Landscape Scale Management:
The Pros and Cons for Upland Farmers

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What is a Landscape?

‘The relationship between people and place. It provides the setting for our day-to-day lives ... It results from the way that different components of our environment – both natural and cultural – interact together and are perceived by us.’ (Swanwick 2002:2; my emphasis).

The recent Glover Report (2019: 25) says:

‘We need people and nature to work together. We should encourage creative harmony’.
Upland Landscapes of Cumbria

- The Lake District (NP & WHS)
- Debateable Lands (+ Hadrian's Wall WHS)
- North Pennines (AONB)
- Yorkshire Dales (NP) (incl. Westmorland Dales)
What is Landscape Scale Management?

Another term for this is *Territorial Management*.

Used by Government in relation to **Nature Improvement Areas** in relation to the Lawson Report and **Nature Recovery Networks**.

Other Examples:
- National Character Areas (England)
- Natural Heritage Zones (Scotland)
- Catchment management

Thinking about and managing large sweeps of landscape.
How does that fit with Upland Farming?

- MASSIF
  - Eg. Commons operation

- CATCHMENT
  - Eg. Biodiversity and Ecological networks
  - Eg Community working

- VALLEY
  - Eg. Buildings & walls, skills

- FARM
Upland Farming Systems –
a cultural landscape
Hefting
Stratification

Best Hill lambs are kept for breeding lower down slope
Rest sent into food chain

Best Upland Longwool for breeding lower down slope
Rest sent into food chain

Best Lowland for cross breeding
Rest sent into food chain
Heft management can be thought about in three ways:

1) **Stocking density** – how many Livestock Units per ha (this varies by breed)

2) **Intraheft pressure** – within the heft, due to range of vegetation types which have different stocking densities

3) **Interheft pressure** – across hefts and thus the territory. Drift due to changes in stocking density and interheft pressure
Challenges to operating territorial management on upland farms

Cognitive conflict
NVC U2 or acid grassland?

Perceptions of marginality
How we use language to describe a place and what it perpetuates ie. ‘sheep wrecked hills’

Silo Management
Different organisations working in isolation, confusing signals on the ground

Land Ownership
Doesn’t fit physical landscape
Heft system biggest issue
More challenges!

**Multifunctionalism**
A piece of land has many uses
- Oh dear the gate is open!

**Centralised Power & control**
Too much ‘telling’ rather than collaborating

**Property rights**
Eg access issues or mineral rights
Challenge – Brexit

Average gross margin can be £5000/yr

Farm Income

- Farming: 40%
- Diversification: 30%
- Subsidies: 30%

Percentage of Hill Farms that could go out of Business

- Hard Brexit: 90%
- Soft Brexit: 60%
Opportunities: Ecosystem services

Provisioning Services
- Food (lamb, beef, milk)
- Fibre (wool & timber)
- Energy (HEP & Wind turbine)
- Mineral deposits

Regulatory Services
- Carbon storage & climate mitigation
- Flood risk management
- Water quality
- Wildfire risk prevention

Supporting Services
- Nutrient cycling
- Water cycling
- Soil formation
- Habitat provision

Cultural Services
- Landscape aesthetics
- Cultural heritage
- Biodiversity
- Health benefits
Territorial Opportunity – Brexit?

AGRICULTURE BILL 2019?

• Emphasis on public goods and related financial support – through agri-envt schemes
• Much less emphasis on rural development
• ‘Recognition’ of cultural heritage needing maintenance but no ideas

Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)

What do we know so far?
• May be three tiers
• A territorial theme to it (ie get farmers to link their farms)
• Paying for public goods NOT food
  eg flood management, climate mitigation
Opportunity: cultural heritage

Also one of the three key themes under World Heritage Site inscription: 
*Cultural landscape evolved through traditional agro-pastoral farming*

**Tangible assets**
- physical manifestations created by the farming process:
  - buildings, structures, sites & locations, product

**Intangible assets**
- ideas, practices, beliefs, traditions and values

**Landscape**
- Vernacular buildings
- Traditional boundaries
- Biodiversity

**Management of commons**
- Sense of place
- Community resilience

**Food**
Territorial opportunity – Climate Change

Example: flood management in Cumbria

**Goldrill Beck, Ullswater** - bank collapse of A592

To re-introduce river sinuosity, dealing with drought

Entirely owned by National Trust and tenant farmed

**Questions to consider**

How does it impact on the WHS of LD?

What impact does it have on the farm business & operations?

What is the cumulative impact of many flood management projects in the WHS – ie the territorial scale impact?
Territorial Opportunity - rewilding

Example: **Wild Ennerdale, West Cumbria**

To re-wild the valley reduce domesticated stock pressure and observe biodiversity change

Consortium of land owners: UU, NT and Forestry England

**Things to consider for farming**

The virtual boundaries of hefting system
Drift from neighbouring areas
Fencing in areas of thin almost non-existent soils
Behaviour of remaining stock – stock knowledge
Unrest in the farming community
Is it replicable – given the land ownership here?
Some concluding remarks

Upland farming systems form cultural landscapes and create cultural heritage in our uplands.

Territorial management is an integral feature of upland farming systems through the functioning of hefts.

*Challenges include:* Heft management, cognitive conflict, perceptions of marginality, silo management, land ownership, multifunctionalism, centralized power & control, property rights and Brexit

*Opportunities include:* Brexit, flood management, rewilding

Appreciating how hefts work is important if we have multiple agendas for uplands.