process that these studies will need to answer are:

- What is the potential to increase existing income streams and generate new ones?
- What is the potential to develop local markets? What are we selling and to whom?
- How much and what type of tourism is desirable? How will visitors be maintained through the year?
- How to ensure the business model supports flourishing nature and wildlife?
- What can we learn from existing and past initiatives locally?
- How will the S2S entity pay for itself after 5 years to ensure sustainability? How can it add value to individual businesses e.g. premium prices, routes to market? What mechanisms will be needed for businesses to economically collaborate?
- What skills and capacities will local businesses need to engage in and benefit from this?
- How can jobs be created for young people to stay in the area?
- Will there be conflicts between different income streams and activities? How will these be handled?
- How many people might benefit economically and in what ways through S2S and its multiplier effect?

In the following section we describe the business design and planning process that S2S will use.

²⁰ Full list of participants: Cate Barrow (ADAS); Adam Thorogood (Woodland Trust); Rebecca Wrigley (Rewilding Britain); Hannah Scrase (Summit to Sea); Dafydd Wyn Morgan (Cambrian Mountains Initiative); Neil Birnie and Glen Jeffries (Conservation Capital); Arwel Jones (Regional development consultant); Bruce Stanley (facilitator); Nick Fenton (Farmers Union for Wales); Emyr Davies (Farmers Union for Wales); Rowan Jones (Business Wales); Wendy Abel (Mid and North Wales Destination Network); Andy Rowland (ecodyfi); Gwenfair Owen (Ceredigion County Council); Greg Jones (NRW)

²¹ This is explored further in Section 2: Theory of Change

August 2017

S2S Business design and planning process

A small Business Design Team is being established led by the Summit to Sea Management Team with local partners and advisory support from external expertise, primarily Conservation Capital and Eden Project plus specific sectoral expertise.

Business feasibility and design (years 1 and 2):

- Start to develop a cohesive narrative thread/identity for S2S that integrates local values and aspirations with a strong vision for ecological restoration and economic renewal on land and sea (in coordination with participatory community engagement activities).
- Work with existing local and regional enterprises and initiatives to develop synergies, explore how S2S can add value and build collaboration around the development and delivery of the project.
- Carry out detailed feasibility studies and market analyses for all relevant economic sectors for scenarios linked to the S2S vision and project outcomes – analysing local, regional and (where appropriate) national/international market contexts.
- For forestry sector work with Natural Resources Wales to commission an independent study to determine scenarios and feasibility for forest management that delivers the greatest overall benefits for Welsh Government policy delivery and for the people of Wales. The indication from NRW is that radical change to forest management is possible on their estate if the evidence is there to support it.
- Develop an overall business case or ‘masterplan’ of activities linked to the S2S vision in close collaboration with project partners and key stakeholders. This will include the enterprise driven ecological and conservation outcomes for the project and concept designs for Phase 1 infrastructure.
- Start to develop a S2S destination brand and associated marketing strategy.

Business development support and financing (years 2 to 5):

- Support development of farm business plans with interested landowners linked to nature-based enterprises and working with existing initiatives, e.g. Farmer’s Unions, Menter a Busnes, Business Wales, farmer ‘clusters’ etc.
- Work with Natural Resources Wales in response to forest management study towards implementing model which provides biodiversity and habitat connectivity for landscape and recreation benefits as well as continuing to produce commercial timber under lower impact silvicultural systems.
- Present business case to Welsh Government to support a pilot scheme for a group contract for delivery of public goods as part of their post-Brexit agricultural support package for the area and work with Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust and ADAS to further develop this and integrate it with the local corporate PES scheme they are developing.
- Define a governance plan which includes all aspects of community benefit sharing and revenue generation for the core Summit to Sea project.
- Build financial business plans to develop existing and any new enterprises linked to S2S vision, ensuring that ecological outcomes are fully incorporated. Identify and engage with local, regional, national and international entrepreneurs to develop these enterprises. Work with the identified entrepreneurs to determine the scale and type(s) of finance required to develop their enterprises - including grant finance and all forms of relevant environmental/social impact driven commercial finance.

- Identify and design synergies between individual enterprises in order to ensure the greatest possible collective impact at 'destination' and 'brand' level. Including ensuring a 'premium' gained through association with S2S and local procurement of local goods and services.
- Identify and engage with a variety of investors / financiers to explore their interest in financing the identified enterprises and to helping to finance a loan fund.
- Link with local providers of skills development and training programmes to ensure that local capacity is built linked to jobs created through the project and its multiplier effect.
- Mentor and support entrepreneurs to ensure that their enterprises successfully generate conservation, economic and social outcomes.

Risks and Assumptions

There are, as yet, no precedents for a nature-based economy at this scale in Wales. We have carried out an initial assessment of its potential and tested the business/economic model proposed with relevant local and external expertise. However, there are still inherent risks with taking a pioneering approach of this kind. These risks, and the risk reduction strategies, are identified in detail in Section 18: Risk Assessment under Outcome 2: Nature-based economy.

13. Re-introductions and translocation

The Summit to Sea (O'r Mynydd i'r Môr) project aims to restore an area of land and sea centred on the northern Cambrian Mountains region of Mid-Wales at a sufficient scale to allow natural processes to restore and sustain a diversified nature-based economy. Part of this project seeks to facilitate the expansion of native species populations as well as plans for the reintroduction of a number of key missing species where there is strong local support and a full assessment of feasibility.

The reintroduction of species to an area where they have been extirpated, or the reinforcement of species that are still present but genetically threatened due to low population numbers, requires a thorough ecological assessment following the IUCN Guidelines. A forum has been initiated to share expertise, co-ordinate consultations and peer review proposals to ensure that all project partners proposing to carry out species restoration are following the same, approved protocols and that IUCN guidelines are being adhered to. In addition to partners working on bringing back species on their own sites the forum will be supported by The Vincent Wildlife Trust as technical specialists.

14. Land purchase

The overall framework for Summit to Sea's land acquisition strategy is as follows:

Existing land ownership by Summit to Sea partners in the area

There are approximately 5,300ha of land relevant to the project and owned by organisational partners²². This is made up of 1,287ha owned by NGO partners and approximately 4,000ha of relevant land owned by NRW. In addition to this there approximately is 1,300ha owned by interested private individuals and another 300ha under negotiation.

Additional land needed to reach target of 10,000ha under restoration

Approximately another 5,000ha will need to be brought into the project within 5 years. There are approximately 60,000ha in the project area in total and most of it is Grade 4 or 5 (poor agricultural land) or forestry and this is where the project will focus its efforts where it will have least impact on food production. There is some Grade 3B land towards the coast and a very small amount of Grade 3A land and this will not be targeted unless in exceptional cases a small area is critical for connectivity between sites.

Outline strategy for land purchase

We will seek to work with existing landowners in most cases but we do anticipate that some particularly strategic land purchases will be an important part of the project. Having several partners who own land within the project area is more feasible and politically acceptable than a single entity which aims to buy up large areas to create a single holding. However, we will need to ensure that there are strong governance and decision-making mechanisms between participating landowners as well as mechanisms to secure conservation benefits in the long term.

Summit to Sea will in time establish a legal entity which can undertake property transactions and hold land titles but we also anticipate initial land purchases being made by, and titles held by, project partners. In some cases partners may be negotiating with neighbouring landowners to acquire specific parcels of land off market in order to connect up or enlarge their existing holdings. In other cases a parcel of land of interest to the project may come on to the open market. In both cases we will consider the questions listed at the end of this section to guide a decision on land acquisition.

Until a long-term arrangement is made the preferred option will be for a project partners to take on the title and management of any new sites. In cases where this is not possible the project may try to identify sympathetic private third parties to purchase land parcels. We will explore the use of current and future legislation to support conservation covenants or other arrangements to work with landowners to secure conservation benefits in the long term.

Priority will be given to land which is: agricultural grade 4 or 5 or non-agricultural; which connects or contributes to connecting existing partner owned land or expands a core area; which has been on the market for some time at a reasonable price (evidence that we are not competing with local

²² NRW own over 9,000 ha in the project area including 2000 ha which could potentially be part of a core area and another 2,000 which could potentially be part of a buffer zone, much of the rest is commercial forestry plantations and not likely to be part of the project. RSPB have four parcels of land totalling 850Ha acres all close together around Ynys Hir reserve. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust have two reserves (Glaslyn and Cors Dyfi) totalling 247 hectares. Wildlife Trusts South and West Wales have one woodland reserve Coed Clettwr 16.4 Ha. The Wales Wild Land Foundation and Woodland Trust have one parcel of land (Cefn Coch which is 350 acres). The Woodland Trust have two other sites totalling 33 Ha.

farmers); where acquiring the site is an opportunity to restore or protect habitat which is not adequately protected by legislation and common practice (i.e. restoration or long term protection is unlikely unless the land is acquired); where a partner can take on any site management or restoration required and where the answers to the guiding questions below don't throw up major concerns.

Land purchase decisions – guiding questions:

- Is it good agricultural land (Grade 1-3B)? Are there local farmers trying to buy it? If yes – is it critical for the success of the project?
- Who is affected by the purchase? Are there any de facto or de jure user rights connected to the purchased site (including rights of way) which are affected?
- Who will hold the land/rights title? Is the partner proposing the purchase in a position to purchase and manage the site for conservation purposes in the long-term? How is the title holder governed? How will decisions be made on future use of the site and its resources?
- Will any conditions be attached to the site to ensure its use for conservation purposes in perpetuity?
- How are any neighbours affected by the purchase or transfer of rights?
- Does purchase of the site bring any obligations? Are there any covenants attached to the site?
- How will the costs of land management and protection be met long-term?
- Does the purchase price represent good value?
- Is this likely to be best use of available acquisition funds?
- Is the partner bringing match funding to the purchase or can the funds be used to leverage additional funding for this site?

15. Harmonisation and scaling-up

Harmonisation

The Summit to Sea project is the first of its scale and scope in Wales and the UK. However, there are similar but smaller ecological restoration projects within the project area and also parallel landscape-scale projects operating in Mid-Wales which overlap with the Summit to Sea project boundaries. At the core of the Summit to sea project is a will to collaborate with existing projects and initiatives, to work together to strengthen and multiply the impacts of work that is already taking place. The main forum for this collaborative approach has been the project's Steering Group, made up of representatives from organisations already carrying out similar work. Steering Group meetings and project partner workshops are already facilitating collaboration between existing initiatives working on ecological restoration and rural development. The S2S project aims to create a multiplier effect by bringing smaller, isolated projects together to facilitate a greater partnership.

As a Rewilding Britain led project, S2S is one of a series of projects that are planned for the British Isles, including parallel projects in England and Scotland. The board of Rewilding Britain are well connected with other landscape scale restoration and rewilding projects across the UK and Europe and are committed to bringing learning and ideas from these to support the development of S2S.

Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust – Pumlumon Project

The Pumlumon project run by the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust also aims to restore the upland landscape of Mid Wales in the same area as the Summit to Sea project but not extending as far as

the coast and not including the marine element. Montgomery Wildlife Trust is a project partner in Summit to Sea and is working closely with the project team to feed into and support the project's aims. The elements of the Pumlumon project: to restore peatlands, reconnect habitats, store flood water, restoring wildlife, changing grazing patterns, recreating habitats, developing green tourism and involving communities are all shared with the project aims of summit to sea. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust has been involved in project design in the early stages of the Summit to Sea project and in this involvement facilitates harmonisation between the two projects. In particular we are collaborating on engagement with farmers and on a public and private sector Payment for Ecosystem Services approach.

Cambrian Mountains Initiative

The Cambrian Mountains Initiative works to enable sustainable rural development within the geographical area of the Cambrian Mountains. Over the years the organisation has established strong partnerships with farming communities and the private sector, fostering collaboration between these stakeholders particularly in the development of branding and marketing for farm products such as meat and wool. Currently the CMI are working on a feasibility study for establishing something akin to a French style "parque naturelle" across the Cambrian Mountains. This project will create a framework for protecting and promoting natural resources, rural communities and cultural heritage by supporting sustainable land use underpinned by novel economic development. There is a lot of overlap here with S2S's aim to develop a nature-based economy and plenty of potential for the two projects to work in unison to support rural development in upland farming communities. We meet frequently with the CMI team and attend each other's workshops wherever possible.

Dyfi Biosphere

The Dyfi Valley and Aberystwyth area is designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This means that 840 square kilometres of land and sea are brought together under the vision for uniting the natural environment and the communities who live and work within it. The Dyfi Biosphere has aims to support nature conservation, sustainable economic development and a strong bi-lingual culture, all of which resonate with the objectives of the S2S project. However, where there is overlap, there is also potential for confusion and duplication with both initiatives aiming to work with the farmers and fishers in the area. Since our stage 2 application, ecodyfi, the local regeneration organisation supporting the Dyfi Biosphere and its main delivery partner, has come on board as a project partner with a strong intention to collaborate. Maintaining a close working relationship between the two projects will establish opportunities for harmonising our interventions and working collaboratively.

Cambrian Wildwood

Cambrian Wildwood is a project run by the Wales Wild Land Foundation and focuses on a 140 hectare site called Bwlch Corog in the northern Cambrian Mountains. The aim of the project is to use rewilding principles to restore the upland habitat currently dominated by Purple moor grass. This will be done by blocking drainage grips in order to allow wetter areas to revert to blanket bog and also to introduce light grazing by Konik horses which will break up the sward of Molinia, allowing heather moorland to re-establish. Tree planting will provide a native seed source, creating a mosaic of bog, moor and woodland. There are plans to acquire more land to extend the area of the project and also to work with neighbouring landowners to link up a larger area of habitat. These aims and ambitions are the same as those of S2S differing except that that they are currently focused on a specific site and don't have an economic development remit. S2S will work at a larger scale creating links between Cambrian Wildwood land and that owned by other partners. The success of Cambrian Wildwood will provide a useful case study that could support the recruitment of more sites and partners across the S2S project area. Wales Wild Land Foundation are project partners.

Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

The S2S project will enable the southward extension of projects that are currently taking place in the northern part of the marine SAC. The SACs Relevant Authorities Group is a working group of organisations who all have a stake in the management of the SAC, this provides a good collaborative forum through which to guide the development of the marine elements of the Summit to Sea project and the way in which the project's interventions can complement work already taking place in the area. The SAC officer will also provide a dedicated individual who can collaborate with the S2S project team to ensure harmonisation. Fisheries Local Action Groups are already a successful forum for stakeholder engagement and will be used within S2S to work with fisher and coastal communities in the project area.

Policy Relevance/Integration

The S2S project has been developed in the context of the UK and Wales leaving the European Union and the ongoing political uncertainty surrounding how Brexit is to be implemented. What we can count on is that there will be a decoupling from the Common Agricultural Policy, which has provided the framework for land management in the UK since its inception 55 years ago, and that there will be uncertainty about the long-term future of other EU environmental legislation such as the Habitats Directive. The result of this uncertainty at a UK level will be a reliance on overarching international environmental agreements to drive domestic conservation action such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). For Wales this foregrounds the importance of recent legislation focusing on ecosystem resilience and sustainability such as the Environment Act and Well-being of Future Generations Act. These recent policy developments in Wales mean that a project of the scope and scale of Summit to Sea is highly relevant for putting into practice much of the theory behind this new and fairly radical and progressive Welsh legislation. A detailed assessment of how the Summit to Sea project is embedded within this political and policy landscape and the opportunities this provides is included in Section 2: Theory of Change under 'Assessment of relevant post-Brexit policy reforms'.

Several S2S partner organisations have dedicated staff working on policy research and government lobbying. Many sit on various boards and advisory panels such as Wales Environment Link and Woodland Strategy Advisory Panel, meaning that the project will be well represented at a policy level. Co-lead project partner, The Woodland Trust, is working to lobby the Welsh Government to create a Sustainable Land Management policy which will underpin the development of post-Brexit land management support tied to the delivery of public goods through increased ecosystem resilience.

Scaling up

The project builds on lessons learnt in a wide range of landscape restoration projects which are ongoing in the UK which many of our partners have been involved in but in the breadth and depth of its scope and scale S2S is a pioneering project that has no past or present analogue in the UK. It will provide a ground-breaking model for conservation and land use that could potentially be replicated in other areas of Wales and the UK. The experience gained from the process of ecological and economic restoration will feed into a body of knowledge that can be used for similar restoration initiatives across other rural landscapes both nationally and internationally. Rewilding Britain has plans to catalyse landscape scale projects elsewhere, at the very least one in each of Scotland and England. The rich learning opportunity that S2S provides will be exploited in order to guide the creation of a UK network of rewilding/ecological restoration projects.

The initial 5 year funded programme will focus on a 10,000ha area of land and a 28,400ha area of sea but we see this project as very long term. This transition stage is intended to galvanize land owners, sea users, public bodies and NGOs to work together to enable ecological processes to evolve at scale whilst the foundations of a nature-based economy are established. The plan is to use the impetus and opportunity provided by the initial ELP funding to leverage additional investment

into the area and the project, for example in relation to eco-tourism and forest restoration. As the project gathers momentum through the transition stage, the reliance on subsidy and grant funding is expected to be gradually replaced by a more robust nature-based economy which can provide a more sustainable financial mechanism to perpetuate ecological restoration. It is important that the seeds of this economic development are sown at the outset of the project through innovative business plans, diversification of income streams and the creation of novel supply chains tied to rural businesses. The proposed Summit to Sea entity, once it is established, will have a bespoke governance mechanism that will provide a structure to enable decision making, absorb new members and direct the sharing of knowledge and resources as the project grows.

Beyond the transition phase, there will be an opportunity to bring in more stakeholders from a wider land area in order to expand the project's spatial scope. There are long term plans to expand the terrestrial project area to encompass up to 60,000 hectare land area with an on-going co-management agreement over the whole of the marine area. This will be done through active outreach to stakeholder communities, leading by example and peer to peer inspiration. S2S makes an offer and creates an opportunity for land owners within a period of uncertainty and change, if the transition phase is successful then the interventions and project mechanisms could be scaled up by bringing in more stakeholders from the wider project area to take advantage of the ecological and economic opportunities that the project provides.

16. Exit strategy and sustainability

The Summit to Sea project has been designed to initiate enduring long-term changes in the management of natural resources, changes that allow resilience to return to the landscape and the communities that rely upon it. The initial 5 year funded period of the project is seen as a transition phase to catalyse a process of action and innovation in the project area. From the outset, interventions supported by the project will be designed and implemented with sustainability in mind so that the initial funding really does act as a catalyst for long term change and isn't dependent on continually finding similar levels of grant funding.

There is no intention to end the project after just five years. We see the transformation of the landscape as taking decades for the full benefits to be achieved, so there won't be an "Exit" as such. However, we do recognise the impact of having substantial up front funding, with the capacity that that brings for a limited period of time, and the risks to the project that this introduces when that funding ends. There are two particular project mechanisms that will ensure an enduring project legacy and that interventions are economically and ecologically sustainable: establishing a locally-led Summit to Sea entity for the project's on-going governance and management and establishing a resilient nature-based economy. Broadly speaking, these two mechanisms will provide continuity and financial support to sustain the project's impact as the initial funding ends.

A Summit to Sea partnership has already been established, coordinated through a Steering Group. This provides the initial decision-making structure to guide the roll-out of actions and interventions. The partnership is a forum for the project's multi-stakeholder, interdisciplinary approach. A key milestone of this group will be to lead on the creation of a common vision for ecological restoration and the economic framework that will power this. We anticipate that by the end of the five years a locally-led Summit to Sea entity (e.g. a charity and/or social enterprise company) will be established and leading the project (employing people and handling finances). The aim in the longer term is that this S2S entity will have a small, agile management/administration team that coordinates on-going ecological restoration activities and supports marketing and investment/business development

across the area. This entity should be self-sustaining within 15-20 years through mechanisms such as business/conservation levies and fees (e.g. small percentage of increased profit received by businesses and fees for marketing support) supplemented with available grant/government funding when necessary/available.

The sustainability of the transition to a nature-based economy is explored in detail in Section 2: Theory of Change but financial forecasting carried out by Conservation Capital suggest that it could provide stable revenue for landowners and sea-users providing that the building blocks are put into place early on. We will be working to attract significant inward investment into the project, the project area and in the businesses associated with it. We are already working with Welsh Government, Conservation Capital, The Eden Project, Arup, The Waterloo Foundation and private individuals to explore specific options for this. The project budget will not be used to create dependency amongst stakeholders but will support the development of economic resilience amongst those whose livelihoods depend upon the land and sea.

One of the critical elements for ensuring the long term involvement of farmers is to ensure that the post-Brexit agricultural support system in this area is aligned with the objectives of the project. That seems to be the direction of travel, both in Westminster and Cardiff and we have started positive discussions with the Welsh Government around an area pilot for public sector Payment for Ecosystem Services which, if successful, would be a significant long term contribution to viable nature based farm businesses²³.

The partnership will also ensure that partners and stakeholders have the required capacity and skills to ensure longevity. Training, capacity building and knowledge transfer will be required to equip people with the tools and skills to do things differently and make the transition to a nature-based economy.

17. Budget

See document attached – Wales_17. Budget

²³ See Section 2: Theory of Change for more detail on this.

18. Risk assessment

Risks	Risk Reduction Strategies
<p>Project is pioneering and has not been attempted at this scale in Britain before</p>	<p>We are bringing together a cross-disciplinary team with the necessary practical and entrepreneurial expertise, and connecting with successful experiences around the world. Most of our partners have experience of landscape scale partnerships which could be described as a vital learning step between traditional reserve management and this multidisciplinary, restoration of ecology and economy approach. Our collaborative approach is a crucial factor in helping to work at the pace and direction that works locally for the partners. A rigorous, scientific approach to monitoring progress will help us to learn from and adapt the model where necessary.</p>
<p>Political and policy context</p>	
<p>Uncertainty around the impacts of Brexit and the shape and future of subsidies and rural land use policy affect the level of incentives to transition to a nature-based economy, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if ‘hard’ Brexit, UK will need to comply with WTO rules and upland sheep production will become inviable as a livelihood. • if ‘soft’ Brexit subsidies for production are likely to gradually reduce and upland sheep production will become inviable as a livelihood. • in the highly unlikely event of no Brexit then levels of production based subsidies may stay the same. 	<p><i>Note: also see theory of change section for more detail.</i></p> <p>The economic opportunities provided by S2S will have to offer a viable alternative to existing land use but landowners may transition at a slower rate as they want to wait for clarity to evaluate their options.</p> <p>Welsh Government legislation and policies already include strong drivers towards landscape scale approaches which improve ecological resilience and connectivity and ecosystem function but implementation strategies have not yet been developed.</p> <p>S2S will use this period of political hiatus to actively make the case for a rural economic and ecological model that helps Welsh Govt deliver on its policy targets</p> <p>The project will develop a number of short to medium term options for land owners to engage with S2S (e.g. farm clusters to bid for Welsh Government habitat restoration funds) which can both build relationships with landowners and move their land in a positive direction in habitat terms. This will position the project and the land in a good place as the consequences of Brexit becomes clear.</p>
<p>Welsh Govt does not follow UK policy in orientating subsidies towards delivery of public goods.</p>	<p>This is unlikely as The Welsh Minister has publicly stated that one of its 5 principles re Brexit and agriculture is that subsidies should deliver public goods that benefit all the people of Wales (see theory of change section).</p> <p>The only scenario under which this is a serious threat is, if following the Welsh Assembly elections</p>

Risks	Risk Reduction Strategies
	<p>in 2019 there is political change. For example, if there is once again a Plaid Cymru/ Labour coalition and Plaid get the Agriculture portfolio and they strongly push the farmers' unions' position of seeking continued direct subsidies. The risk is small as all parties have included references to supporting payments for ecosystem services or public goods in their manifestos. However, in this event S2S must provide a viable economic alternative to current land use for those that want to take it up but this may be at a slower rate.</p>
Outcome 1: Ecological Restoration	
Ecological restoration interventions do not provide the desired outcomes	Use tried and tested methods where available. Where using innovative methods develop adaptive management and learn from the process.
The incentives are insufficient for additional partners/landowners to include their landholdings in the project.	<p>This is unlikely as all indications are that the consequences of Brexit will mean that many upland landowners will either be looking for viable economic alternatives or may have to leave farming.</p> <p>If it does occur we will refocus efforts on a combination of direct habitat connectivity between the existing partner owned land and enabling creation of additional patches of habitat in the landscape that contribute to a critical mass of functional habitat in a mosaic across the landscape.</p>
Coordinated restoration actions across landholdings are unable to demonstrable improvements in habitats, species, ecological function and services.	If change is much slower or less than expected seek to understand the reasons for this and adapt project plans to address likely causes.
No post Brexit rural support / payment for public goods is available to support landowners to carry out restoration work and transition to nature-based enterprises.	Welsh Government has already indicated that support will be available. Ensure S2S works with its partners to influence the direction of this support. Specifically, develop proposal to WG for a pilot public sector PES programme in the project area in case it is not offered nationally.
Sea users are not motivated to take coordinated actions leading to seabed recovery.	Ensure community engagement is undertaken from the start – local fishery action group already showing support – and develop evidence to show benefits of coordinated engagement. Use case studies of where restoration has benefitted sea users in other places, if necessary arrange study tour.
Species reintroductions (where necessary) are not acceptable to local communities	<p>As above – ensure community engagement from the start and develop clear evidence to show possible economic/ ecological / community benefits of any proposed reintroductions.</p> <p>Be clear from start about what level of support or opposition is considered sufficient to determine whether a proposal goes forward.</p> <p>Be prepared to park specific proposals if the</p>

Risks	Risk Reduction Strategies
	threshold for support is not met. It may be more successful at a later date.
Outcome 2: Nature-based economy	
S2S is unable to develop a business offer to landowners/sea-users which is better than the alternatives post Brexit.	S2S will carry out rigorous feasibility studies and market assessment to ensure that business case is realistic and offers viable alternatives. S2S will work with local business fora to influence Welsh Government and County policies to offer alternatives.
Post Brexit economic climate is not conducive to new business development.	Unlikely – mid Wales already established as a target for development due to current low incomes. Need to promote S2S vision as a key to development
<p>The S2S business plan does not attract sufficient enterprise investment into the area within 5 years</p> <p>Local business and enterprises initiatives don't experience increased economic returns through being associated with the S2S brand and values</p> <p>S2S vision and brand does not inspire new nature-based enterprises to get established.</p> <p>Recovering nature is insufficient to drive revenue before benefits of fully restored ecosystems are available</p>	<p>Need to manage expectations in relation to timescales. Nature based businesses will present more of an opportunity once the nature is clearly recovering and this will take some years especially in the uplands. However, there are already rich ecological assets that could form the basis for Phase 1 infrastructure/business devt. There are existing relevant businesses who could be supported to diversify their offer.</p> <p>In the meantime S2S will work to establish a transition economy supported by public payments to allow time for the business plans to develop and for investment to be secured.</p>
<p>Competing land uses provide more attractive economic alternatives to landowners, e.g. commercial conifer plantation companies are actively looking to expand timber production in the area, mainly for tax-related benefits.</p> <p>There are also wind-farm interests registered across the area which are not currently being developed largely because of political planning issues.</p>	<p>We will mitigate these risks by securing the buy-in from multiple owners/stewards, with the collective influence they bring, ensuring that a diversified nature-based economy provides an attractive, viable and resilient alternative.</p> <p>We will remain flexible about which land comes into the project within the target area so that success is not dependent on the decisions of a small number of landowners. Connectivity can be achieved across the landscape either via different contiguous holdings or via the critical mass / mosaic approach.</p>
Any new business enterprises have inherent risks associated with the conditions of the wider economy.	Our initial research suggests that this risk can be reduced and spread by diversifying the enterprises and revenue streams as much as possible to increase economic resilience.
Increased nature-based tourism may affect existing land uses. For example, increased mountain biking and hiking may impact on forest areas and farm lands / lands adjoining farm.	Engaging directly with landowners and communities on this issue and aim to build a model that benefits landscape managers as well as activity providers.
Landowners may not have knowledge of diversifying their income through developing tourism services and the related finance to do so, and may therefore be initially unwilling to	It is vital as part of the Summit to Sea to provide adequate training and guidance on business generation, especially around finance options available. Other agencies such as Business Wales

Risks	Risk Reduction Strategies
pursue new revenue opportunities.	and Menter Busnes can help with this.
Forestry has a long-term horizon of change, and, accordingly, stakeholders may not see a “return” within the short to medium term.	It will be imperative to engage with landowners and other stakeholders to explain the long-term nature of the changes being made, and to reward landowners for taking a long-term view.
Proposals to transform forest management practice and to create new forested areas through afforestation or natural regeneration will lead to a different landscape. This will impact aesthetically but also practically on peoples’ daily lives.	See box above. It is important to work closely with local stakeholders in order to facilitate the impact of this change, aesthetically, logistically and economically.
The average farm size is comparatively small. Accordingly, it may not be financially or ecologically viable for individual farms to engage in forestry.	It is recommended that in order to create the necessary scale, adjoining agricultural landowners may combine efforts. Processes and advisory services will be put in place to support this.
By shifting farming methodologies, farmers may be concerned they will lose access to their current subsidies.	It is envisaged that, at least initially, any such shift would allow farmers to keep access to the same subsidies, and, indeed, gain access to further types of subsidies.
If UK funding to Wales follows the ‘Barnett Formula’ (i.e. linked to population) Wales will be worse off than under current CAP funding and there will be insufficient funding available for public goods to support a transition economy	This is a low risk as, at Defra questions on 26 April 2018 Michael Gove has already stated: <i>‘We want to make sure, as is the case at the moment, farmers in Wales – indeed, farmers under all the devolved administrations – receive more money than would be strictly the case under the Barnett Formula.’</i>
PES is a relatively new market-based mechanism. To date, private business has been typically unwilling to invest heavily in PES. Accordingly, there may be limited expertise in this field in the Summit to Sea landscape, and the economic drivers for PES (e.g., buyers of the services, and public finance and support for such activity) may change.	It is envisaged that a regional expert guidance group is established to assist landowners identify opportunities in this sector. There already exists a national government-backed PES advisory practitioners group. ²⁴
There will be no net gain in local employment and procurement opportunities due to the project and its multiplier effect.	The project needs to keep clear data on employment generated through the project as far as possible and also to be able to differentiate any changes in employment due to the project from changes due to other factors otherwise if unemployment rises or incomes drop due to Brexit conditions for example it may mask any gains due to the project.
Conflicts and competition emerge between S2S and similar initiatives in the area	S2S is engaging actively with the Dyfi Biosphere Reserve and the Cambrian Mountains Initiatives and looking for areas where we can support each other and work jointly for common aims.

²⁴ For more information see: <http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/payments-for-ecosystems-projects/?lang=en>.

Risks	Risk Reduction Strategies
Outcome 3: Partnership, governance and legal entity	
In the S2S area a workable legal entity/governance model can't be found that engages private land owners and other stakeholders in a commitment to manage and protect the area. Economic actors are unwilling to engage in a collaborative platform.	The model will be developed jointly with businesses and land owners so if there is a mutually acceptable model it should be possible to establish it. However if no model can be found which is sufficiently compelling to persuade farmers and other businesses to collaborate then a revised model which focuses more on land owned by partners, with scope for future expansion, would need to be developed.
Effective/workable mechanisms of agreement or 'covenant' on land cannot be found to ensure long-term stability of S2S vision	This will be a long term goal and may not be achieved for private land within 5 years. However, the land owned by NGO and government partners makes up a significant area and a possible model is that it is this "public" land which have long term security of use on it and the private land around may come in and out of the project over time, providing an additional contribution to the critical mass of habitat but not a static one.
It is not possible to design and agree codes of use of the land that are meaningful and acceptable to land owners/resource users	Aim to keep the codes as simple as possible and the incentives for and benefits from signing up to the codes as attractive as possible.
The management team and Steering Group have insufficient capacity to implement the project as planned	To ensure that it is effective we are bringing together a cross-disciplinary team with the necessary practical and entrepreneurial expertise, and connecting with successful experiences around the world. We are also working through and with a group of partners with substantial combined expertise and capacity.
Outcome 4: Community engagement	
Opposition or lack of buy-in from local owners/stewards and communities	Our priority is to open a positive dialogue and work with local stakeholders to learn from their experience, jointly shape the project's strategy and ensure benefits are shared.
Conflicts arise from some of the negative impacts of the project, e.g. rise in predator numbers	Ensure open dialogue on this from the outset, including potential mitigation such as predator control.
Outcome 5: Policy and legislative mechanisms	
NRW and Welsh Government are unable to deliver on the commitments in the new Environment and Well Being Acts.	As this is a legal requirement then S2S will work with partners to keep pressure on WG and NRW (see theory of change section)
Welsh Government does not follow UK government in orientating subsidies towards payments of public goods	WG have already indicated 'support' will continue. S2S to work with partners to influence the direction of that support (see theory of change section)
Welsh Government is not open to piloting a group contract with landowners for the delivery of public goods.	Unlikely – WG grants such as Sustainable Management Scheme already support joint applications. S2S to support 'Farm Clusters' in their applications (see theory of change section)

August 2017

19. Socio-cultural impacts and safeguards assessment

Participation

Over the last 18 months the project team has opened a dialogue about the potential of the Summit to Sea project with a wide range of stakeholder groups and individuals. For example, in July 2017 we brought a wide range stakeholders together for a workshop to explore the possible benefits and costs of S2S and to begin to develop a shared vision. This workshop demonstrated broad support for the project's vision and for working together to continue to shape its design and led to the establishment of the project's Steering Group.

We have spent the last 12 months following up with each participant to explore mutual areas of interest and gain further input into the project's development. Six subsequent partner/stakeholder workshops have been held as part of the participatory, stakeholder-led approach to the project.

In this project design stage we have so far met or spoken individually to over 160 individuals, many of whom also represent stakeholder groups. This has included farmers groups, sea-user/fishers groups and visiting over 25 individual landowners/farmers to talk through the project's approach. The next stage of identifying all households and groups and how to ensure equal access will be undertaken as a first step in the community engagement work once the project is funded and capacity to do this can be brought in.

We will continue to reach as many farmers/landowners/sea-user as possible before the project is funded by contacting them through their representative organisations and unions. The communications plan will be further developed to ensure that as many as possible of non-landowning stakeholders are reached early on in the project so that they also have the opportunity to get involved. Processes for ongoing involvement and dispute resolution will be developed as part of the governance of the project.

Vulnerable (excluded/marginalized) people and groups

The area has a full cross section of society including all vulnerable groups: people on very low incomes, people with disabilities, elderly people, migrant workers, a small group of refugee families in Aberystwyth and people with mental health issues that lead to isolation.

The population is relatively elderly and this means that there are likely to be a relatively high number of people who would not be reached through social media or email (Mid-Wales has a higher than average percentage of adults who are not online) and these will need additional effort to engage.

These groups are unlikely to face additional burdens because of the project but they may face barriers to participation or to benefitting from it on account of being more difficult to reach due to not using the internet in some cases and not having transport to attend meetings or visit project sites.

Our community engagement team and communications lead will develop strategies to overcome these barriers. So far we have done it this by phoning people or writing to them where they don't use the internet and by visiting people at home on their farms to talk to them rather than expecting them to come to us. There are some projects within the area that our partners are running which are aimed at engaging people who don't tend to get outdoors in nature - for example the Dolau Meadows project - and we are engaging with them to learn from their approach.

Men and women

Farming, fishing and forestry are traditionally male dominated sectors although women are heavily involved in farming. Whoever is engaged in natural resource management, whole families will be potentially positively impacted by the project as it focuses on keeping families on the land/sea and generating additional opportunities to make that possible. Some of the anticipated alternative income streams are likely to be taken up by women as they are more represented in tourism and food sectors than in fishing and forestry.

Possible barriers to participation may be more around skills than gender. We haven't found so far that there have been significantly more men than women involved. The project will work on training and skills development to ensure that local people have or can get the skills to make the most of new opportunities. The participatory video projects described in the community engagement plan will also work to ensure that the voice across genders is balanced.

There is an element of peer pressure amongst the farming community which may prevent some farmers from getting involved. For example, farmers express concern about what other farmers say if they move towards organic farming or less commercial cattle breeds. This probably affects men more than women because they tend to be the ones attending livestock sales and fox hunting meets where this kind of peer pressure is likely to be exerted. There can be an element of machismo which doesn't encourage innovation or working with conservation bodies as it is seen as "not real farming". The older generation of male farmers also still has a significant say over farm business models and can act as a constraint to the younger generation – male and female – to innovate.

The project will aim to balance gender representation amongst staff, on any advisory bodies and in relation to opportunities within the project such as training, funds for restoration work or contracts. We will appoint one member of the advisory panel with a specific responsibility to hold us to account on this issue.

Livelihoods and wellbeing

Use of or access to natural resources: The project doesn't intend to impose resource management restrictions on 3rd parties, any involvement in the project by land owners or rights holders will be entirely voluntary. If a land owner or grazier (for example) decides to join the project they will need to agree to certain codes of practice and they will only do that if they consider the benefits to outweigh the costs. In relation to sea users, if they agree to set up a community managed marine reserve then they will be closely involved in setting the terms of any restrictions on use of sea resources so again that would only be if the benefits outweigh any costs. There may be a majority who do want to jointly manage marine resource use but a minority who don't agree and are not part of any agreement. This would need to be resolved through the community engagement process.

Recreational, cultural or spiritual activities: There may need to be some restrictions on some recreational activities that currently go on in core areas such as jet skis where they disturb dolphins but this is not a major activity in this area. There is no intention to try and restrict cultural or spiritual customs, with the exception that hunting with hounds is not allowed on NGO owned land. This is still a widespread cultural activity, as well as being perceived as a pest control measure, and any changes to these practices have to be handled sensitively and agreed locally.

Human wildlife conflict: There is a concern amongst some farmers locally that more semi-natural habitat will result in more predators, such as foxes and badgers, and their impacts on lambs, poultry and ground nesting birds. The project intends to engage with this issue and to work with farmers to mitigate impacts and, if necessary, to consider fox control measures (badgers are a protected species). Other human / animal conflicts are more likely to be around dog walkers and grazing

animals such as horses, but these are new or not unique to the project. There is potential for more complex issues to arise in relation to any reintroductions such as beaver and this is why any reintroductions will be conditional on local consultation and risk assessments and will include measures to manage any such conflict. For example the pine marten relocations into the area have been widely supported and successful but there is still a member of staff responsible for managing any conflicts that may arise.

Balancing human wellbeing with biodiversity conservation: The project has three main strands which between them aim to balance these different objectives. In addition to a biodiversity restoration strand there is a strong focus on diversifying and strengthening the local economy, and also on community engagement. Details of each of these are given in other parts of this application.

Tenure and rights to land and resources

Land will only come into the project if the tenure and rights holders decide that it is in their interests for it to do so. There is not expected to be any reduction of use or rights for these groups unless they agree to do so, e.g. through the use of conservation covenants or long-term lease agreement. There is no intention to reduce public access or rights of way in the project area. We are not aware of other traditional user rights which would be affected by the project but the public engagement work should help to identify any that there are.

Resettlement or displacement

There is no intention to displace people or prevent access to resources they have traditionally used, to the contrary, the project aims to enable people to stay on the land by developing alternative additional income streams to replace uneconomic agriculture.

Indigenous peoples

There are no populations in the UK which meet the criteria to be classified as indigenous people under international law. There is a local Welsh speaking community in the project area, there are also English speaking Welsh people as well as Welsh speaking and/ or English speaking people from other parts of the UK and further afield. All of these groups have been included in the discussions so far and will be in future but there will be a particular focus on engaging with rural farming communities who tend to speak more Welsh and also be more involved with and dependent on the land for their livelihoods.

The project has a wide potential area (60,000 Ha) and the aim is to bring 10,000 Ha into restoration so there is no need for people from any community to be involved unless they choose to be. The community engagement process will be open to all whether or not they are interested in getting more involved and this process will help to shape the project and to ensure that the project doesn't negatively impact on local communities.

Monitoring and impact assessment

We have identified social indicators and a procedure for monitoring them. See Monitoring Plan for details.

Research and studies

Any data gathered will be stored and safeguarded in compliance with GDPR.

Partnerships

We have nine key partners – of very different sizes, some will have detailed policies while others may not. We will ascertain what policies each partner has in place and establish and agree procedures to fill any gaps.

August 2017

20. Environmental impacts assessment

Possible Adverse effect	Mitigation measures	Monitoring	Responsibility	Cost estimate
Intervention fails to improve habitats and species or causes adverse effects on existing habitats and species.	Ensure adaptive management is tied into monitoring with no fixed outcome expected	All interventions will be monitored as part of the overall monitoring process, with specific monitoring designed for specific interventions	Overall responsibility with the Summit to Sea manager – individual sites the responsibility of project managers	Varied – most costs will be covered under the monitoring budget
Increased access developed by the project causes disturbance to protected species / habitats	Ensure careful design of access to avoid sensitive areas. Consider path closures / diversions if necessary	Monitor visitor use of the trails and location of sensitive species / habitats	Summit to Sea Manager with NRW officers	Automatic trail counters £900 each. Number needed to be decided in trail design. Species / habitats will be covered by monitoring programme.
Increased access developed by the project causes erosion in sensitive areas	Ensure careful design of access to avoid sensitive areas. Consider non-intrusive path maintenance and / or path closures / diversions if necessary	Monitor trails on an annual basis by walking.	Summit to Sea Manager	Should be able to be covered by volunteers in association with local Ramblers.
Increased tourism causes traffic problems in small rural roads	Ensure careful design of any literature to guide people to non-sensitive areas and include details of public transport.	Discuss potential monitoring with local authorities transport departments – traffic counters etc.	Summit to Sea manager	Depend on level of local authority input
Grazing levels cause unwanted impacts	Manage grazing pressure by moving stock around / changing numbers / species	Grazing levels and effects on species richness, trampling, etc. will be part of the	Summit to Sea Manager and stock managers	Covered in budget for biodiversity and herbivore monitoring

	of grazers animal numbers	monitoring for biodiversity.		
Introduction of 'naturalistic grazing' involving letting animals range across properties raise biosecurity issues	Ensure any proposal is fully risk-assessed and full liaison with neighbours, NRW and Welsh Government Agriculture Department	Animal health will be monitored as part of normal good practice husbandry	Stock managers	To be included in any project proposal
Colonisation by non-native, invasive species caused by grazing interventions	Manual removal of non-native and invasive plant species such as Japanese knotweed or Rhododendron	Part of the continual programme of biodiversity monitoring and regular observations in the field	Summit to Sea Manager and individual site managers	Should be able to be covered by volunteers in association with local Wildlife Trust and WWLF.
Changes in vegetation cover causes increase in predators that could affect other species and / or relationships with landowners	Consider potential predator control and regular liaison with landowners	Predators to be monitored as part of the overall monitoring programmes. Feedback from landowners will be investigated	Summit to Sea Manager and Ecologist	None initially, to be costed if problems arise
Problems caused by re-introductions, such as disease, genetics of populations and impact on other species	Ensure all re-introductions are fully researched and risk-assessed. Experts will be fully involved, IUCN guidelines followed and all appropriate licences obtained.	Monitoring programme will be developed with any re-introduction proposal	Summit to Sea Manager / Ecologist and specialist expert teams	To be costed as part of any project proposal
Interventions cause release of metal toxins from old mines and mine waste into watercourses	Interventions will be fully risk-assessed and surveys undertaken before commencement. Full liaison with NRW experts who work on the problem in the area	Monitoring programme, if required, will be produced with NRW experts	Summit to Sea Manager / Project Managers and NRW	To be developed on a project by project basis

21. Due Diligence assessment

See documents attached:

- Wales_21. Due Diligence assessment Rewilding Britain
- Wales_21. Due Diligence assessment Woodland Trust

Supporting Documents

The following supporting documents are attached.

1. Letters of intent from the following project partner organisations:

- ecodyfi
- Marine Conservation Society MCS
- PLAS Marine SAC
- Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust MWT
- Natural Resources Wales NRW
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds RSPB
- Wales Wild Land Foundation WWLF
- Whale and Dolphin Society WDC
- Woodland Trust (as project co-lead)

2. Declarations of support from the following:

- Chris Sandom, Sussex University and Wild Business
- Conservation Capital
- Eden Project
- Geo Spatial Decisions GSD
- Heather Stevens CBE
- John Muir Trust JMT
- Pentir Pumlumon
- Peter Davies
- Pukka Herbs (Pukka Tea)
- Sophie Wynne Jones, Bangor University
- The Waterloo Foundation
- Vincent Wildlife Trust

3. Audited accounts (from the lead organisation) for the last two years:

- Rewilding Britain audited accounts 2015-2016
- Rewilding Britain audited accounts 2016-2017

4. Copy of the lead organisation's constitution

- Rewilding Britain – Constitution

August 2017