

Dear SIRN community,

With another year coming to a close, we want to thank you for your support and we send you our best wishes for 2019.

Adélia de Paula (on behalf of [SIRN Leadership Team](#))

Opportunity for early-career researchers:

“Sustainable Intensification & Valuing Nature in Dialogue: enabling researchers to work across environment and farming policy interests”

Workshop for early-career researchers

5th -7th March 2019 – Birmingham

We are very pleased to inform about a new workshop in partnership with the Valuing Nature (VN) programme aimed to support the development of capability for researchers to work across the diverse disciplines needed to link Sustainable Intensification and Natural Capital frameworks. Therefore, VN and SIRN are inviting expressions of interests from early-career researchers to take part in the three-day event. There is no cost to attend the workshop, overnight accommodation (5th and 6th March 2019) and meals will be provided free of charge. Attendees will be expected to cover their own travel costs.

Confirmed speakers and mentors include Michael Winter (University of Exeter), Andy Whitmore (Rothamsted Research), Ece Ozdemiroglu, (eftec), Rosie Hails (National Trust), Robert Fish (University of Kent) and Charles Godfray (University of Oxford).

More information on eligibility and application process [here](#).

Closing date for application is **10am 28th January 2019** - **Please help us disseminating the information to your colleagues.**

Other events, career development and networking opportunities:

The Oxford Farming Conference

2nd-4th January 2019 – Oxford

If you are attending the conference, we want to highlight the events:

- **Putting Science Back into Policy** with former Government Chief Scientific Advisor Prof Sir Mark Walport, now Chief Executive of UKRI - Thursday 3rd Jan. 15:40
- **BBSRC Innovation Hub** - An exciting opportunity to get up-close with the latest agricultural research from around the country. Learn about BBSRC's investment in world-class bioscience research, and how it could help your business adapt to change. Thursday 3rd Jan 16:40
- **A world of innovation** – A focus on some of the world's most spectacular innovations and farming, their impact on the world, and the barriers to acceptance and how to overcome those. Speakers from Microsoft UK, JIC, AHDB, Queens University Belfast and Innovative Farmers. Friday 4th Jan 11:45

View programme [here](#).

The Oxford Real Farming Conference

3rd-4th January 2019 – Oxford

Programme for the 2019 conference is now [available](#). Lots to see including participation from this research community. Topics on show are: Sustainable Soil Management, Agroecological approaches to weed control, Maximizing the potential of uplands business, Intercropping in research and practice, Can increasing crop diversity make our farming systems more resilient to pests, diseases and weeds? Managing pests biologically: how can we build pest resilient systems?

STFC Food Network+ Showcase Event 2019

16th - 17th January 2019 – Didcot

The event will consist of talks by expert speakers on topics spanning the STFC Physics and AgriFood sectors along with updates on our awarded projects and networking opportunities. Book your place [here](#).

Defra funded workshop in Bristol on use of Organic Amendments in Agriculture (Livestock)

21st January 2019 - Bristol

Cranfield University in collaboration with Rothamsted Research, NIAB, Newcastle University and University of East Anglia have received funding from Defra to cooperate in a multidisciplinary project entitled Knowledge gaps and research priorities to optimise the use of organic amendments for sustainable intensification of UK agricultural systems. This is an invitation to farmers, policy makers, researchers, waste management companies, fertiliser companies and researchers to attend the workshop free of charge. Book your place [here](#).

UKRI BBSRC community workshop - creating a network on quality and food loss in horticulture

31st January 2019 - Central London

BBSRC are holding a community workshop to bring together academic and industry experts in areas of quality traits and reducing food loss, with the overall aim of creating a focussed network. Read more [here](#). **Application deadline: 17:00, 3 January 2019.**

Is the future of the food up in the air or down on the ground? - Soil and Food Security Conference

7th of February 2019 - Royal Agricultural University

This free conference draws together experts to debate how the options from a range of sectors will secure the worlds food supply. Delegates will gain unparalleled access to those at the forefront of research and industry direction. The day offers the chance for speakers and delegates to network and develop valuable research links. Book your place [here](#).

Innovate UK - Climate change and agriculture: all you need to know in a day

6th March 2019 – London

This conference will be an overview of the impacts of climate change on agriculture and the range of options available to cope with the changes. It will also address the impacts agriculture has on the climate and the options available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. If you want to get to grips with the state of the art in agriculture, food supply and climate change, then this conference will tell you all you need to know. In a day. Read more [here](#).

STFC Sandpit advanced technology for addressing challenges in water runoff from fields in the UK

27th-28th March 2019 – Lancaster

Funded by the [STFC](#)'s 21st Century Challenge programme, CEH is planning to run a two-day sandpit event to build multidisciplinary collaborations involving STFC-funded researchers.

Read more [here](#). Closing date: **31st January 2019**

Cambridge Global Food Security International Symposium 2019: Generating Practical Solutions

Save the date! *8-9th April 2019 – Cambridge*

The event will address three important themes within the overall food security challenge, with a focus on India and Africa: Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sustainable Agriculture, Food Supply Chains and Trade and Gender, Nutrition and Policy.

Registration will be opening soon. Read more [here](#).

The STEPS Summer School on Pathways to Sustainability

13th-24th May 2019 - Brighton

The Summer School is a two-week immersive course on theories and practical approaches to sustainability, through creative, interactive and participatory learning.

Read more [here](#). The deadline to apply is 23.59 on **27th February 2019**

Opportunities to influence:

Help review the UK's Centres for Agricultural Innovation

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is interested in your views of the four Agri-Tech Centres:

- Centre for precision agriculture and engineering [Agri-EPI Centre](#)
- Centre of excellence for big data across the agri-food sector [Agrimetrics](#)
- Centre for innovation in crop health and protection [CHAP](#)
- Centre for innovation excellence in livestock [CIEL](#)

They are seeking to gather an independent assessment of the investment to date. Whether or not you have heard of or used the centres, they would be very grateful for your views – no prior knowledge or experience of the Agri-Tech Centres is required. The [survey](#) should take less than five minutes to complete.

Join the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Scientific Advisory Committee

FSA Chair, Heather Hancock, and the Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Guy Poppy, are inviting applications from science experts to join independent Scientific Advisory Committees including three new joint expert groups.

Read more [here](#). Closing date for applications is **23.59pm Friday 4th January 2019**

News on recent awarded funding:

£7m multilateral programme to tackle swine and poultry disease

11 collaborative projects have been funded, involving leading UK bioscience researchers and teams in China, the Philippines and Thailand. Host- pathogen interactions, microbiology, epidemiology, and disease management and control, are issues that will be addressed as part of the research. A total of £7 million has been awarded by BBSRC on behalf of UK Research and Innovation to support UK research organisations, a sum matched collectively by the project's other international partners. Read more [here](#).

UKRI launched major programmes to tackle climate change and drive clean growth

Four research programmes established with £60 million of funding have been announced to protect the environment and communities from the effects of climate change and support a move to a low carbon economy by:

- Producing better data on climate risks to the UK
- Building a digital picture of our natural environment for greater monitoring and analysis of the impact of climate change
- Reducing air pollution and protecting vulnerable groups from its effects
- Ensuring better use of land, for the benefit of the environment and communities
- Development of options to adapt to climate risks, and understanding behaviour change

You can see summary of projects including on Climate Resilience and Landscape Decisions [here](#) .

UK-wide consortium to combat serious threat to plant health

The bacterial plant diseases programme is a £17.7m collaboration between UK Research and Innovation Councils, BBSRC and NERC - together with Defra and the Scottish Government who are providing £1.1m of additional funding.

In a first phase of the programme a broad consortium of institutions co-ordinated by the John Innes Centre has been awarded £4.85m to address the urgent need for evidence to inform the UK's response to the potentially devastating *Xylella fastidiosa*, a highly infectious bacterium that has proved impossible to eradicate following outbreaks in continental Europe.

Read more [here](#).

UKRI announces the new Global Research Hubs to tackle complex development challenges

12 Global Research Hubs were selected. Over the next five years these interdisciplinary research Hubs will work with governments, international agencies, NGOs and community groups in developing countries to provide creative and sustainable solutions to help make the world safer, healthier and more prosperous. You can see a list of projects [here](#).

UK-SCAPE (UK- Status Change and Projections of the Environment)

CEH has recently secured five years of funding from NERC for the new programme UK-SCAPE. The programme was launched on the 5th December 2018 and will underpin future environmental research across the UK and enable a crucial shift towards a more holistic approach looking at the wider landscape. Read more [here](#).

New research to assess long-term governance implications of Brexit in the UK

ESRC has announced £3.5m of funding for a programme examining the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, including on the country's constitutional arrangements, public service provision and delivery and economic performance across different places and sectors such as agriculture industries. A project led by the University of Sheffield, in collaboration with UEA and the University of York, will explore agri-environmental governance post-Brexit and the co-production of policy frameworks. Read more [here](#).

Locked up

Another project led by CEH will transform our understanding of the potential of soil carbon storage to mitigate climate change. The project is to receive a grant of £1.8 million from NERC to help scientists understand the processes of soil carbon formation, stabilisation and loss. Read more [here](#).

NERC announcement on 4th round of highlight topics

£24 million for new research into major environmental topics. From understanding how soil can capture carbon, to investigating the impact of light pollution on coastal creatures, these awards fund research areas essential to help us understand our environment and how we live within it. Read more [here](#).

Funding opportunities for research projects and fellowships:

ERA- NET SUSAN Joint Call on “Novel technologies, solutions and systems to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions in animal production systems”

The three ERA-NETs FACCE ERA-GAS (Monitoring and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases from Agriculture and Silviculture), ERA-NET SusAn (Sustainable Animal Production Systems) and ICT-AGRI 2 (Information and Communication Technologies and Robotics for Sustainable Agriculture) have coordinated and aligned efforts in areas of mutual interest and established a joint transnational funding programme in the field of agricultural greenhouse gas (GHG) research, focusing on emissions from livestock production. The overall objective of the 2018 Joint Call is to contribute to the development of novel technologies, solutions and systems to reduce the GHG intensity of animal production systems in Europe and beyond. This funding initiative calls for applied research. The projects’ potential impact should be relevant for the mitigation of GHG emissions within 5 - 10 years.

Read more [here](#). **Deadline extended until 31st January 2019**

Royal Society Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships

These enable researchers to focus on full-time research by relieving them of all their teaching and administrative duties. Candidates may be working in all areas of the life and physical sciences. Read more [here](#). **Deadline: 5th February 2019**

UKRI Landscape Decisions Strategic Priority Fund – Programme Coordination Team (2019)

UKRI are inviting applications for a Programme Coordination Team (PCT) for the Strategic Priorities Fund's 'Landscape Decisions: Toward a new framework for using land assets' programme. The programme will be jointly delivered by NERC, EPSRC, ESRC, BBSRC and AHRC. The Coordination team will address the varied challenges and perspectives of the programme, and integrate its package of work with other new and ongoing activities within the programme in a cohesive way. Funding of up to £725,000 at 80% full economic cost is available over the four years of the programme. Read more [here](#). **Deadline: 16:00 on 19 February 2019**

NERC: Large grants

These grants support adventurous, large-scale and complex research tackling big science questions that cannot be addressed through other NERC funding opportunities. Value: £1.2-£3.7mil, up to 5 years. Read more [here](#). **Deadlines: 16:00 12th March 2019 (outline proposals), November 2019 (full proposals)**

Pre-announcement - FACCE-JPI: Third call for proposals for joint research projects

This aims to improve collaboration and cooperation across European research in the area of sustainable intensification of food and non-food biomass production and transformation systems, including biorefinery concepts. Value: €6mil, 36 months.

Read more [here](#). **Deadline: 19th March 2019 (Call expected to be announced on 9th January 2019)**

Pre-announcement - UKRI ‘GCRF Collective Programme’

The new international development research programme will bring together a wide range of researchers from across the UK and developing countries to generate innovative solutions to intractable development issues and contribute to enabling healthier and safer lives, sustainable development and prosperity for all. The individual Programme calls will be officially launched throughout 2019 with topics including:

- **Food Systems:** GCRF Cultures and histories of agriculture, food, and nutrition and GCRF A combined Food Systems approach to developing interventions to address the Double Burden of Malnutrition
- **Resilience to Environmental Shocks and Change:** GCRF Equitable Resilience: ensuring resilience enhances the Sustainable Development Goals and GCRF Multiple and systemic Risks

For more information on individual call announcements, read [here](#).

Highlighted publications:

William J. Sutherland, Steven Broad, Stuart H.M. Butchart, Stewart J. Clarke, Alexandra M. Collins, Lynn V. Dicks, Helen Doran, Nafeesa Esmail, Erica Fleishman, Nicola Frost, Kevin J. Gaston, David W. Gibbons, Alice C. Hughes, Zhigang Jiang, Ruth Kelman, Becky LeAnstey, Xavier le Roux, Fiona A. Lickorish, Kathryn A. Monk, Diana Mortimer, James W. Pearce-Higgins, Lloyd S. Peck, Nathalie Pettoirelli, Jules Pretty, Colleen L. Seymour, Mark D. Spalding, Jonathan Wentworth, Nancy Ockendon, **A Horizon Scan of Emerging Issues for Global Conservation in 2019**, Trends in Ecology & Evolution, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2018.11.001>

Natural England "[Natural Capital Indicators: for defining and measuring change in natural capital](#)" report (2018)

Valuing Nature "[Demystifying Health](#)" report (2018)

Podcast:

Listen to [podcast from the Disruptive Environmentalist](#) featuring David Rose (University of East Anglia) on ways to influence behaviour around environmental issues.



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