

News story: Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund provides conservation boost

The fourth round of the popular Facilitation Fund has been one of the most successful yet, with 37 new groups of farmers from Cornwall to Northumberland signed up to agreements after a competitive application round, which closed in November 2017.

The Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund rewards groups of farmers for coming together to work out the best ways to improve the natural environment across their land, providing habitats for wildlife on a landscape scale to better aid conservation of important species.

There are now 98 groups working across England with the common goal of better delivering environmental improvements on their land, and the land of their neighbours.

A number of high quality applications were received in this latest funding round, which meant the funding pot was increased by £600,000 to ensure that groups with important work to deliver could access the funding to do so.

All 37 groups have now received their agreements and will be able to receive funding for working together and sharing knowledge to improve the landscape. The addition of these groups to the scheme means that now over 450,000 hectares of holdings in England are delivering landscape-scale measures for wildlife, water management and the historic environment.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

I am very pleased to see thirty seven new nature conservation groups established with over 700 members involved. The facilitation fund we have established aims to support partnership working and bring together farmers and other land managers to deliver local conservation projects.

It is particularly encouraging to see how many high quality applications we received, which we hope to replicate across the Countryside Stewardship scheme following the steps we have taken to simplify the wildlife packages.

Press release: Prime Minister's meeting with Roberto Gualtieri MEP: 8 Feb 2018

This afternoon the Prime Minister hosted Roberto Gualtieri MEP at Downing Street.

The second in a series of engagements between the Prime Minister and key representatives from the European Parliament, Mrs May and Mr Gualtieri discussed the Brexit negotiations, with both recognising the importance of the terms of the implementation period being agreed by the March European Council.

The Prime Minister also set out her vision for a bold and close economic partnership with the EU in the future. Mr Gualtieri highlighted his appreciation of the Prime Minister's speech in Florence which he attended.

On citizens' rights, Mrs May and Mr Gualtieri agreed that certainty should be given to people and businesses as soon as possible. Finally, they agreed on the importance of avoiding a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster David Lidington and the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the European Parliament Sir Tim Barrow also attended the meeting. Mr Gualtieri met with the Brexit Secretary David Davis, Chancellor Philip Hammond and Home Secretary Amber Rudd earlier in the day.

Press release: Cyanide spill in Derbyshire still being assessed

Environment Agency officers are continuing to investigate and monitor the impact on the local environment following an accidental chemical spillage at an industrial unit on Adams Close, Heanor, Derbyshire. The accident caused a spill of around 400 litres of liquid cyanide, some of which leaked into a nearby pond.

The incident happened on Tuesday 6 February and Environment Agency officers were immediately on the scene along with colleagues from Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service, Severn Trent Water and Derbyshire County Council to manage the spill and minimise the risk to the environment.

Environment Agency officers are now in their third day at the scene and are continuing to take water samples and are assessing any potential environmental impacts this spill has had on the local watercourses and ponds.

Penny Thorpe, Area Duty Manager at the Environment Agency said:

Our officers have been on site since the incident occurred on Tuesday and have worked alongside Derbyshire Fire and Rescue and Derbyshire County Council to contain the spillage in order to minimise any effects on the environment and wildlife in the surrounding area.

A temporary dam has been created in order to stop the spillage leaving the pond and to prevent any further contamination and our officers will continue to monitor the environment for any other impacts from this spillage.

We have taken water samples from Adam's pond and the brook further upstream to help us establish the best way to clear the environment of any contaminants that may remain, we will also be investigating the cause of this spill and following up with action as necessary.

Our staff work 24/7 to protect people and wildlife from pollution incidents, if you see pollution in your local river, call our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Press release: Prime Minister's roundtable with senior representatives of Japanese businesses

Alongside the Chancellor, Business Secretary and International Trade Secretary, the Prime Minister discussed the role of our modern Industrial Strategy in making the UK an even more attractive destination for Japanese and international investment, as well as the UK-Japan trade and investment relationship.

Discussions also covered the opportunities and challenges presented by the UK's exit from the EU.

The Prime Minister set out her vision for an outward looking, global Britain, and the long-term opportunities presented by the modern Industrial Strategy.

The strength of the trade, investment and cultural relationship between the

UK and Japan was discussed. The Japanese businesses present spoke of their desire to continue trading with, and investing in the UK.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to securing a new deep and special partnership with the EU as the UK leaves the EU.

She reiterated her commitment to global free trade, and she recalled her discussions with Prime Minister Abe in Japan in August last year, and their agreement that, as the UK exits the EU, the UK and Japan will work quickly to establish a new economic partnership based on the final terms of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement.

Business representatives expressed their appreciation for the opportunity for constructive dialogue with the Government, and agreed on the importance of the time-limited implementation period in providing clarity and certainty for people and businesses.

There was also agreement on the importance of moving quickly in the negotiations to secure a trading relationship with the EU that is as tariff-free and frictionless as possible following the implementation period.

In closing, the Prime Minister committed to maintaining a constructive dialogue between Government and business as EU exit negotiations progress.

[Speech: Call to Redouble Efforts to Defeat Daesh](#)

Thank you Mr President,

And thank you Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for your briefing and for the Secretary-General's report.

Mr President,

Since 2014, Daesh has lost 98% of its territory and the Global Coalition has liberated more than 7.7 million people from Daesh's rule in Iraq and Syria. The UK is proud of the role we've played, conducting more than 1,600 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria, training more than 60,000 Iraqi Security Forces, and supporting counter-Daesh operations with nearly 1,400 UK personnel in the region.

In addition to winning the war, we are working to win the peace by supporting stabilisation and the humanitarian response. The UK has committed \$3.4 billion to the Syrian crisis since 2012. In Iraq, we have committed \$320 million in humanitarian aid, \$418 million in loan guarantees through the World Bank to support fiscal stability and economic development, and nearly

\$35 million to support stabilisation.

But, Mr President, we cannot afford to be complacent.

As the Secretary-General's report highlights, Daesh is weakened and fragmented, but around the world we continue to face a grave threat from individuals and cells affiliated to Daesh, or those inspired by them. The continued threat of terrorism is unfortunately something we've felt personally in the UK.

As we think of the victims of terrorism around the world, we must redouble our efforts to defeat Daesh for good.

First, we must continue and step up our efforts to tackle terrorist misuse of the internet. We are already making strides in this fight online. The event last September, led by Prime Minister Theresa May, alongside President Macron and Prime Minister Gentiloni, was a landmark achievement bringing states and industry together to tackle the threat. Daesh propaganda output has fallen by more than half since its peak and sympathizer accounts are being taken down faster than ever before. The UK's first-of-its-kind terrorist content referral unit has worked with tech companies to take down over 300,000 posts. But we need to do much more to make sure that we have the tools and technology to remain ahead of the terrorists.

Building on the establishment of the global internet forum to counter terrorism, we are seeking to encourage tech companies to take responsibility themselves for terrorist content uploaded to the internet. Terrorist content must be taken down rapidly, limited in circulation and prevented from being made available to users in the first place. Larger companies need to support and spread best practice to smaller companies.

Second, we must strengthen our collective ability to counter the threat of returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters, rightly highlighted by the Secretary-General's report, and a focus of UNSCR 2396. We are encouraged that more than 60 countries are now working to build upon INTERPOL's global database, currently tracking 43,000 fighters. But there is more that states around the globe must do to strengthen border security, including work on Advance Passenger Information, Passenger Name Records, and biometrics. We must also do more work on developing effective prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration strategies, paying special attention to the particular challenges posed by women and children returnees.

Third, the UK remains committed to enhancing aviation security to counter terrorism, building on this council's resolution 2309 in 2016. To do this, the UK is investing in the development of new technology, as well as working with partners around the world. We also welcome the agreement of ICAO's new Global Aviation Security Plan last October and we call on ICAO and all states to ensure that it is fully implemented.

Finally, I want to reiterate the UK's support for the Secretary-General's reform of the UN counter-terrorism architecture and for the Office of Counter Terrorism under the leadership of Under Secretary-General Voronkov. We

welcome the initial steps taken to enhance coherence within the UN system, especially the commitment to work closely with CTED and Executive Director Coninsx. We look forward to OCT developing greater ability to support states, in particular in areas where the UN can add unique value, such as in the prevention of violent extremism.

In conclusion, Mr President, as this report outlines, the threat of terrorism is pervasive and evolving. But in the same way the Global Coalition brought so many of us together against a common enemy in Daesh, we must remain united to meet these new threats. This is a global threat, and it will require global action.

Thank you.