

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Question 1: Do the 2011-2016 strategic priorities remain robust and relevant for the period 2016-2021?

No comment.

Question 2: Do these 'enabling principles' set the right context or should additional principles be adopted?

Whilst FAWC is impressed with the research carried out in Scotland on farm animal welfare, supported by the Scottish Government (SG), we believe that such work has less prominence than appropriate, given that it contributes to many other priorities such as food security, environmental protection and public health. Indeed, consideration of animal welfare can contribute positively to all three pillars of sustainability (environmental, economic and social) – and we note (page 7, emphasis added) the SG's vision for this strategy 'to support research that is relevant, respected and responsive to Scotland's communities, its people and to the rural economy,' and the high level aim 'to focus ... on creating a more successful country ... through increasing **sustainable** economic growth.'

In that context, we wish to point out that these 'Enabling Principles' do not even refer to the resource base that is critical to sustainability, including animals (welfare and other aspects), plants, land and people. The importance of this to agriculture (including for livestock), perhaps in contrast to other scientific fields, is illustrated by the fact that in agriculture there is a need to balance innovation and new knowledge (two of the three Principles) with existing, traditional and practice-based information.

Question 3: Are the high level outcomes sufficiently clear, if not, what changes would you propose?

Yes, except that under 'Productive and Viable Land Use' we note the aim to help 'businesses innovate ... adapting new options and solutions for Scottish agriculture.' As in our answer to Question 2, we point out that 'new options and solutions' are not always appropriate for agriculture, including livestock.

Question 4: Are the three broad themes identified an appropriate way of structuring our work? If not, what alternatives should be considered?

Yes, and, in view of our general point in answer to Question 2 that consideration of animal welfare contributes to many other priorities, we are encouraged by the stated intention to reduce compartmentalisation,

illustrated by the overlap between the themes in Figure 1. Indeed, both the themes and outcomes could have been better related to one another in a 'One Health' context where the health and wellbeing of humans, animals and the environment are interdependent.

Question 5: How can the SG maximise the benefits of on-going investment in the MRPs to build and benefit from connectivity with the wider science base?

No comment.

Question 6: What are your views of the performance and operation of the CoEs to date, are there any additional areas that would benefit from such support?

We believe the existence and operation of the Centre of Expertise for Animal Disease Outbreaks will be important for farm animal welfare. We note that neither on its website nor in this consultation's reference to it is animal welfare mentioned explicitly, but we trust that in both the Centre's and the SG's approaches to disease outbreaks, welfare will be appropriately covered – including in the Centre's intention to address 'Horizon Scanning - what will livestock production look like in 40 years' time?' Similarly, livestock (and their welfare) have impacts on Climate Change and Water resources, but no mention of livestock is apparent on the websites of either of those Centres of Expertise. We suggest this should be amended.

Question 7: Do you agree with the SG's proposal to end support for SPs and to explore alternative mechanisms to strengthen engagement between its investment in research and the business sectors it aims to support?

No comment.

Question 8: Do you have any proposals for how the research portfolio can better link to the business community to deliver the desired outcome?

No comment.

Question 9: Is the purpose and value of underpinning capacity sufficiently clear, if not how can it be improved?

No comment.

Question 10: Do you have any views regarding the performance and use of the Contract Research Fund including how it could be improved?

FAWC believes this fund is important. Our own area of concern, animal welfare, continues to be seen by many stakeholders as peripheral to their main priorities. Yet it is important, as we have argued above, for environmental, economic and social reasons. This type of funding is therefore invaluable. The same must be true for other concerns that are not

seen as core priorities.

Question 11: Could the overall delivery model be further simplified in a way which still enables SG to meet its strategic priorities for the portfolio, if so how?

No comment.

Question 12: Do you have specific suggestions as to how the RESAS research strategy can contribute to the delivery of the objectives of the CAMERAS partnership?

No comment.

Question 13: Do you have any suggestions for developing the partnership with other research funders?

No comment.

Question 14: Do you have any particular suggestions as to how greater engagement with the HEI sector might be achieved?

No comment.

Question 15: Are the research outputs from the RESAS portfolio of research readily accessible or can this be further improved, if so how?

No comment.

Question 16: Is the current performance management approach fit for purpose or can it be improved, if so how?

No comment.