A4.4 Avon Valley Habitat Targets

Table A4.4.1: Uptake of Eligible Land to the Tiers of ESA Agreements

Tier of agreement	Area Eligible to Enter Tier (ha)	'Target' Uptake % of Eligible Area	Area Under Agreement (ha)	% Eligible Area Under Agreement
1	3257	50	827	25
2 (Option 1)	2630	15	141	5
2 (Option 2)	581	-	27	5

Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Table A4.4.2: Maintenance Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Maintenance Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Maintain existing habitat extent and quality
Natural Area		To maintain existing extent of habitat
Local BAP	2,000 ha* of floodplain grazing marsh 5,400 ha* of both habitats	Maintain the extent and quality of the existing resource of the habitat
ESA		50% of all grassland is under Tier 1 agreement
		15% of floodplain grass is under Tier 2 (option 1) agreement to maintain habitat
* = quoted estimates		

Table A4.4.3: Rehabilitation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Rehabilitation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Rehabilitate 10,000ha of grazing marsh which has become too dry or is intensively managed by 2000. Half of this area to be within ESAs
Natural Area		To enhance existing habitat
Local BAP	2,000 ha* of floodplain grazing marsh 5400 ha* of both habitats	Within SSSIs, initiate restoration management on all areas of habitat in unfavourable condition by 2003 in order to achieve favourable conservation status on all grassland habitat within SSSIs (3,800 ha) by 2010
		Outside SSSIs, secure existing appropriate management on sites in good condition, or implement restoration management on sites in unfavourable condition, on 30% of the remaining habitats - 500 ha- by 2005, and as near practical to 100% - 1,600 ha - by 2010
ESA		50% of all grassland is under Tier 1 agreement
		15% of flood plain grassland is under Tier 2 (option 1) agreement to enhance the habitat
* = quoted estimates		

Table A4.4.4: Creation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Creation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Create 2,500ha of new grazing marshes from arable land in target areas, in addition to that achieved by ESA schemes, with the aim of completing as much as possible by 2000
Natural Area		To restore approximately 2,000 ha of inclosure to heathland, mire and grassland habitats by tree and fence removal, and restoration of grazing
Local BAP	2,000 ha* of floodplain grazing marsh 5400 ha* of both habitats	Expand area of new species-rich neutral grassland outside ESAs by an additional 100ha by 2010
		Within the Test and Avon ESAs begin expanding the extent of new species rich grazing marsh by reversion from arable; establish 150 ha of extensive grassland by 2002 (tier 2A), with the aim of management as grazing marsh (tier 1C) by 2010
ESA		10% of arable land is reverted to grassland using the specified seed mixture under Tier 2 (Option 2)
* = quoted estimates		

Table 4.4.5: Creation Targets for Reedbeds in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Creation Target
National	2,300 ha	Create 1,200 ha of new reedbed on land of low nature conservation interest by 2010
Natural Area		To extend habitat where appropriate
Local BAP		Not specified
ESA		Not specified

Fens

Table A4.4.6: Maintenance Targets for Fens in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Maintenance Target
National		Identify priority fen sites in critical need of rehabilitation
Natural Area		To maintain existing extent of habitat
Local BAP	3,000ha*	Maintain the extent and quality of the existing resource of the habitat
ESA		There is no reduction in the area of wetland habitats
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

Table A4.4.7: Rehabilitation Targets for Fens in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Rehabilitation Target
National		Initiate rehabilitation of priority sites by 2005. Ensure appropriate water quality and quantity for all SSSI fens by 2005
Natural Area		To enhance existing habitat
Local BAP	3,000ha*	Within SSSIs, initiate restoration management on all areas of habitat in unfavourable condition by 2003 in order to achieve favourable conservation status on all grassland habitat within SSSIs (3,800 ha) by 2010
		Outside SSSIs, secure existing appropriate management on sites in good condition, or implement restoration management on sites in unfavourable condition, on 30% of the remaining habitats - 500 ha- by 2005, and as near practical to 100% - 1,600 ha - by 2010
ESA		30% of agreements have a conservation plan
		10% of conservation plans include provision for the positive management of wetland habitat areas
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

Table A4.4.8: Creation Targets for Fens in the Avon Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Creation Target
National		Not specified
Natural Area		To extend the area of agriculturally unimproved grassland within the Avon Valley
Local BAP	3,000 ha*	Expand area of new species-rich grassland outside ESAs by an additional 100 ha by 2010.
ESA		Not specified
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

A4.5 Test Valley Habitat Targets

Table A4.5.1: Uptake of Eligible Land to the Tiers of ESA Agreements

Tier of Agreement	Area Eligible to Enter Tier (ha)	'Target' Uptake % of Eligible Area	Area Under Agreement (ha)	% Eligible Area Under Agreement
1A	2,396	30	357	15
1B	2,396	30	821	34
2	883	10	153	17

Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Table A4.5.2: Maintenance Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Maintenance Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Maintain existing habitat extent and quality
Natural Area		To maintain existing extent of habitat
Local BAP	2,000 ha*	Maintain the extent and quality of the existing resource of the habitat
ESA		60% of all grassland is under agreement
		30% of grassland is under Tier 1A agreement to maintain the nature conservation interest of the improved permanent grassland
		30% of grassland is under Tier 1B agreement to maintain the nature conservation interest of the unimproved grassland
* = quoted estimates		

Table A4.5.3: Rehabilitation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Rehabilitation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Rehabilitate 10,000ha of grazing marsh which has become too dry or is intensively managed by 2000. Half of this area to be within ESAs
Natural Area		To enhance existing habitat
Local BAP	2,000 ha*	Within SSSIs, initiate restoration management on all areas of habitat in unfavourable condition by 2003 in order to achieve favourable conservation status on all grassland habitat within SSSIs (3,800 ha) by 2010
		Outside SSSIs, secure existing appropriate management on sites in good condition, or implement restoration management on sites in unfavourable condition, on 30% of the remaining habitats - 500 ha- by 2005, and as near practical to 100% - 1,600 ha - by 2010
ESA		60% of all grassland is under agreement
		30% of grassland is under Tier 1A agreement to enhance the nature conservation interest of the improved permanent grassland
		30% of grassland is under Tier 1B agreement to enhance the nature conservation interest of the unimproved grassland
* = quoted estimates		

Table A4.5.4: Creation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Creation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Create 2,500ha of new grazing marshes from arable land in target areas, in addition to that achieved by ESA schemes, with the aim of completing as much as possible by 2000
Natural Area		To expand the habitat where appropriate
Local BAP	2,000 ha*	Expand area of new species-rich neutral grassland outside ESAs by an additional 100ha by 2010
		Within the Test and Avon ESAs begin expanding the extent of new species rich grazing marsh by reversion from arable; establish 150 ha of extensive grassland by 2002 (Tier 2A), with the aim of management as grazing marsh (Tier 1C) by 2010
ESA		10% of arable land is reverted to grassland under Tier 2
* = quoted estimates		

Fens

Table A4.5.5: Maintenance Targets for Fens in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Maintenance Target
National		Identify priority fen sites in critical need of rehabilitation
Natural Area		To maintain existing extent of habitat
Local BAP	3,000ha*	Maintain the extent and quality of the existing resource of the habitat
ESA		Not specified
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

Table A4.5.6: Rehabilitation Targets for Fens in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Rehabilitation Target
National		Initiate rehabilitation of priority sites by 2005. Ensure appropriate water quality and quantity for all SSSI fens by 2005
Natural Area		To enhance existing habitat
Local BAP	3,000ha*	Within SSSIs, initiate restoration management on all areas of habitat in unfavourable condition by 2003 in order to achieve favourable conservation status on all grassland habitat within SSSIs (3,800 ha) by 2010
		Outside SSSIs, secure existing appropriate management on sites in good condition, or implement restoration management on sites in unfavourable condition, on 30% of the remaining habitats - 500 ha- by 2005, and as near practical to 100% - 1,600 ha - by 2010
ESA		Not specified
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

Table A4.5.7: Creation Targets for Fens in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Creation Target
National		Not specified
Natural Area		To expand habitat where appropriate
Local BAP	3,000 ha*	Expand area of new species-rich grassland outside ESAs by an additional 100 ha by 2010
ESA		Not specified
* area of unimproved neutral grassland/fen in Hampshire		

Reedbeds

Table A4.5.8: Maintenance Targets for Reedbeds in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Maintenance Target
National	2,300ha	Identify by 2000 the priority areas of existing reedbed and maintain by active management
Natural Area		To maintain existing extent of habitat
Local BAP		Not specified
ESA		There is no reduction in the area of wet habitats
		30% of all agreements have a conservation plan
		10% of conservation plans include provision for the positive management of wet habitat areas

Table A4.5.9: Rehabilitation Targets for Reedbeds in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Rehabilitation Target
National	2,300ha	Rehabilitate priority areas of existing reedbed and maintain subsequently
Natural Area		To enhance existing habitat
Local BAP		Not specified
ESA		30% of agreements have a conservation plan
		10% of conservation plans include provision for the positive management of wet habitat areas

Table A4.5.10: Creation Targets for Reedbeds in the Test Valley

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Creation Target
National	2,300ha	Create 1,200 ha of new reedbed on land of low nature conservation interest by 2010
Natural Area		To extend habitat where appropriate
Local BAP		Not specified
ESA		Not specified

A4.6 Broads Habitat Targets

Table A4.6.1: Uptake of Eligible Land to the Tiers of ESA Agreement

Tier of Agreement	Area Eligible to Enter Tier (ha)	'Target' Uptake (% of eligible area)	Area Under Agreement* (ha)	% Eligible Area Under Agreement
1	17,334	50	8,371	48
2	17,334	32	6,331	37
3	17,334	3	334	2
4A**	6,630	5	275	4
4B	-	-	6	-

* Includes all applications and signed agreements as at end December 1995
** Some arable reversion land has subsequently come under Tier 2 agreements

Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Table 4.6.2: Maintenance Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Maintenance Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Maintain existing habitat extent and quality
Natural Area	20,000 ha	Maintain the extent of the drained marshes
		Where drained marsh is to continue into the longer term, manage as lowland wet grassland, with associated high water tables and extensive grazing
		Maintain appropriate water quality so as to sustain recognised areas of both freshwater and brackish dyke communities
		Manage all fen meadows by extensive grazing
		Protect all areas of carr woodland on the drained marsh
		Maintain populations of all internationally and nationally important species present within the drained marshland
		Achieve BAP targets for this habitat and the species it supports
Local BAP	29,500 ha*	Maintain existing habitat extent and quality
ESA		85% of permanent grassland is under agreement
		50% of permanent grassland is under Tier 1 agreement
		32% of grassland is under Tier 2 agreement
		3% of grassland is under Tier 3 agreement
		Vegetation that is characteristic of ditches at various successional stages of development does not deteriorate under Tier 1 agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Table 4.6.3: Rehabilitation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Rehabilitation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Rehabilitate 10,000 ha of grazing marsh which has become too dry or is intensively managed by 2000. Half of this area to be within ESAs
Natural Area	20,000 ha	Restore freshwater dyke communities in drained marshland areas, increasing the total length of dyke habitat
		Restore the remaining areas of fen meadow
		Strengthen populations of all internationally and nationally important species present in sustainable situations
		Achieve BAP targets for this habitat and the species it supports
Local BAP	29,500 ha*	Rehabilitate 640 ha of grazing marsh habitat which has become too dry, or is intensively managed, by the year 2000. This would comprise 320 ha already targeted in ESAs, with an additional 320 ha
ESA		85% of permanent grassland is under agreement
		50% of permanent grassland is under Tier 1 agreement
		32% of grassland is under Tier 2 agreement
		3% of grassland is under Tier 3 agreement
		Vegetation that is characteristic of wet grassland increases on organic soils under Tier 2 agreement
		Vegetation that is characteristic of ditches at various successional stages of development increases under Tier 2 agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Table 4.6.4: Creation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Creation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Create 2,500ha of new grazing marshes from arable land in target areas, in addition to that achieved by ESA schemes, with the aim of completing as much as possible by 2000
Natural Area	20,000 ha	Over time a progressively larger area should be allowed to return to the natural regime of the river
		Create small shallow transient and more permanent water bodies within the marshes
		Recreate new areas of fen meadow on peaty soils
		Expand carr woodland where they will not compromise freshwater dyke communities
		Achieve BAP targets for this habitat and the species it supports
Local BAP	29,500 ha*	Aim to create 350 ha of grazing marsh from arable land on the North Norfolk Coast, in addition to that which will be achieved through the two existing ESA schemes in the county. This target does not include the element of habitat creation that may be necessary as a result of sea level rise
ESA		5% of arable land is reverted to grassland under Tier 4A agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Fens

Table 4.6.5: Maintenance Targets for Fens in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Maintenance Target
National		Ensure appropriate water quality and water quantity for the continued existence of all SSSI fens by 2005
Natural Area	2,750 ha*	Secure the means to sustain management through commercial activities that do not compromise the natural variety of the fens
		Secure appropriate supplies of water in the short term for the full range of fen sites and in the future, so as to sustain the greatest proportion possible of the present fen habitats under the scenario of sea level and environmental change
		Maintain the improved quality of water irrigating fen sites in order to sustain the wildlife interest
		Protect remaining fen and rond habitats from erosion, development or other human impact
		Maintain populations of all internationally and nationally important species
		Achieve BAP targets for fen habitats and species they support
Local BAP	5,350+ ha	Ensure appropriate water quality and water quantity for the continued existence of all Norfolk SSSI fens by 2005
ESA		Not specified
* estimate		

Table 4.6.6: Rehabilitation Targets for Fens in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Rehabilitation Target
National		Initiate rehabilitation of priority sites by 2005. Ensure appropriate water quality and quantity for all SSSI fens by 2005
Natural Area	2,750 ha*	Restore through the implementation of the Fen Management Strategy the flood plain fens, so as to bring about an appropriate balance of habitats, from shallow open water, swamp and herbaceous fen to scrub and carr woodland
		Improve the quality of water irrigating fen sites in order to sustain the wildlife interest
		Restore habitat in situations that are sustainable in the long term
		Achieve BAP targets for fen habitats and species they support
Local BAP	5,350+ ha	Identify Norfolk fen sites in critical need of rehabilitation, and initiate restoration by the year 2005. All rich fen and other sites with rare communities should be considered
ESA		Not specified
* estimate		

Table 4.6.7: Creation Targets for Fens in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Fen	Creation Target
National		Not specified
Natural Area	2,750 ha*	In the short term, promote the creation of new habitat in areas secure from environmental change. In the longer term allow natural processes to take place
		Recreate replacement fen in situations where it is sustainable in the longer term
		Re-establish populations of all internationally and nationally important species over a range which takes in to account future environmental change
		Achieve BAP targets for fen habitats and species they support
Local BAP	5,350+ ha	Not specified
ESA		Not specified
* estimate		

Reedbeds

Table 4.6.8: Maintenance Targets for Reedbeds in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Maintenance Target
National	2,300 ha	Identify by 2000 the priority areas of existing reedbed and maintain by active management
Natural Area		Secure the means to sustain management through commercial activities that do not compromise the natural variety of the reedbeds
		Secure appropriate supplies of water in the short term for the full range of sites and in the future, so as to sustain the greatest proportion possible of the present habitats under the scenario of sea level and environmental change
		Maintain the improved quality of water irrigating sites in order to sustain the wildlife interest
		Protect remaining fen and rond habitats from erosion, development or other human impact
		Maintain populations of all internationally and nationally important species
		Achieve BAP targets for fen habitats and species they support
Local BAP	1,540* ha in Norfolk	Maintain existing area and quality as a minimum
ESA		Not specified
*RSPB Reedbed Inventory - however, the definition of reedbed used for this inventory was wider than that proposed in the Local BAP		

Table 4.6.9: Rehabilitation Targets for Reedbeds in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Rehabilitation Target
National	2,300 ha	Rehabilitate priority areas of existing reedbed and maintain subsequently
Local BAP	1,540* ha in Norfolk	Rehabilitate by 2000 the priority areas of existing reedbed which are not currently at favourable conservation status
ESA		Not specified
*RSPB Reedbed Inventory - however, the definition of reedbed used for this inventory was wider than that proposed in the Local BAP		

Table 4.6.10: Creation Targets for Reedbeds in the Broads

Level	Known Extent of Reedbed	Creation Target
National	2,300 ha	Create 1,200 ha of new reedbed on land of low nature conservation interest by 2010
Local BAP	1,540* ha in Norfolk	Create 100 ha of new reedbed to replace reedbeds likely to be lost to rising sea levels in advance of loss. These should be located as near as possible to existing sites on areas of current low nature conservation interest
		Recreate a further 600ha of new reedbed safe from future threat of sea level rise within Norfolk and Suffolk. This will be on areas of low current nature conservation interest
ESA		Not specified
*RSPB Reedbed Inventory - however, the definition of reedbed used for this inventory was wider than that propose in the Local BAP		

A4.7 Upper Thames Tributaries Habitat Targets

Table 4.7.1: Uptake of Eligible Land into ESA Tiers

Tier of Agreement	Area Eligible to Enter Tier (ha)	Target % of Area Under Agreement	Area Under Agreement* (ha)	% Eligible Area Under Agreement
1A	10,687	45	2,462	23
1B	10,687	20	1,651	15
2	5,376	5	415	8
3A	12,508	-	467	4
3B	4,740	-	105	2
* Signed agreements by end of December 1997 (excludes any outstanding applications).				

Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

Table 4.7.2: Maintenance Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Upper Thames Tributaries

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Maintenance Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Maintain existing habitat extent and quality
Natural Area		Ensure all grassland of high nature conservation interest is managed appropriately (Thames and Avon Vales).
		Encourage the maintenance and restoration of water levels in the traditionally wet meadows of the river flood plains (Thames and Avon Vales)
Local BAP		To maintain 200 ha of unimproved or semi-improved grazing marsh at Otmoor
		To have 500-600 ha of semi-natural wet grassland under management at Otmoor by 2010 which will meet with ESA objectives
ESA		70% of all permanent grassland is under agreement
		5% of floodplain grassland is under Tier 2 agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Table 4.7.3: Rehabilitation Targets for Grazing Marsh in the Upper Thames Tributaries

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Rehabilitation Target
National	219,000 ha in England (1992)*	Rehabilitate 10,000ha of grazing marsh which has become too dry or is intensively managed by 2000. Half of this area to be within ESAs
Natural Area		Encourage the maintenance and restoration of water levels in the traditionally wet meadows of the river flood plains (Thames and Avon Vales)
ESA		5% of floodplain grassland is under Tier 2 agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Table 4.7.4: Creation Targets for Grazing Marsh in Upper Thames Tributaries

Level	Known Extent of Grazing Marsh	Creation Target
National	219,000ha in England (1992)*	Create 2,500ha of new grazing marshes from arable land in target areas, in addition to that achieved by ESA schemes, with the aim of completing as much as possible by 2000
Natural Area		Encourage restoration of water levels in the traditionally wet meadows of the river floodplains, particularly in the Upper Thames Tributaries ESA
ESA		5% of arable land within the floodplain is reverted to wet grassland under Tier 3B agreement
* = quoted estimates		

Annex 5: Structured Formats for Interviews with English Nature and Farming and Rural Conservation Agency Officers

DRAFT QUESTIONAIRE FOR ENGLISH NATURE OFFICERS

The basis for each interview will be an analysis of the:

- ADAS Environmental Monitoring Reports to MAFF;
- Water Level Management Plans;
- Available species data;
- ESA maps with areas under different tiers of management;
- Local BAPs; and
- BAP short and medium list species and habitat and management requirements.

General Issues:

1. Interaction between English Nature and FCRA on the management of ESAs:

- setting overall environmental objectives, particularly with reference to BAP habitats and species targets;
- advising on management prescriptions for each tier; and
- monitoring farmer uptake and wildlife trends.

2. Interaction with other bodies, such as MAFF, EA or Drainage Boards regarding Water Level Management Plans:

- How are water levels set, and do they take into account key species water requirements?
- Are compromises made to cater for other water abstraction needs?

3. Views on farmer uptake, co-operation and understanding of wildlife needs. Is it all economically driven, or is there an increasing understanding of wildlife and biodiversity issues and an interest in contributing to conservation? What help are farmers getting in terms of practical advice eg: EN, Wildlife Trusts, FWAG, FRCA, ADAS, RSPB? What simple improvements could improve benefits for wildlife?

Specific Issues:

Habitats:

12. Discuss general implementation of habitats action plans, including grazing marsh, reedbeds and fens.

13. Discuss management prescriptions in the ESA and their role in meeting habitat action plans.

14. Discuss the success of the management prescriptions in contributing to the overall national habitat action plan targets.

15. How dependent is the ESA scheme on external factors, in addition to implementation of water level management plans, in terms of achieving BAP targets?

Other Relevant Site Designations:

1. How do other site designations eg: SSSIs, interact, for example, are there any conflicts, or do they, in practice, assure "double" protection?

Species:

Discuss the specific species action plans relevant to the ESA and how these are being implemented and monitored:

1. Species action plans - how are local targets set?
2. Who is involved in setting local targets?
3. How much is the ESA expected to deliver for the key species?
4. Are targets and species needs fed back to FRCA?
5. How flexible is the process of changing or modifying management prescriptions or environmental objectives to address BAP targets?
6. Monitoring species recovery - how is this co-ordinated and fed back to inform further target setting and action?
7. Interpretation and correlation of species data with the management practices being implemented - how is this approached, and what issues are currently being taken into account?
8. Which BAP species are likely to be met and which are seriously behind schedule? If so, what needs to be done, and how would this be addressed through the ESA?
9. Should future ESA Monitoring Reports record species other than birds and plants, eg: invertebrates, amphibians, particularly BAP species? Is this carried out by other groups and is there a way that this should be co-ordinated?

Future Developments:

1. What further action is required in terms of ensuring BAP targets are met within the ESA?

2. Are they realistically achievable, in terms of uptake and cost?

DRAFT QUESTIONAIRE FOR FRCA OFFICERS

The basis for each interview will be an analysis of the:

- ADAS Environmental Monitoring Reports to MAFF;
- Water Level Management Plans;
- Natural Area Profiles;
- Available species data;
- ESA maps with areas under different tiers of management;
- Local BAPs; and
- BAP short and medium list species and habitat and management requirements.

General Issues:

1. Interaction between FRCA and English Nature on the management of ESAs:

- setting overall environmental objectives, particularly with reference to BAP habitats and species targets;
- advising on management prescriptions for each tier; and
- monitoring farmer uptake and wildlife trends.

2. Interaction with other bodies, such as MAFF, EA or Drainage Boards regarding Water Level Management Plans:

- How are water levels set, and do they take into account key ESA objectives?
- Are compromises made to cater for other water abstraction needs? If so, what?

3. Views on farmer uptake, co-operation and understanding of wildlife needs. Is it all economically driven, or is there an increasing understanding of wildlife and biodiversity issues and an interest in contributing to conservation? What help are farmers getting in terms of practical advice eg: EN, Wildlife Trusts, FWAG, FRCA, ADAS, RSPB?

- What are the factors influencing decisions by farmers to enter agreements at different tiers?

- What other schemes run within the ESAs, eg: Arable Stewardship, Countryside Access Scheme, Farm Woodland Premium Scheme, Habitat Scheme, Nitrate Sensitive Areas, Organic Farming Scheme? How are these integrated?

Specific Issues:

Costings:

- Discuss the costings for each tier of the ESA, farmer uptake and total expenditure.

- Discuss possible extra expenditure required to persuade farmers to adopt higher tiers of management.

Meeting ESA Objectives:

- Discuss in detail how the ESA objectives are being met and the factors influencing success.

- How dependent is the ESA scheme on external factors, in addition to implementation of water level management plans, in terms of achieving BAP targets?

- What further improvements are being considered to ensure that objectives are being met?

Other Relevant Site Designations:

- How do other site designations eg: SSSIs, interact, for example, are there any conflicts, or do they, in practice, assure "double" protection?

Habitats and Species:

- Discuss the specific species action plans relevant to the ESA and how these are being implemented and monitored:
- Who is involved in setting the ESA objectives?
- How much is the ESA expected to deliver for the key species and habitat action plan targets?
- Are targets and species needs fed back to FRCA by the conservation bodies?
- How flexible is the process of changing or modifying management prescriptions or environmental objectives to address BAP targets?
- Monitoring species recovery - how is this co-ordinated and fed back to inform further target setting and action?
- Do FRCA consider that future ESA Monitoring Reports should record species other than birds and plants, eg: invertebrates, amphibians, particularly BAP species? Do other monitoring records or reports feed into the process, in addition to ADAS reports?

Future Developments:

- What further improvements to the ESA scheme do FRCA consider necessary for wildlife and habitats and are they realistically achievable?

- What is the future for ESAs? Any prospects for further funding or expansion of the ESA?