



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

RSPB SWRO	
RECEIVED	
05 AUG 2013	
PASSED TO	DD
COPIED TO	

CCU 7th Floor
Nobel House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

T 08459 335577
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Deborah Deveney
Secretariat on behalf of the High Nature Farming Coalition
c/o RSPB SWRO
Keble House
Southernhay Gardens
Exeter
Devon
EX1 1NT

Our ref: DWO313163

August 2013

Dear Ms Deveney,

High Nature Value Farming

Thank you for your letter of 31 May to the Secretary of State setting out the importance of High Nature Value Farming in the UK and of the potential to address this through CAP implementation. I have been asked to reply and I am sorry for the delay in replying.

Defra recognises the environmental benefits that High Nature Value farming systems and High Nature farmland can provide. The current Rural Development Programme for England supports a targeted Environmental Stewardship which offers agreements to farmers in hill and upland areas as well as to lowland farms.

We are developing a new Environmental Land Management scheme which will replace Environmental Stewardship as part of the new Rural Development Programme. The new scheme will aim to retain the best features of Environmental Stewardship.

We are currently considering with interested parties, including some of your members, what other elements might enhance its effectiveness and quality, and how best this can be targeted to where it will have the most impact. No decisions have however currently been taken as to the final shape of the new scheme or what can be funded under the next Programme.

However, we do agree that we want to protect our precious wildlife and landscapes and target the Rural Development Programme in England. Rewarding farmers for the environmental goods they provide is an effective way of achieving these objectives. Support for UK farming should also be focused on helping the sector become more efficient and productive than its global rivals. We therefore very much welcome the flexibility to transfer funding from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2.

We want to implement the new CAP in ways that enhance farmers' competitiveness, the rural economy and the environment, as well as delivering best value for taxpayers and consumers. It will also be essential to ensure we implement the CAP in a way which is as simple as possible, affordable and effective in delivering the outcomes we all want to achieve.



We have noted your five action points and will bear these in mind as we develop the targeting which will support the new programme. This will include looking at how we might address support for High Nature Value farming systems, in the light of evidence from our existing programme of monitoring and evaluation.

Within the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will separately be developing their new Rural Development Programmes and you may wish to write to them setting out your views.

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Hunt
Defra - Customer Contact Unit