

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

10 principles for rural land and property managers, natural capital investors and off-setters to abide by

We have written this set of principles to help guide property and land owners and managers when making decisions about their property that affects its impact on the environment and society. Decisions should ideally be responsible, based on sound principles and of high-integrity.

MAKING DECISIONS:

1. THINK BROADLY



Consider both positive and negative impacts on all four types of capital, which are Economic, Human, Social and Natural, when making any decisions

4. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT YOU



Your decisions are likely to create benefits that could be shared between you, tenants, neighbours, the local community and possibly the general public. NB This does not necessarily mean making payments to the community but it could do; it could involve local procurement or public access

2. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CARBON



Carbon is just one issue to consider. Decisions should also consider energy, pollution, water quality and quantity, inequality, biodiversity and food supply.

5. IT'S GOOD TO TALK



For decisions that affect local communities or very large areas, engage with those local communities, rather like you would for major planning and development schemes.

3. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CREDITS



Think about what you can do to play your part in reducing climate change, biodiversity loss crises and impacts on people.

6. DON'T BE FACELESS



If you are buying property or changing the way it is used, engage with the local community as soon as you can to inform and discuss your future plans and maybe identify opportunities to collaborate. Avoid negatively affecting or taking away any rights that the community has benefited from.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR PROPERTY OR LAND

7. JEWELS IN THE CROWN



Identify what is environmentally or culturally important on your property or land and make sure it is in good condition. Restoration is one of the cheapest and quickest actions you can take.

9. FOLLOW THE ENVIRONMENTAL HIERARCHY



The hierarchy is to

- avoid emissions or environmental impact where possible
- if you can't avoid impacts, reduce them as much as practically possible, and then finally
- offset any remaining unavoidable impacts (as the last resort, not the first).

8. GET YOUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER FIRST



Consider and deal with your own current and future impacts before considering the sale of any environmental credits. Buyers of credits will want to know that they are not buying credits from you when you are polluting or having negative social impacts elsewhere.

10. SELL WELL



If you are selling credits, sell high quality ones. You can do this by using high quality professional advice, using established codes and registers, and by using reputable brokers. Be as open as possible about any credits you sell.

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FURTHER READING:

[Guidance on Engaging Communities in Decisions Relating to Land](#)

[UK Green Building Council Net Zero Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for the Built Environment](#)

[Woodland Carbon Code](#)

[Peatland Code](#)

[Responsible Natural Capital and Carbon Management Protocol](#)