

NIEA Prosperity Agreement Programme: Evaluating impacts of partnership working for a Better Environment

Liz Smyth



Overview

- Introduce the idea of Prosperity Agreements and what they hope to achieve
- Talk about some of the ways the agreements have delivered key environmental outcomes, using a couple of case studies
- Cover how we are measuring and reporting the effectiveness of PAs as a regulatory intervention
- What are our next steps and future for the programme

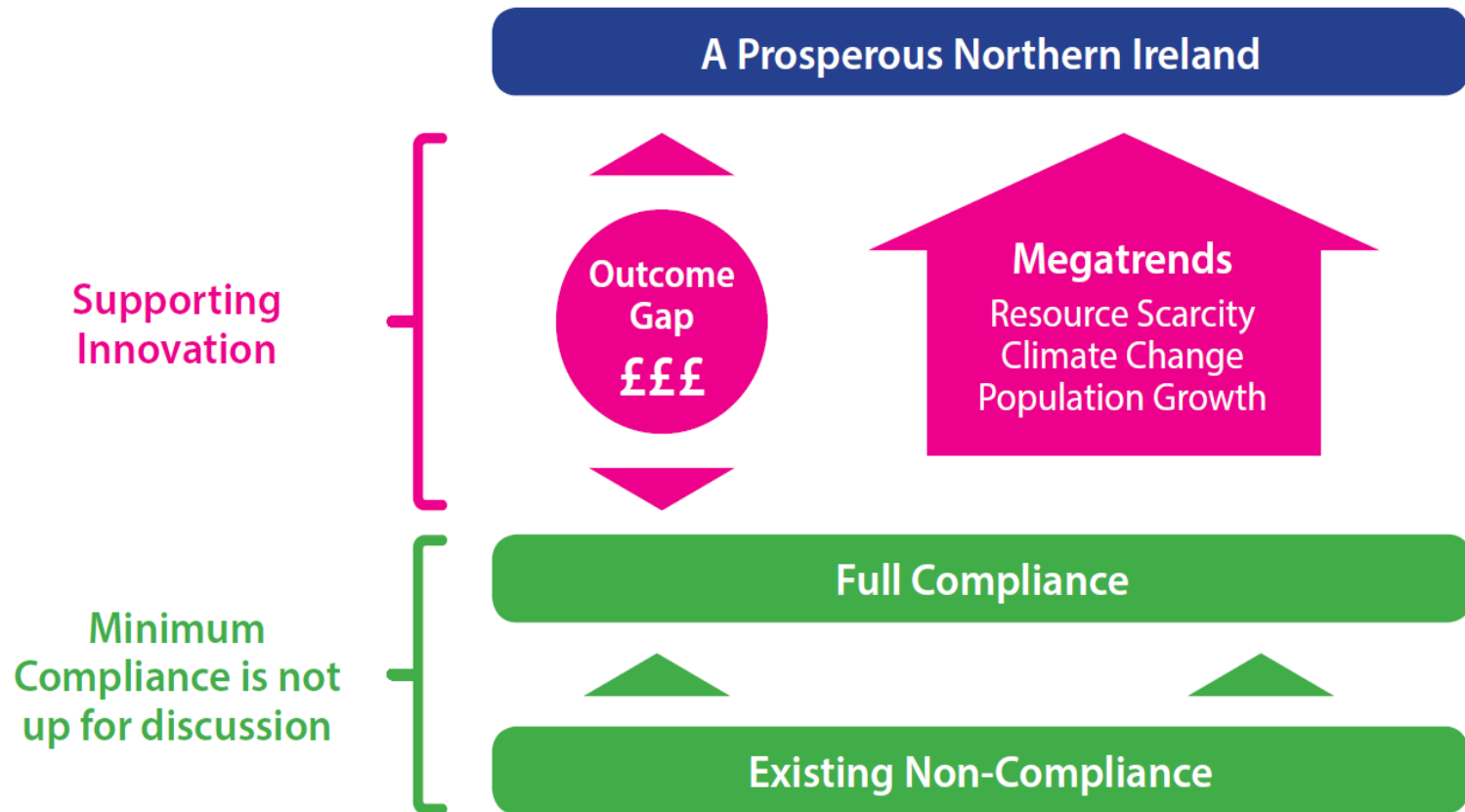


What are Prosperity Agreements?

- Voluntary agreements
- Contain commitments from both parties which will deliver significant environmental benefits, which also help improve business performance and competitiveness
- Designed to encourage organisations to see the environment as an opportunity and not a barrier, and to go beyond compliance.
- Opportunity for NIEA to build upon / use regulation to partner on innovation and focus on strategic outcomes
- Compliance is a given: an agreement does not remove the requirement to meet all obligations in full.



21st Century Regulatory Innovation



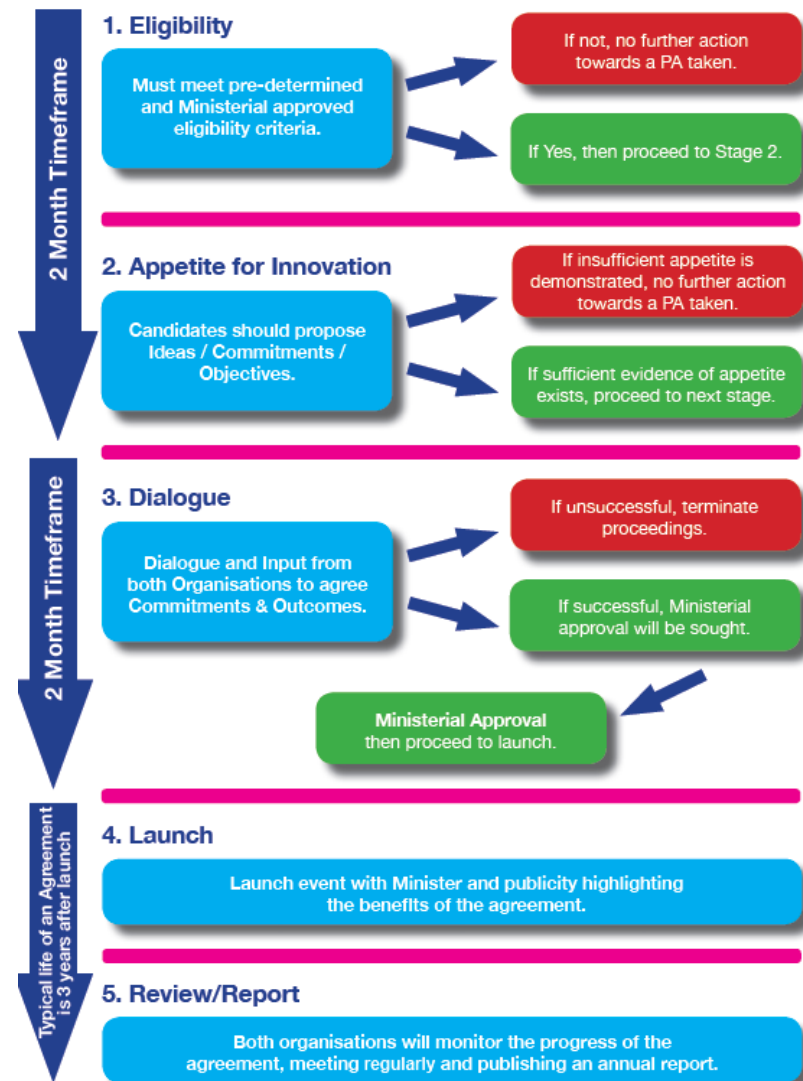
What can an agreement deliver?



- Reduction in emissions and resource efficiency savings;
- Exploring opportunities for trials of new technologies and innovative working practices;
- Supply chain management and promotion of the circular economy;
- Protecting and enhance biodiversity
- Corporate social responsibility and stakeholder engagement.
- Strategic relationship between regulator and business

How do I get one?

- Good compliance record
- No relevant convictions
- Demonstrate clear appetite for innovative solutions & to go beyond compliance e.g.
 - Strong commitments in the Business plan to environmental outcomes.
 - Being part of an accredited environmental management scheme.
 - Evidence of community outreach
 - Schemes which help support sustainable behaviours among employees.



Who holds one in Northern Ireland?



Do they work?



- Carbon emissions reduced by 25%
- Improvements in bio-security
- Positive community engagement
- Investment in innovation to influence supply chain
- Reduction in waste





- Increased diversion of commercial food waste from landfill
- Increased generation capacity from around 4MW to around 9MW via additional engines
- State of the art gas cleaning technology enables production of better quality gas which is sold to other businesses.
- Innovation around new markets for the digestate and other by-products.
- Opportunity to engage on expansion and investment decisions.

How are we assessing the impact?

- Heavy reliance on anecdotal and informal feedback mechanisms
- Seeking to ensure future agreements include measureable outputs to facilitate reporting
- Using assessment and evaluation tools such as surveys where appropriate.
- Regular contact with holders to consider progress.
- Use of internal steering group to monitor



Partnership Working for a Better Environment Prosperity Agreement Progress Report - 2016

Carbon emissions reduced by
Linden Foods installed an air exchange refrigeration system to enable them to meet their target. It also crew the production environment, resulting in a 75% reduction in electricity used. They also recently upgraded all their low energy LED lighting.

Carbon and energy management initiatives
Thompsons have achieved a reduction in carbon emissions of 48t tonnes per month with further reductions projected with their new Combined Heat and Power plant which will come on line in 2017. This new plant also has ability to process gas from available surplus in an option which may be considered in the future to power the operations at the York Road site. The height of the main stack has been increased improving local air quality.

Carbon and energy management initiatives
Thompsons are looking for opportunities to influence their supply chain and farm customers in better understanding the value of biodiversity and natural capital. They will be working with NIEA on a number of potential biodiversity initiatives.

10% reduction energy use
Coca-Cola HBC have reduced CO₂ at their Knockmore Hill site through ensuring equipment powers off in use and conserving power of on site combined heat and power plant has also reduced energy over 90% of electricity saved by the on site CHP plant.

261 ton/ waste r
Through changing the packaging and change process, Lafarge has tonnes of waste from to fill 27,000 black bins.

Zero land
Coca-Cola HBC has light weight Dewar bottles by reducing plastic used by 70% in their supply generated for curmery recovery.

180% increase in recycling
Thompsons are now using durable tubes which can be reused for delivery of vitamin premix rather than non-recyclable bags as before. 70% of waste on site is now recycled.

Positive impacts on Biodiversity
Thompsons are looking for opportunities to influence their supply chain and farm customers in better understanding the value of biodiversity and natural capital. They will be working with NIEA on a number of potential biodiversity initiatives.

Positive Community Engagement
Thompsons have ongoing involvement with the North Belfast Area Partnership and the Belfast City Council and have contributed to the planning and redevelopment costs for the new road. They are also working with Arts Council NI to promote local arts and culture. They have developed a positive local identity. They have developed a plan to reduce carbon from and the importance of

Investment in research projects
Thompsons are promoting low protein pig diets, which reduce slurry volume, nutrient and genetic emissions. More than 20% of Thompsons pig customers have now implemented this new feeding approach and on pig productivity collected via a number of research projects on the positive impact of nutrient management on the environment. Thompsons are also working with various farmers on nutrient management, supporting the use of farmer managers, supporting the implementation of the Field Activator program. They have also supported the training and technical staff trained and awarded certification in environmental compliance and environmental policy.

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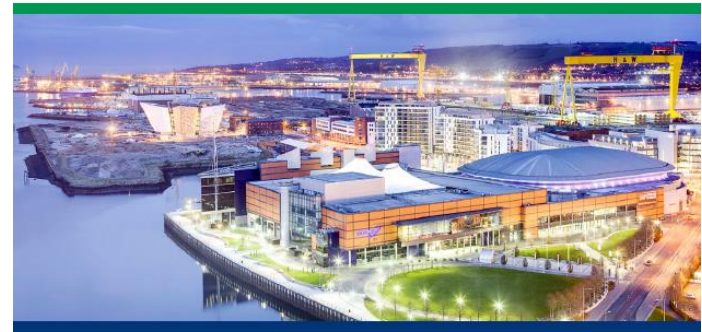
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Partnership Working for a Better Environment

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NIEA Northern Ireland Environment Agency
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Agency within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera.gov.uk



PA Holders Forum



Next steps for the programme

- Continue to negotiate with progressive and engaged businesses
- Looking to integrate some of the thinking and regulatory tools into mainstream approaches
- Considering options for reaching a wider audience
- Prosperity Agreements as a vehicle for change across industry
- Potential for 'earned recognition' and third party accreditation.
- Reporting on progress and highlighting the benefits of the programme





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<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/prosperity-agreements>

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