

SELEP – SSF Project Background Information

Name of Project	Accelerating Nature-Based Climate Solutions		
Sector Support Fund (SSF)	The Project is seeking £135,000 SSF		
Need for Intervention	The project focusses on carbon sequestration (the removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere), where there is significant demand but fragmented supply.		
Description of what Project delivers	<p>The Project aims are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide an understanding of the demand for nature-based projects from local authority climate emergency plans and the local businesses seeking to invest in local carbon offsetting. 2. Assess the 'readiness' of nature-based organisations to develop and deliver nature-based projects for carbon sequestration and identify gaps in skills, knowledge and capacity that stand in their way. 3. Produce resources (see section 9) to support the development and delivery of a coherent nature-based carbon sequestration offer. 4. Develop demonstration projects to showcase innovation and good practice. <p>Develop a framework for a SELEP-wide 'brokerage hub' that can bring together 'buyers' and 'sellers' to co-develop nature-based carbon sequestration projects¹.</p>		
Project benefits	Type of Benefit	Number of benefits created	Cash value of benefit (£)
	Immediate benefits		
	Increase in skills and expertise in developing nature-based projects for carbon sequestration across the nature-based sector in SELEP	<i>Over 50 organisations will directly benefit from the training and resources developed and delivered via this project. Beneficiaries will be amongst the 30 members of the Sussex Local Nature Partnership, the 20 members of the Kent Local Nature Partnership, the 35 local authorities in SELEP, at least 10 organisations working in wildlife in Essex and the farm clusters engaged through the project.</i>	An estimated £10,000 worth of resources and training per organisation will be developed and provided to at least 50 organisations = £500,000 of value that would otherwise not be accessible.
	Demonstration projects developed to kick start a project pipeline	<i>The demonstration projects in each federated area will leverage additional investment, help to create new natural capital assets and support jobs in the nature-based sector.</i>	Based on examples of 'investment readiness' funds in the social sector it's estimated that the £50,000 project development fund could unlock 9 times its value = £450,000 (see: GM-Natural-Capital-Investment-Plan-Final180119.pdf (naturegreatermanchester.co.uk)).

¹ Nature-based projects create and deliver wildlife-rich habitats as a way of delivering a range of benefits to people and nature including carbon storage and sequestration. They are recognised by government as a unique mechanism for tackling the twin challenges of halting biodiversity loss and tackling climate change, whilst creating and retaining jobs as part of the green recovery. For info see [The Government Response to the Committee on Climate Change's 2020 Progress Report To Parliament. Reducing UK Emissions.](#)

			This equates to 56 jobs, based on government estimates that the £40 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund will deliver 5000 jobs in nature-based solutions.
	Longer term benefits once 'brokerage hub' established		
	Acceleration of nature-based projects, which will help to diversify incomes for land owners and farmers, reduce barriers to housing development ² , and contribute to achieving net zero carbon.	<i>A 'brokerage hub' to support the development and delivery of natural capital projects doesn't currently exist.</i>	The brokerage hub, through the delivery of projects, will be able to develop indicators such as the hectares of habitat created, tonnes of carbon sequestered and jobs created for the financial investment made.
	Support for existing jobs within the nature-based sector and growth of new jobs and skills	<p><i>Investment in nature-based solutions for net-zero has resulted in 1/3 of the total job growth in Scotland between 2015-19 and growth in this sector is expected to rise significantly in coming years³.</i></p> <p><i>Research by the LSE and Grantham Institute has found that "planting trees and restoring wetlands are capable of delivering jobs at speed. These projects are not susceptible to off-shoring, are less import-intensive than many traditional stimulus measures and can create jobs in all regions of the UK"⁴.</i></p> <p><i>This project will help to establish a future mechanism from bringing project ideas 'to market' and thus support jobs and growth.</i></p>	Using analysis by Surrey Wildlife Trust (in partnership with C2C), work in Surrey to create 700ha of habitat will support the creation of 18 FTE jobs ⁵ . This equates to approximately 1 job per 38 ha of habitat created/managed.
	Creation of new areas of natural capital across the SELEP area - contributing to nature recovery, delivery of benefits for people, places, jobs and the local economy	Natural capital across the SELEP region provides a range of benefits to nature and people, including carbon storage, flood risk reduction, improved drought resilience, water quality improvement, air quality improvement, pollination, benefits for physical/mental health and wellbeing, attractiveness of places and landscapes, with	<p>No estimation of the value of natural capital across the SELEP area exists. However, studies from elsewhere can identify the scale of benefits to the local economy from natural capital - and gains to be made from investment in its creation and enhancement.</p> <p>A study of the natural capital value of the C2C LEP area estimated the value of natural capital benefits to the area at £792 million per year. The assets</p>

² See here - for details of scheme in Hampshire to provide offsets for nutrient neutrality and enable development to proceed <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/reducing-nitrates-solent>

³ Nature Scot (2020). Nature-based jobs and skills for net-zero - and initial assessment.

<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2020-12/Nature-based%20jobs%20and%20skills%20for%20net%20zero%20-%20an%20initial%20assessment.pdf>

⁴ Stern N, Unsworth S, Valero A, Zenghelis D, Rydge J, Robins N (2020) Strategy, Investment and Policy for a Strong and Sustainable Recovery: An Action Plan. Centre for Economic Performance: CEP COVID-19 Analysis. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Strategy-investment-and-policy-for-a-strong-and-sustainable-recovery.pdf>

⁵ Efttec(2019). A Coast to Capital Natural Capital Accounting Study. Final Report. Surrey Wildlife Trust. July 2020.

		knock on benefits for tourism and inward investment.	themselves are valued at £2.5bn in present value terms over 60 years. £3.3bn are direct benefits to businesses through agriculture, fishing, timber, renewable energy and minerals. The majority of benefits are to wider society (£19bn) through recreation and public health (physical activity and reduced air pollution) ⁶ . Studies of Greater Manchester (where natural capital benefits have been estimated at over £900m annually) - investment in natural capital creation can yield total environmental benefits of £8,192 per ha.	
Financial Information	Funding breakdown (£s)			
	Source	2021/22	2022/23	Total
	SSF	£112,500	£22,500	£135,000
	Other sources of funding (please list below, add additional rows if necessary)			
	East Sussex County Council	5,000	5,000	£10,000
	Kent County Council	5,000		£5,000
	Clean Growth UK	5,000		£5,000
	Partner in-kind			
	Kent County Council	5,000	2,500	£7,500
	Essex County Council	5,000	2,500	£7,500
	Kent Wildlife Trust	20,000		£20,000
	Forestry Commission, South Downs National Park, Kent and Sussex Local Nature Partnerships	7,000	1,000	£8,000
	Total Project Cost	£164,500	£33,500	£198,000
Project constraints	Risks			
	Issue	Risk	Mitigation	
	Project Management	1) Loss of staff capacity. 2) Underestimation of project management time required. 3) lack of expertise in the project team.	1) Establish robust governance. 2) Ensure supportive project management capacity is available amongst the main project partners. 3) Include budget to procure project management and relevant expertise. 4) Allow for additional delivery time within the programme.	
	Budget	1) Not enough budget to deliver the outputs. 2) match funding not provided.	1) Obtain indicative quotes for all contracted works prior to bid submission. 2) confirm match prior to bid submission.	

⁶ Eftec(2019). A Coast to Capital Natural Capital Accounting Study. Final Report. Surrey Wildlife Trust. July 2020.

	Contractors	1) Cannot procure an appropriate contractor for key deliverables. 2) Contractors perform poorly.	1) Discuss interest and capacity with potential contractors prior to bid. 2) Write clear contract specifications and set up clear and robust project management processes.
	Partner participation	Unable to recruit businesses or organisations to participate.	Identify participants prior to bid submission.
	COVID-19	Travel restrictions constrain delivery of outputs.	Design outputs to be deliverable without the need for face-to-face work.
Project Timeline	<i>Start date: May 2021</i> <i>Completion date: April 2022</i>		
Outcome of ITE Review	Awaiting update from Accountable Body		
Evidenced compliance with Assurance Framework?	Yes		
Link to Project page on the website with full business and links to any previous decisions by Accountability Board and/or Strategic Board	https://www.southeastlep.com/project/carbon-pathways-c-path/		