Geophysical Research Abstracts
Vol. 15, EGU2013-2317, 2013
EGU General Assembly 2013

Engaging farmers to inform future diffuse pollution policy in England

Emilie Vrain (1), Andrew Lovett (1), Lister Nobel (2), Fiona Grant (3), Paul Blundell (3), and Will Cleasby (4)

(1) School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, UK, , (2) Farm Systems and Environment Ltd, Low Road, Wortwell, Norfolk, IP20 0HJ, UK , (3) ADAS UK Ltd, Manor Farm, Draycot Cerne, Chippenham, SN15 5LD, UK, (4) Eden Rivers Trust, Dunmail Building, Newton Rigg Campus, Penrith, CA11 0AH, UK

Stakeholder knowledge and engagement is increasingly seen as a necessary ingredient for catchment management. Whilst many agricultural management options remain voluntary, the implementation of diffuse pollution mitigation measures will only be effective with the cooperation of stakeholders. Anthony et al. (2009) and Zhang et al. (2012) state the need for more information on the realistic farmer uptake of methods to enhance analyses of the potential for pollution mitigation.

A study engaging farmers to understand current agricultural practices and their attitudes towards mitigation measures has formed part of the Demonstration Test Catchment (DTC) programme in England. Interviews with over seventy farmers were conducted during 2012 in three contrasting areas of the UK: the grassland dominated Eden catchment in the North West of England; the arable dominated Wensum catchment in East Anglia and the mixed farming of the Hampshire Avon catchment in southern England.

Results from the farmer survey provide a baseline regarding current agricultural practices and give insight regarding attitudes to the adoption of other mitigation measures in the future. Opinions were obtained on eighty different measures taken from a recent guide to possible measures prepared for the UK government (Newell-Price et al., 2011).

Analyses have been conducted examining how current use and attitudes towards future adoption of measures varies according to different characteristics of farm businesses. These findings will be of benefit to researchers, policy makers and farm advisers, particularly aiding decision making with respect to strategies for future implementation of programmes of measures.

References.

Anthony, S.G. et al., 2009. Quantitative assessment of scenarios for managing trade-off between the economic performance of agriculture and the environment and between different environmental media. Available at: http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&ProjectID=14421&FromSearch=Y&Status assessment&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description.

Newell-Price, J.P., Harris, D., Taylor, M., Williams, J.R., Anthony,
S.G., Duethmann, D., Gooday, R.D., Lord, E.I. and Chambers, B.J. (ADAS), A. & Chadwick, D.R. and Misselbrook, T.H., 2011. An Inventory of Mitigation Methods and Guide to their Effects on Diffuse Water Pollution , Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Ammonia Emissions from Agriculture Prepared as part of Defra Project WQ0106. , (December).

Zhang, Y., Collins, A.L. & Gooday, R.D., 2012. Application of the FARMSCOPER tool for assessing agricultural diffuse pollution mitigation methods across the Hampshire Avon Demonstration Test Catchment, UK. Environmental Science & Policy.