

# **Regeneration in South West Scotland: towards options for Joint Working**

## **1. Purpose**

Based on the progress, cooperation and momentum already achieved in relation to inter-agency joint working on the Biosphere Reserve (BR), the purpose of this paper is to explore how this can be developed further. Irrespective of what ultimately happens with a BR in South West Scotland it is agreed that the positive progress already made should not be lost. The opportunity now exists to consolidate this progress and develop a cross cutting approach which builds on and integrates a range of policy strands in support of maximising South West Scotland's sustainable contribution to national economic growth. A number of options are explored with a view to deciding how to proceed. The aim being to work towards a model for regional development in South West Scotland which fully integrates people, communities, jobs, culture and nature in a way which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

## **2. Context**

On the 5<sup>th</sup> February the Member/Officer Group for the proposed Galloway and South Ayrshire Biosphere Reserve agreed that pending a resolution to the principle of establishing a BR other options should be explored and then taken forward. It was agreed that the focus should be on four key elements:

- Identification of key sectors from Mackay Associates Study for further work including possibility of rural Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- Support for FES Galloway Forest Park Economic Impact Appraisal
- An Ecosystem based approach to River Basin Management Planning
- Regeneration of rural communities through a broadly based sustainable community futures initiative

## **3. Approaches**

Each of these approaches is detailed and discussed below. The key elements of each are drawn out and then summarised in an attempt to synthesise an overall direction.

### **3.1 Mackay Associates Study**

The recent Mackay Associates study of the economic and social potential of a Biosphere Reserve in Galloway and South Ayrshire indicates quite clearly that a targeted regional development initiative focussed on this area would produce significant additional economic and social benefit. The study looked at a range of possible scenarios and quantified the outcomes as being between £4 and £9 additional income generated within the area for each £1 spent. While some of this would clearly be related to the UNESCO Biosphere brand per se the exact effect of this compared with any other 'area branding' is not known with any certainty. A reasonable conclusion could therefore be that there would still be a significant

effect from a range of similarly targeted expenditure if combined with some other branding effort. The study identified that a focus on the sectors would produce the best returns:

- **Tourism including accommodation;**
- Visitor Attractions;
- **Angling;**
- Nature Conservation;
- Arts & Crafts;
- **Renewable Energy;**
- **small SME's;**
- Local Towns;
- Carbon Trading;
- **Local Food**
- Education/Recreation.

Of these the sectors identified as having the largest potential for additional economic benefit are:

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Contribution to Economic Additionality</u>
• Tourism	39%
• small SME's	36%
• Angling	16%
• Local Food and	7%
• Renewable Energy	2%

While these sectors have clear potential the report notes that they have economic impacts which were more clearly identified and quantified within the resources available to the study. However not all sectors have such clear and easily measurable economic benefits and although not included specifically as quantified monetised outputs in the assessment of additional GVA there are other sectors with potential and their contribution should not be discounted because a monetary value is difficult to assign at this point.

Para 7.20 of the Mackay Study states, “There are also the research and development, educational projects and environmental opportunities which would bring direct benefits .... but they are mostly longer term.” Para 7.21 continues “There are also potential management, operational, environmental and sustainability synergies which are perhaps implied rather than specified because they are also difficult to quantify but nevertheless would be important. These synergies could be achieved if all stakeholders work together..... to maximise the focus, impetus and opportunities.....from planning, managing and enhancing the ... area as a sustainable regional ecosystem and as an internationally recognised asset.”

**The Mackay study indicates quite clearly that a targeted regional development initiative focussed on this area would produce significant additional economic and social benefit. A concentration on the key sectors identified in the study offers clear potential for development and regeneration. However there are also a number of other sectors and actions where the benefits are not as easily measurable but which are likely to merit further attention.**

### 3.2 BIDs

Business Improvement Districts provide a powerful and flexible new vehicle for engaging and harnessing local business efforts to identify, prioritise and fund improvements to the trading environments of local businesses (retail; business; tourism etc). In this way they offer real potential to assist broader regeneration efforts, particular if coordinated with other initiatives. BIDs can be focussed on any defined geographic area - towns, town centres or groups of towns/ villages, rural area or any other defined area and can be broadly based across a variety of businesses or focussed on any specific sectors such as retail, tourism, renewable energy, fishing etc. The basis of a BID is via a fully costed business plan of formally agreed improvements in a defined area which is financed through a levy on business rates and delivered through a BID partnership body. BIDs work best when they are delivered in partnership with local authorities.

BIDs offer two key advantages which other approaches do not. Firstly BIDs engage and empower the business community to invest in local regeneration actions which are important to their business and which it is hoped will have a positive impact on profitability. Secondly BIDs provide significant new money to regeneration which can be used to lever in additional investment through match funding from a whole variety of sources. In South West Scotland LEADER and INTERREG 4 would be particularly relevant. LEADER (at a 50% intervention rate) would effectively double the BID investment and INTERREG 4a and 4c (at a 75% intervention rate) could effectively quadruple the investment. This additional funding would be a powerful incentive for businesses to adopt BIDs and to agree to invest their own money through the levy.

BIDs could be adapted in a number of new and innovative ways to help deliver regeneration in rural South West Scotland. For instance, in the first instance, attention could be focussed on those business sectors identified in the Mackay study as having significant potential. The impact would be greatest if BIDs could be aligned, integrated and coordinated with actions and priorities of other agencies, local authorities and community planning partnerships.

**The BIDs process offers real potential to engage the business community (in partnership with the local authority), in bringing additional money and leveraging in additional investment and funding to help deliver regeneration in combination with a range of other efforts across the area. Consideration should be given to targetting those sectors identified in the Mackay study as offering significant potential.**

### 3.3 Galloway Forest Park (GFP)

GFP is a key resource with great economic potential at the heart of South West Scotland. This makes GFP a key component and central to underpinning sustainable regeneration and development efforts in the area. It is essential therefore that this potential is clearly identified, recognised and that development strategies are put in place which will enable this potential to be realised across the wider area. GFP's 'A Strategy 2006 and Beyond' states that FCS are "awakening to the contribution that tourism makes to employment and services in the communities of southwest Scotland. GFP is one of a relatively small number of visitor destinations that underpin economic activity in accommodation, catering and some retail businesses in our part of the world".

However forestry has a much wider value and role in terms of the economy, environmental quality, biodiversity, timber, access and health, business and community development and climate change (Scottish Forestry Strategy, 2006). This is being operationalised through for example the FC - Climate Change Action Plan 2009-2011 which includes the following:

- Carbon sequestration – through growth of biomass and conservation of carbon sinks.
- Protect and manage existing forests
- Create new woodland
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change (eg mitigating river bank erosion; flood risk management)
- Promoting use for energy and construction.
- Reducing forestry's carbon footprint.
- Raising awareness and understanding.

To ensure the benefits of the GFP to South West Scotland are maximised it is important that GFP's potential is understood within this wider context, and specifically in relation to the Forest Enterprise study of economic potential of the GFP.

It is now clear that FCS will not now be leasing 25% of FC land. Instead plans to create joint ventures between FC and renewable energy companies will be established via the Climate Change Bill.

**The role that GFP could play in underpinning economic development across the communities of the wider south west Scotland area has been recognised by FCS, the issue is to clarify how this can be identified, maximised and delivered. There is however a much wider role for forestry in relation to climate change, timber, biodiversity, access and health, environmental quality and community and business development which needs to be factored into any consideration and studies of GFP's potential and more generally of regeneration and development in the area.**

### 3.4 An Ecosystem Services Approach

An integrated management/developmental approach which focuses on increasing economic growth by sustaining and where necessary restoring the health of ecosystems to provide goods and services, thereby building a sustainable future for people and nature. The Scottish Government has defined an ecosystem approach (in relation to marine management) as:

*“the integrated management of human activities based on knowledge of ecosystem dynamics to achieve sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services and maintenance of ecosystem integrity .“* (Seas the Opportunity, 2005).

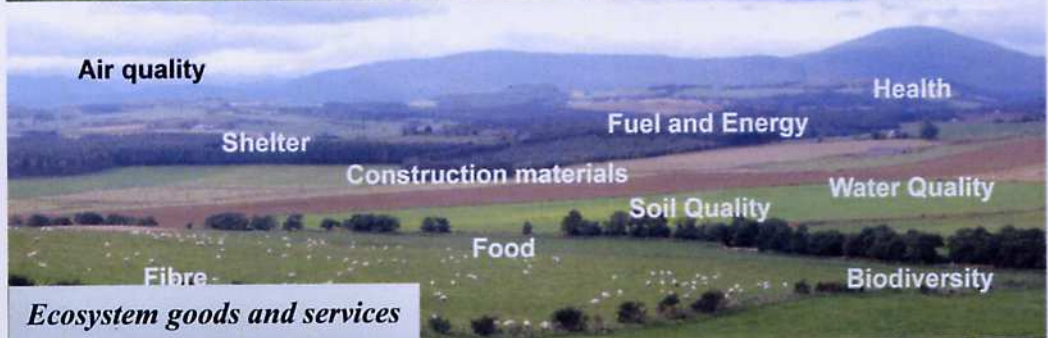
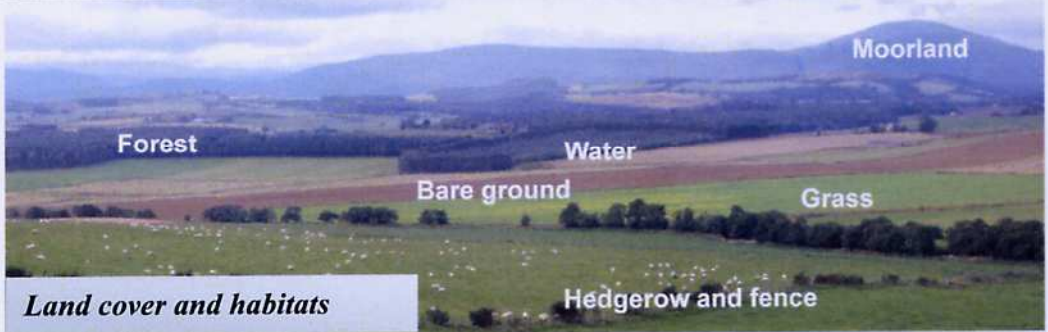
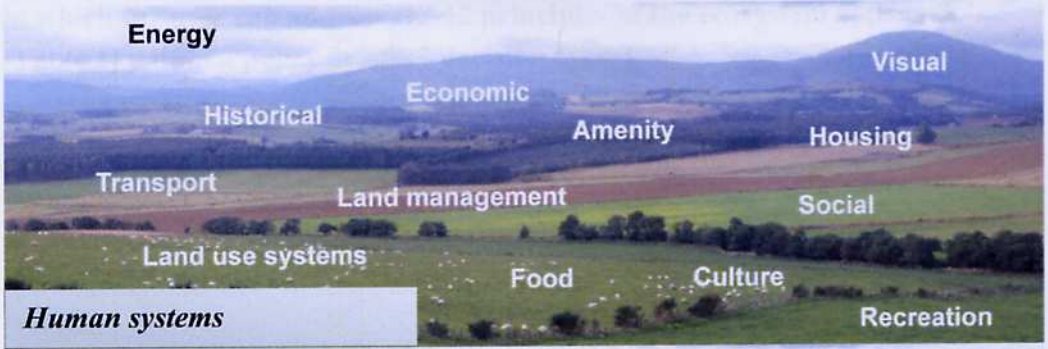
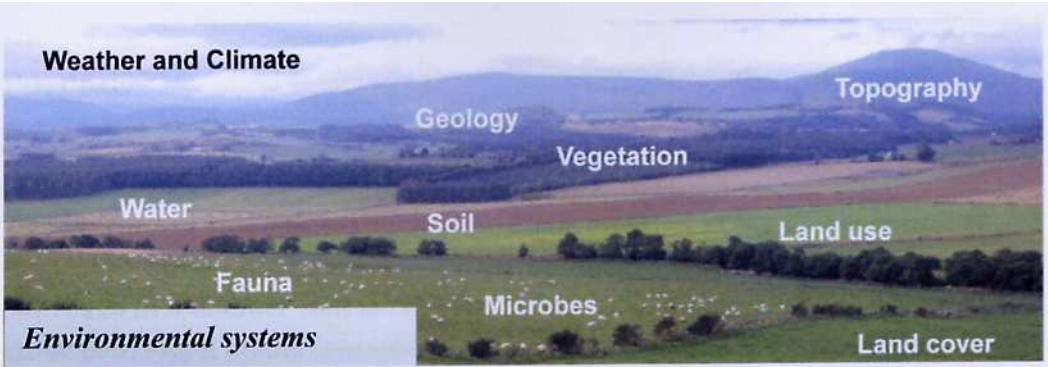
The benefit of an ecosystem approach is in achieving a balance between conservation and the use of biodiversity: human well-being without unsustainable loss of natural capital, ensuring that the natural environment can continue to provide us with essential services and benefits in the long term. In other words it is a framework for planning, managing and delivering sustainable development.

The approach recognises that landscapes, farming, forestry, fishing, food, energy, water and air quality, habitats, species, outdoor recreation, amenity cannot be considered in isolation but are all dependent on maintaining or restoring healthy ecosystems and that the threats and pressures upon the various parts of ecosystems needs to be addressed in a coordinated way at appropriate spatial scales.

The Ecosystem approach considers an area as a totality and emphasises integration as a central element. Ecological, economic and social factors are considered within a single framework helping to identify potential conflicts, interactions and tradeoffs. In particular it recognises that people, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems (ie Man & the Biosphere). An area delivers many goods, services, benefits and values which can be viewed from many different perspectives:

- As a set of Environmental Systems
- As a set of Human Systems
- As a set of Land Covers or Habitats
- As a set of Land Uses
- As a set of Ecosystem Goods & Services

A recent Report from the Macauley Land Use Research Institute ( A Field Guide to an Ecosystem Approach, 2009) provides a useful illustration of this and is reproduced over the page.



In practice an ecosystem approach involves 3 inter-related aspects:

- Understand and take account of how ecosystems work – consider the environmental limits and consequences of resource use.
- Understand and take account of the variety of goods and services that ecosystems provide to people/communities and where possible their value.
- Involve/empower public involvement in decision making and action.

Ecosystem delivery plans are being discussed and it is currently suggested that an overview of the key issues relating to each of 5 generic ecosystem types across Scotland is prepared. For example one of these which has direct relevance to South West Scotland is for Scottish Uplands.

Uplands are an important part of Scotland’s economic resource and particularly important in south west Scotland. While appearing natural in character uplands have been profoundly influenced by human activity past and present. Much of the uplands have been kept open by land management practices, a product of man interacting with natural ecosystems and as such are part of the cultural landscape. The natural resources of the uplands provide a livelihood for people through land uses such as agriculture, forestry, field sports, tourism and recreation. The upland ecosystem also provides us with resources such as clean water for people and industry; flood management; carbon sequestration in peat and bogs; renewable energy from hydro, wind and biomass; food from livestock. The wild nature, ruggedness and habitats of upland water and landscapes provide open-air recreation and enjoyment and their natural beauty and fauna is one of the main attractions for tourism.

The Table below taken from an SNH working note illustrates what the key issues might be in an upland area and how they could be influenced.

### Key Ecosystem topics for biodiversity and people in Upland areas

<b>Ecosystem influence</b>	<b>Ecosystem issue</b>	<b>Type of action required</b>	<b>Key players</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
Agriculture	Grazing intensity, muirburn, nitrogen deposition, habitat management	Find a sustainable level of grazing and burning which will benefit both livestock and biodiversity, and thus ecosystem health.	Farming and crofting community; SG; SNH;	Management which benefits biodiversity, low intensity agriculture and ecosystem health and services
Woodland	Ploughing, planting exotic spp, extraction, fertiliser, loss of open ground habitats	Native woodland management; good planning and design of forests which benefits biodiversity, commercial crop and recreational value	FCS; small scale woodland operators; SNH	Prevents further loss of open habitat; reversion of some previous losses; expansion of native woodland in appropriate places

Development	Habitat loss from Renewables, housing, agriculture, infrastructure	Strategic planning for renewable and built development in the countryside	LAs; SG; development community; farming community; tourist industry	Economic growth in appropriate locations; no loss of priority habitats; biodiversity encompassed within development
Field Sports	Deer numbers, habitat management, grazing, muirburn, tracks management of ticks re lymes disease	Find a sustainable level of burning which will benefit both business and biodiversity, and thus ecosystem health. Implementation of the Strategy for Wild Deer in Scotland	Landowners; DCS; Scotland's Moorland Forum	Management which benefits biodiversity, low intensity agriculture and ecosystem health and services
Recreation and Tourism	pressure on habitats – trampling, footpaths and tracks, infrastructure....		Tourism industry; landowners; LAs;	
Climate Change	Change of climate space, loss of species or habitat; adaptation	Development of adaptation strategies and measures to help maintain and enhance resilience of habitats and species, and to accommodate change.		
Pollution	Atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Mitigate overall impact of nitrogen via management of input from livestock as not easy to limit/influence inputs from atmosphere		

**The Ecosystem Services Approach offers an important holistic tool with great potential for the identification and valuation of the potential of the area's resources and as a regional development framework for planning and managing sustainable regeneration and development. South West Scotland could be the basis for A Model Ecosystem Framework Project (similar to current initiatives in NE Scotland) across the whole area or based initially on say one or more individual river catchments as pilot projects.**

**One particular application, focussed on complete river systems, which has similarities to an ecosystem approach is currently being operationalised via the River Basin Management Planning process under the Water Framework Directive.**

### 3.5 Water Framework Directive/ River Basin Management Planning / Flood Risk Management

South West Scotland like much of Scotland has a good quality water environment which underpins welfare and offers great potential to deliver increased economic and other benefits. The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) recognises this and is now changing the way Scotland's water environment is managed. The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS) transposed the WFD into law with the principal mechanism for sustainable management being through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). This is a holistic 'source to sea' approach for river systems which is being delivered through partnerships managed by SEPA for both the Scotland and Solway Tweed River Basin Districts (RBDs). The watersheds in South West Scotland straddle both, with the Biosphere Reserve area feeding river catchments in the Solway and Scotland RBDs.

In addition to the 2 RBMPs covering Scotland, supplementary Area Management Plans (AMPs) for natural regions such as the Clyde Area Management Plan are also being prepared. Although not a statutory requirement, Catchment Management Plans (CMP) can provide further detail for managing the environment at the level of individual river systems (eg River Dee in Aberdeenshire and River Ken Dee in Dumfries & Galloway). The result should be a nested 3 level hierarchy of management plans:

- |                                 |               |                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. River Basin Management Plans | Scotland RBMP | Solway-Tweed RBMP |
| 2. Area Management Plans        | eg Clyde AMP  |                   |
| 3. Catchment Management Plans   |               | eg Ken Dee CMP    |

The process has identified the most significant issues:

- Diffuse Pollution – from Agriculture; Forestry; Urban; Sea & coast transport
- Point Source Pollution – from Sewage; Aquaculture; Manufacturing; Refuse Disposal; Mining & Quarrying
- Abstraction & Flow Regulation – Electricity Generation; Public Water Supply; Agriculture
- Physical Changes/ Modifications to river – Historical engineering; electricity; agriculture; urban
- Invasive alien species

The aim is to create an integrated policy framework which balances protection and improvement of the water environment with its use for sustainable social and economic development. The Scottish Government see RBMPs contributing to sustainable economic growth, addressing mitigation of and adaptation to climate change as well as environmental protection and improvement. RBMPs are expected to help achieve a greener, wealthier, fairer and healthier Scotland.

It is recognised that to ensure integration, links with other policy and regulatory areas are necessary: Enterprise; Recreation and tourism; Marine & Coastal; Freshwater Fisheries; Rural Land Management; Sustainable Transport; Land use planning; Energy; Sustainable flood management and drainage; Water supply; and Agriculture. (WEWs Consultation: Scotland's Water; Future Directions 01/09). Despite this integration there does, however, appear to be a missing community dimension particular in relation to the lack of engagement with the Community Planning process through the Partnerships (CPPs).

The Draft RBMPs have identified the following gaps in the RBMP process:

- Need for policy framework for restoration of water bodies downgraded by historic engineering impacts – this is the most widespread and significant issue
- Need for effective source control of pollutants from urban & rural sources
- Need for a programme to prevent spread of alien invasive species.

Restoration frameworks for the water environment aimed at protecting and improving river basins from source to sea based on a partnership approach to sustainable integrated water system management. In addition to the RBMP process introduced in the Water Environment & Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 an additional component will be the new Flood Risk Management responsibilities for SEPA; Scottish Water and Local Authorities (Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Bill). Past experience shows that coordinated action across river catchments is more likely to deliver significant environmental and other benefits than ad hoc restoration. It is essential that the economic, social and community benefits are fully factored into this process. Ecosystem benefits include:

- Improves resilience to climate change
- Reducing flood risk eg by rural land management
- Improved biodiversity
- Enhances amenity and provides a focus for urban regeneration
- Increased aesthetic value, economic benefit and recreational opportunities
- Health benefits from improved drinking and bathing water quality
- Reducing diffuse pollution
- Improves fisheries and therefore enhances economic and recreational benefits

**The developments in river basin and river catchment management and planning are a significant move towards operationalising an ecosystem services type approach to planning man and biosphere relationships. Planning and managing these relationships at the level of individual river catchment areas as exemplified by the River Basin Management Planning and Catchment Planning process provides a useful and logical**

**template worthy of consideration for adoption in planning for development and regeneration. It is, however, essential that there is improved integration and coordination between WFD and other policies and funding, particularly in relation to Community Planning**

### **3.5 Whole Town Strategies / Community Futures and Visions**

Creating individually distinct community based plans and visions for the future development of a local area is increasingly recognised as a key underpinning to regeneration and community capacity building. A plan which makes a clear statement about the type of place a town aims to be and what needs to be done is essential. There are a number of approaches such as Whole Town Strategies or Community Futures which are tried and tested. These can be used for individual towns, clusters of functionally related communities (eg Girvan + villages; Maybole + villages; New Cumnock/Cumnock/Auchinleck/Mauchline) or wider geographical areas such as towns and villages in river catchment areas (eg Doon Valley; Dee-Ken; Stinchar). These processes are all fundamentally bottom-up; community driven; partnership led initiatives aimed at identifying and developing local assets and potential, enabled and supported by local authorities and facilitated by amateurs. As such there is recognition that a “one size fits all” approach will not do and there is a close fit with the Scottish Government & COSLA’s joint statement of commitment to ‘community empowerment’.

For example in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, 25 communities are currently engaged in a Community Futures process. Each settlement has produced its own 10 Year Vision and Community Action Plan which is kept under regular review by local Community Futures steering groups engaging wide participation of local people. Community Action Plans typically contain:

- Understanding why the community/area has developed in the way it has.
- Defining an agreed long term vision/aspiration for the future development of the community/area
- Agreeing views on the community/area as it is now and the issues which are most important
- Identifying the main ways in which the community/area can and should develop
- Specifying the main priorities for action

Many communities participating in Community Futures have developed organisational capacity and have gone on to develop Community Development Trusts. (eg 18 out of 25 in LL&TNP).

Following on from Community Action Plans communities have been encouraged to come together to look at their common needs and aspirations. In the LL&TNP 25 communities have grouped into 4 Area Networks where experience is shared, common issues are identified, and common priorities established. The effects of engaging in this process have been:

- More people with the confidence and wanting to take part in sharing views and shaping the future of their own community
- Increased individual and common understanding of the environmental, economic, social, cultural and heritage aspects of their community and region
- Increased membership of existing local groups
- Increased local capacity to plan, develop and manage community projects
- Creation of new community organisations
- Changing and more sophisticated leadership within communities
- Communities shifting from being reactive to being proactive
- Communities becoming partners in their own development
- A wide range of community projects and initiatives
- A greater ability for communities to partner with public, private and charitable agencies to deliver services

Whole town strategies/community futures for towns/clusters provide solutions which are bottom up, locally differentiated to suit local circumstances, and can provide the longer term strategic and spatial context for regeneration within which individual actions/projects, through Programmes such as LEADER can be placed and against which they can be prioritised and assessed. These strategies could be candidates for assistance through SRDP/ LEADER Measure 341 described above.

**A process based around Whole Town Strategies/Community Futures offers great potential for building capacity in local communities and organisations, agreeing, energising and focusing regeneration efforts in the area and engaging and coordinating with Community Planning Partnerships and other public, private and voluntary agencies.**

## 4 External Funding

### EU Programmes - INTERREG IV & LEADER etc

There are a great variety of potential funding sources which could have relevance to the regeneration and development of the area. The principal EU funds are INTERREG, LEADER and SRDP.

#### 4.1 INTERREG IV

INTERREG is a combination of Programmes aimed at enabling regions to exploit their endogenous potential (ie assets/resources) by integrated territorial development (ie links across administrative boundaries; national borders and geographical barriers). It promotes balanced and sustainable development of the territory. The main priority focus is on

- Innovation – developing the knowledge economy
- **Environment** – sustainable management of natural resources and of natural & technological risks
- Accessibility – improving connectivity through sustainable transport and ICT
- **Sustainable development** – promoting strong and prosperous communities

Of these Priority 2 Environment and Priority 4 Sustainable Development are of direct relevance in the current context.

Priority 2 addresses issues of increasing pressures on the environment; climate change and its spatial implications; and technological hazards which are recognised as needing joint strategic actions on a cross boundary, transnational basis. The overall aim of Priority 2 is to promote an innovative and sustainable approach to natural resource management, risk management and the enhancement of the natural environment through transnational cooperation. There are 3 Objectives under Priority 2 of which Objective 2.1 is relevant

Objective 2.1: aims to promote an innovative and sustainable approach to natural resource management, including water, landscapes, biodiversity, energy and waste management. Eg Integrated transnational approaches to the management of trans-boundary river basins, coastal zones, seas, fresh water resources, forests and landscapes of transnational significance.

Priority 4 is aimed at actions and model solutions for adapting policies to achieve a better balance in the settlement structure and avoid further polarisation and depopulation tendencies, and to make better use of the potentials of an area in order to enhance its competitiveness. There are three Objectives under Priority 4 of which Objective 4.1 is relevant.

Objective 4.1 aims to promote transnational actions that will enhance the economic and social performance of cities, towns and rural areas; including the economic potential of local and

regional assets. Eg actions aimed at realising and using the economic potential of regional assets (natural and business assets) through transnational cooperation.

Interreg is operationalised via three Interreg Operational Programmes – namely Interreg 4a; 4b and 4c. Interreg 4a and 4b are applicable to South West Scotland and are therefore potentially relevant.

Interreg 4a, the Cross Border Programme for Territorial Cooperation, appears to offer the most immediate opportunities. It applies to Northern Ireland; the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland. Dumfries & Galloway and East and South Ayrshire are all eligible. Priority 2 (Cooperation for a sustainable Programme region) is aimed at strengthening environmental protection and the synergies between the environmental context and the economy. Encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of natural and cultural resources, as well as the prevention of natural and technological risks.

An tentative approach has been received from the Antrim Coast Heritage Trust to explore the possible development of a joint Interreg IVa project in cooperation with Donegal in Ireland and South West Scotland.

## **4.2 LEADER**

Almost the entire area of South West Scotland is now covered by the LEADER Programme, split between D&G Leader & Ayrshire Leader. While each LAG has its own individual strategy and priorities, generally the LEADER Programme is focussed on community capacity building and community regeneration and utilises a bottom up community led and partnership driven process which is common throughout both areas. However while Leader strategies identify priorities they currently have no clear spatial component or organising principles for that strategy in local areas and sub regions to place potential projects within an overall strategy for an area.

LEADER offers rural South West Scotland significant opportunity and resources for regeneration over the next 5 years (£3.4m for Ayrshire and £2.75m in D&G) through a series of match funded individual projects (sponsored by local community groups, social enterprises and community planning partners, including councils). This will provide a total Programme spend of £12.3m in the area. Opportunities also exist for linking with other LEADER areas.

SRDP currently has Measure 341 “Production of Collaborative Local Development Strategies” which is currently being considered for transfer and administration through LEADER. This measure facilitates the creation of Local Development Strategies to provide coherent and integrated frameworks for developing individual projects showing how specific investments will contribute to local priorities. The measure will support:

- Studies of the area
- Information on area and strategy
- Staff training in developing /implementing strategies
- Promotional events

- Training of leaders
- Implementing public/private partnerships
- The measure will fund research and consultancy; promotional work; information and implementation of the strategy.

**There appears to be EU Funding support at a number of levels which would fit with the aspirations for sustainable regeneration and development in South West Scotland. Interest from partners in Ireland and Northern Ireland for some form of Cross Boundary strategic approach to regeneration and development are currently being explored. The exact form and extent of this will require further discussion and investigation.**

**INTERREG potentially appears to offer a good strategic fit between the aims and priorities of the Programme and the possibilities for application to a development and regeneration strategy based around ecosystem principles in South West Scotland.**

**At a community level LEADER could be used for local project implementation within the context of a wider strategic framework at the level of individual river catchment planning areas.**

**SRDP offers significant support at the level of individual land managers.**

## **6. Local Authority Context**

By prioritising local authorities efforts Single Outcome Agreements/Community Planning Partnerships offer the opportunity to target coordinated actions and investments in the public sector which can underpin and facilitate regeneration efforts. Other key statutory functions such as Local Development Plans, Local Transport Plans etc would also need to consider how to coordinate with and underpin regeneration efforts.

**Local Authority and Community Planning Partnership priorities and investments would need to be aligned and integrated with the rural regeneration and development efforts.**

## **7. Widening the Partnership**

This may be an opportune moment to give consideration to involving other partners who could add value to the process. Key partners indicated by this review in addition to existing members could include:

- SEPA/ Marine Scotland
- Visit Scotland

- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Water
- University/ Research Institute
- Community Planning Partnerships
- Scottish Power

**A widely representative and committed partnership will need to be developed building on the firm foundations created by the existing membership.**

## **8 Summary**

At previous meetings of the Biosphere Group it has been agreed that irrespective of what ultimately happens with a formal BR proposal in South West Scotland the positive progress in joint collaborative working already made amongst the partners should not be lost. The opportunity now exists to consolidate this progress and develop a cross cutting approach which builds on and integrates a range of policy strands in support of maximising South West Scotland's sustainable contribution to national economic growth. A number of options have been explored with a view to gaining insights from other related approaches on how to proceed. The aim being to work towards a model for regional development in South West Scotland which fully integrates people, communities, jobs, culture and nature in a way which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The foregoing review of the approaches has indicated a number of insights which should be helpful in deciding the next steps. The following summarises the key pointers:

1. The Mackay study indicates quite clearly that a targeted regional development initiative focussed on this area would produce significant additional economic and social benefit. A concentration on the key sectors – Tourism; small SME's; Angling; Local Food and Renewable Energy - identified in the study would appear to offer clear potential for development and regeneration. However there are also a number of other sectors and actions where the benefits are not as easily measurable but which are likely to merit further attention.
2. The BIDs process offers real potential to engage the business community (in partnership with the local authority), in bringing additional money and leveraging in additional investment and funding to help deliver regeneration in combination with a range of other efforts across the area. Consideration should be given initially to targeting those sectors identified in the Mackay study as offering significant potential.
3. The role that the GFP could play in underpinning economic development across the communities of the wider south west Scotland area has been recognised by FCS, the issue is to clarify how this can be identified, maximised and delivered. There is however

a much wider role for forestry in relation to climate change, timber, biodiversity, access and health, environmental quality and community and business development which needs to be factored into any consideration and studies of GFP's potential and more generally of regeneration and development in the area.

4. The Ecosystem Services Approach offers an important holistic tool with great potential for the identification and valuation of the potential of the area's resources and as a regional development framework for planning and managing sustainable regeneration and development. South West Scotland could be the basis for A Model Ecosystem Framework Project (similar to current initiatives in NE Scotland) across the whole area or based initially on say one or more individual river catchments as pilot projects.
5. One particular application, focussed on complete river systems, which has similarities to an ecosystem approach is currently being operationalised via the River Basin Management Planning process under the Water Framework Directive.
6. The developments in river basin and river catchment management and planning are a significant move towards operationalising an ecosystem services type approach to planning man and biosphere relationships. Planning and managing these relationships at the level of individual river catchment areas as exemplified by the River Basin Management Planning and Catchment Planning process provides a useful and logical template worthy of consideration for adoption in planning for development and regeneration. It is, however, essential that there is improved integration and coordination between WFD and other policies and funding, particularly in relation to the community dimension and the Community Planning Process.
7. A process based around Whole Town Strategies/Community Futures offers great potential for building capacity in local communities and organisations, agreeing, energising and focusing regeneration efforts in the area and engaging and coordinating with Community Planning Partnerships and other public, private and voluntary agencies. This approach would be enhanced by integration and coordination with an Ecosystem based approach to RBMP.
8. There appears to be EU Funding support at a number of levels which would fit with the aspirations for sustainable regeneration and development in South West Scotland. Initial exploratory interest from partners in some form of strategic approach to regeneration and development has been received. The exact form and extent of this will require further discussion and investigation.
9. INTERREG IV appears to offer a good strategic fit between the aims and priorities of the Programme and the possibilities for application to a development and regeneration strategy based around ecosystem principles in South West Scotland. At a community level LEADER could be used for local project implementation within the context of a wider strategic framework at the level of individual river catchment planning areas. SRDP offers significant support at the level of individual land managers.

10. Local Authority and Community Planning Partnership priorities and investments would need to be aligned and integrated with the rural regeneration and development efforts.
11. A widely representative and committed partnership will need to be developed building on the firm foundations created by the existing membership.

## **9 . Conclusion**

The review indicates that each of the different approaches reviewed individually all offer some distinct and significant advantages to sustainable regeneration and development in the context of rural South West Scotland. Some of the approaches are actively being applied to policy and practice at the present time, some are in use but not within South West Scotland and others have yet to be fully operationalised in the field. However despite their application and relevance they have so far not been applied in an integrated and coherent way anywhere. To work towards a model for regional development in South West Scotland which fully integrates people, communities, jobs, culture and nature in a way which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable would require coordination and integration of these various approaches. Such an approach would require a committed partnership, political support, community engagement and funding. An exercise which worked towards developing the feasibility of a pilot project based on one or more of South West Scotland's complete river catchments from source to sea and which incorporated a synthesis of the main findings could be the next step towards a regional scale model for sustainable regeneration and development.

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