

FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Summary: To present a summary of Farming in Protected Landscapes year 2021/22 and a forward look for 2022/23

Recommendation: That the report is noted

Report by: Mark Connelly, Land Management Lead & Scott Brown, Farm Engagement lead

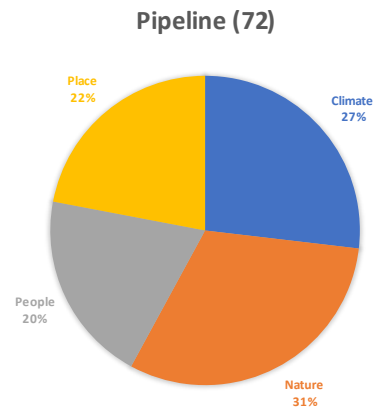
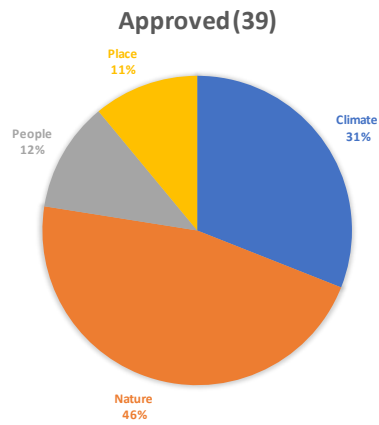
INTRODUCTION

1. Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme launched on 1 July 2021. It is part of the Government's Agricultural Transition Plan, sitting alongside other programmes and schemes such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) Scheme pilots, Tree Health pilot and Farming Investment Fund. FiPL runs until March 2024 when the full ELM scheme is due to start. For further information please refer to the FiPL update presented to the Executive Committee 14 September 2021.

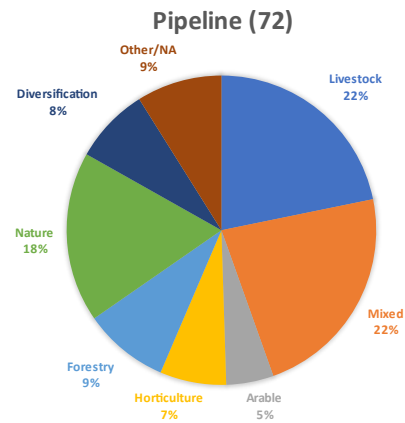
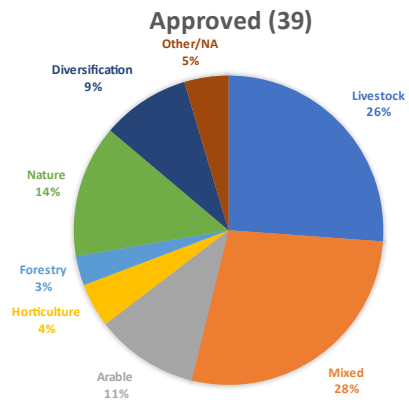
Summary of year (1 July 2021 – March 2022)

2. Between launch on 1 July and the end of March 2022 we received over 150 enquiries about the programme. This converted to 43 applications, 37 considered by the Assessment Panel and 6 under £5,000 assessed by The CNL Land Management Lead. A map showing the spread of projects across the CNL is attached as Appendix 'A'. The programme awarded £956,794 to 39 projects worth over £1.6 million involving over 220 farms and sites. Projects supported ranged from livestock handling equipment for new entrant farmers and Community Supported Agriculture businesses to farm disability access and soil carbon analysis across 15,766ha of land with a Farm Cluster Group. A full list of projects supported is on the CNL website <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FiPL-Project-summaries-July-21-to-Mar-22-for-website.pdf>
Attached as Appendix 'B' is the summary returned to Defra.
3. 17 projects completed with the other 22 completing over the next two years. The pipeline of projects is very healthy with 72 proposals but not all will convert into applications.
4. The Assessment Panel met four times to assess applications, deferring four out of 43 applications. The focus during February and March was on monitoring projects progress, site visits to confirm completion of the project or phase of project and processing claims. Progress reports have also been sent to Defra monthly along with case studies and progress summaries.
5. Both the projects supported and the pipeline have been analysed by FiPL outcomes, and farm type:

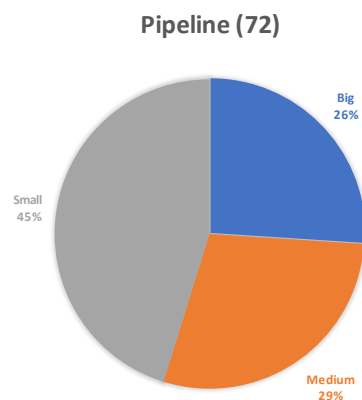
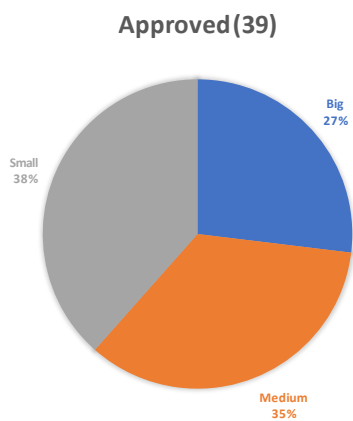
FiPL Outcomes



Land use/farm type



Holding size



Years 2 and 3 (2022–2024)

6. The results of the analysis have been discussed by the Assessment Panel, identifying gaps in FiPL delivery during the first year and opportunities.
7. The majority of applications during 2021/22 were from those already engaged in agri-environment and grants schemes and had familiarity with grant application processes. There is an identified need to reach out to the less engaged by raising awareness of the Agricultural Transition and how FiPL can help and by offering more custom support for applicants who may need assistance with, for example, proposal development and form-filling.
8. The panel is also keen to see more delivery at scale by developing opportunities that support connected landscape scale outcomes and by brigading related projects to explore and demonstrate collective impacts e.g. shared design, networking. There is potential for this in the Upper Windrush Valley where there are a number of FiPL enquiries and good levels of stakeholder engagement.
9. There is little coming forward for arts, culture and heritage outcomes. There is an opportunity to explore agricultural transition as a cultural phenomenon and to explore delivery of the Art in the Landscape Strategy adopted by the Board in June 2021 <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/meeting/board-meeting-tuesday-22nd-june-2021/> There are also a lot of heritage assets on farms such as prehistoric funerary monuments and earthworks, washpools, stone stiles and dewponds (FiPL has just awarded a grant for the repair of two stone bridges). Potential solutions include a survey of farmers to test interest, contacting arts, heritage and cultural organisations and discussing with other FiPL teams. Opportunities could include on-farm art residencies, events, ephemeral installations and heritage conservation projects.
10. There has been some discussion, initially with the Forestry Commission, about developing an application to support co-ordinated deer management by supporting the formation of Deer Management Groups and training new Deer Stalkers. There is a long-standing pressing need for this in the Cotswolds and further discussion with the FC Deer Officer is needed.
11. After adjusting for successful applications during 2021/22 that deliver over the next two years, £557,483 is available for grant allocation this year. The panel met on 4 May to consider five applications. All five were supported and along with one sub £5k application awarded £132,190. The panel next meet on 30 June.

FiPL workshops

12. Defra's FiPL team have set up a number of workshop with FiPL staff across England. We hosted (and organised) the workshop for the West of England and West Midlands FiPL teams; nine protected landscapes in total from Exmoor National Park to the Shropshire Hills AONB. The workshop shared experiences and learning from the first year of FiPL, explained how Defra and the RPA use the monitoring forms and ran through some of the revisions made to the application form, guidance for applicants etc. The afternoon session included site visits to two projects supported

by FiPL in the CNL: Homegrown at Hampen and the Sanfoin Centre for Regenerative Agriculture at Whittington. The Defra team seemed particularly pleased with these two projects as examples of what FiPL can achieve.

13. Feedback from Defra is that FiPL has been very well received by Defra and Ministers. Although no details have been confirmed about what may happen when the programme ends in March 2024, the Defra FiPL team do hope to build on the programme's success and are aware of the need to give PLs plenty of notice should any changes be likely that may impact staffing needs and work planning. Defra is also collating figures from all 44 protected landscapes from the monitoring forms and from the summary sheets (Appendix B) and presumably a national summary will become available.

Supporting documents:

- Appendix 'A' – Map of FiPL enquiries and applications
- Appendix 'B' – Cotswold FiPL summary for Defra

MAY 2022