



Just Transition Commission - Agriculture and Land Use Workshop 25th November 2019

Commission Attendees

Professor Jim Skea (Chair)
Lang Banks, representing WWF Scotland
Professor Mike Danson
Richard Hardy, representing Prospect
Rachel McEwan
Norman Kerr
Kate Rowell
Tom Shields
Colette Cohen

Workshop Summary

The Commission attended a workshop, facilitated by SEFARI Gateway, to support the Commission's fifth meeting on agriculture and land use.

This workshop provided an opportunity for the Commission to hear directly from individuals involved in the agriculture industry. This helped inform the Commission meeting the following day.

Discussion at the workshop focussed on the following themes:

The impact that climate change is already having on the sector

- Changing weather patterns are creating uncertainty for farmers, inhibiting planning and increasing costs and risks. There is also an increase in the threat of pests and diseases.
- For the sector to accurately identify and adopt practices which lower emissions, carbon accounting needs to be improved to understand the current situation.

Opportunities from the transition to a net-zero economy:

- Costs savings: more efficient farming practices and improvements to livestock breeding will help to reduce costs to farmers.
- Land availability: streamlining agriculture could repurpose less productive land for agroforestry and renewable energy production.

Barriers preventing the adoption of new practices:

- The disconnect between consumers and food producers (e.g. consumers no longer eat seasonally or by calendar).
- There is little incentive to change as farmers receive single farm payments whether they follow good practices or not.
- There is not a standardised tool to help farmers base their management decisions upon. This is exacerbated by how carbon emissions are calculated and the lack of a consistent baseline.

The impact of an unmanaged transition

- The impact could be significant if the transition is not managed correctly, and could lead to unemployment in the sector.
- The Commission also heard that if implemented correctly, the industry could become fairer and more just.