

Evaluating climate and socio-economic change through land use scenarios

Iain Brown, Marie Castellazzi, Alessandro Gimona, Laura Poggio
The James Hutton Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen, AB15 8QH, Scotland, UK
iain.brown@hutton.ac.uk



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AIM: Testing current policy objectives against future scenarios in the context of multiple benefits

'Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future' (Nils Bohr, physicist).

Many aspects of decision-making require a knowledge of future as well as present conditions, otherwise the desired outcomes may not be achieved. Scenario analysis provides a tool that can be used to remedy the pitfalls of blind predictions by considering the implications for a decision or plan across a range of future possibilities. Socio-economic change will combine with climate change to produce both direct and indirect consequences. We have developed an integrated approach based upon the key influences on land use change (policy, prices, preferences, path dependency) to help identify both controllable and uncontrollable aspects of change. Using the scenarios in a participatory approach can therefore allow societal choices and trade-offs to be deliberated and refined.

