THE ECONOMICS OF SOIL: PRIVATE ASSET or PUBLIC GOOD?
Portcullis House, 18 March 2019

SPEAKERS

The Rt Hon Liz Truss MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Elizabeth Truss was appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 11 June 2017. She entered parliament when elected as the Conservative MP for south west Norfolk in 2010. She was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education & Childcare in September 2012, served as the Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs from 2014-2016 and was Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice from 2016-2017. Elizabeth was previously Deputy Director at Reform. She also worked in the energy and telecommunications industry for 10 years as a commercial manager and economics director, and is a qualified management accountant. She studied Philosophy, Politics & Economics at Merton College, Oxford.

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
Secretary of State for BEIS

The Rt Hon Greg Clark was appointed Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy on 14 July 2016. Greg was Director of Policy for the Conservative Party from March 2001 for 3 successive leaders - William Hague, Iain Duncan Smith and Michael Howard - before being elected as an MP for Royal Tunbridge Wells in 2005. Before entering politics, Greg worked for the Boston Consulting Group, one of the world’s top business strategy firms. He was posted to the USA, Mexico, South America and Iceland, as well as working for clients in the UK. He has also worked as Head of Commercial Policy at the BBC. Born in Middlesbrough, Greg studied economics at Cambridge before earning his PhD from the London School of Economics.

Professor Chris Collins
Coordinator of the Soil Security Programme; Professor of Environmental Science, University of Reading; Chair, SSA Science Panel

Coordinator of the NERC Soil Security Programme (2015-2020), a multi-million pound research investment to understand how soils resist, recover and ultimately adapt to land use and climate change; Chris also sits on the government’s Natural Capital Committee (2018 - present) and is the Chair of the Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee (2013 – present, Chair 2017 onward) which provides expert advice on how to protect the environment, and human health via the environment, from potentially hazardous substances and articles including nanomaterials. He is on the Board of Directors for Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF, 2016 – present) and Director of the Soil Research Centre (Director 2016- present), a cross-disciplinary Centre of Excellence that brings together researchers across the University of Reading with external stakeholders to explore the challenges of a key resource - the soil.
Professor Joe Morris  
*Cranfield University*

Joe Morris is Emeritus Professor at Cranfield University in Resource Economics, focusing on rural land and water, and the natural environment. He has played lead roles in International, EU and UK Research, including UK Foresight, Rural Economy and Land Use, UK National Ecosystem Assessment and the Valuing Nature Programme. He led on the economic assessment of soil degradation in E&W for Defra, of peri-urban soils for the European Environment Agency, on options for lowland peatlands for Natural England and the Climate Change Adaptation sub-Committee. He contributed to the recent UNEP-led international Assessment of Land Degradation and Restoration.

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Stephen Briggs  
*Innovation for Agriculture*

Stephen is a practical farmer, consultant & Soil and Water manager at Innovation for Agriculture. Stephen been providing farm business consultancy throughout the UK and internationally for over 20 years and has delivered soil, water and crop advice and training to many UK farmers. He has previously worked for DFID, FAO, the World Bank & private Co's in Africa, India & China.

He guest lecturers at Universities and has held posts on UK Government Policy and Research and Development Committees. Author of ‘*Organic Cereal and Pulse Production*’ (2011). Stephen was a 2011 Nuffield Farming Scholar studying Agroforestry around the world. He was the first vice chairman of the European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF) and is active in influencing agricultural policy at UK and EU levels. Stephen was a founding director of ‘*Speedwell Farming Ltd*’ and Director of Anglo Chinese Food Ventures (ACFV) and he was a founding Director of the Institute of Organic Training and Advice. Stephen works with private companies, NGO’s, Governments, and local authorities to develop innovative sustainable food production and conservation programmes integrated with other land use systems.

At home, Stephen farms 270 acres of land in Cambridgeshire & in Rutland growing cereals, root crops, vegetable and fruit crops and is pioneering agroforestry, with the UK’s largest system on 125 acres, growing apple trees and field crops together. Agroforestry – 3D farming, mixing trees with crops and or animals on the same area, is a perfect example of *ecological intensification*.

Stephen has an MSc in Soil Science with experience in soil and water management combining research, development, farmer engagement & training, consultancy, policy development work and practical farming. Stephen and his team are leading soil and water management innovation in the UK. He believes that there are huge opportunities to engage stakeholders and farmers and further advance their understanding of our most vital resources.
Emma Howard Boyd
Chair: Environment Agency

Emma Howard Boyd is the Chair of the Environment Agency, an Ex-officio board member of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and has recently been appointed as the UK Commissioner to the Global Commission on Adaptation. Emma serves on a number of boards and advisory committees which include ShareAction, Menhaden Capital PLC, The Prince’s Accounting for Sustainability Project and the Green Finance Institute. She has worked in financial services for over 25 years, in corporate finance and fund management. As Director of Stewardship at Jupiter Asset Management until July 2014, Emma was integral to the development of their expertise in the corporate governance and sustainability fields.

Emma’s previous board and advisory roles include: Vice Chair of Future Cities Catapult, a director of the Aldersgate Group and Triodos Renewables PLC, Chair of UKSIF (the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association), and a member of the Commission on Environmental Markets and Economic Performance and the Green Finance Taskforce.

Dr Toby Willison
Executive Director of Operations: Environment Agency

Toby Willison joined the Environment Agency (EA) in 2002 and has worked in a variety of strategic and operational roles. His previous roles include: Director of Water Land and Biodiversity, Environment Agency; and Head of the Water Team, Scottish Executive.

Toby is a post-graduate of Exeter University with a PhD in Ecology.

The Executive Director of Operations is responsible for all of the Environment Agency’s operational activities. These include the organisation’s strategy, communicating with customers and stakeholders to ensure a safe and productive workplace for employees.

Guy Thompson
En Trade

Guy Thompson is Managing Director of EnTrade, a dynamic new business focused on creating markets in collaboration with the beneficiaries and suppliers of environmental services from land.

He was previously Chief Operating Officer and a founding Executive Director of Natural England, the government’s expert adviser on the natural environment. Before that, he was Director of Green Alliance, a leading UK think tank known for achieving ambitious leadership for the environment.

A seasoned operational and strategic leader, Guy has a reputation as a progressive voice for the environment at the highest levels of government and business in the UK. He has worked closely with the farming industry throughout his career and is convinced there is a compelling business case for businesses and society to pay for environmental net gain from farmed land, including soil health.
Sue Pritchard

*RSA Food, Farming & Countryside Commission*

Sue Pritchard is Director of the RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, a two-year independent inquiry funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. As the UK negotiates its relationships with the European Union and the rest of the world, we face serious choices about the future of our food, farming and countryside. The purpose of the Commission is to help shape a future that is fairer, can stand the test of time and aligns more closely with public expectations and values; and to propose solutions to achieve this, identifying where communities and businesses can take a lead, and where national policy is essential. As part of its research and public engagement programme, FFCC is working with University of Lincoln and Lincolnshire farmers, supported by Ashden Trust, on practices to improve soil fertility and water quality. Sue is herself a farmer, running an organic, permaculture livestock farm in Wales.

Dr Jess Davies

*Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business, Lancaster University*

Dr Jess Davies is a Senior Lecturer in Sustainability at Lancaster University’s Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business. With 10 years’ experience of model-driven research crossing soil hydrology, physics and biogeochemistry, Jess is interested in advancing our ability to quantify and predict soil change and natural capital, and works with businesses to understand soil-related risks and opportunities. As an Early Career Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council Fellow, she leads the ~£1M Soil Value project exploring the delivery and resilience of food, water and climate services from soils across the UK. Through this work, she engages with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development – a global CEO-led forum of 200+ leading businesses – on soil sustainability, which has led to the publication of a landmark report on ‘The Business Case for Investing in Soil Health’ authored by 20+ global companies, NGOs and International Organisations.

Andrew Voysey

*Soil Capital*

Andrew Voysey is Head of Business & Government Solutions at Soil Capital – farm managers with experience of transitioning large-scale, industrial farming operations around the world to regenerative practices, improving profitability from the first year. He works with food and agriculture businesses, financial institutions and governments to help them enjoy the business benefits of transitioning to regenerative agriculture at scale across the value chain. Regenerative agriculture prioritises soil health, captures more carbon than it emits, produces nutrient-dense food and is more resilient to extremes of weather – all driven by the natural productivity of farm ecosystems rather than costly inputs. It is also more profitable.

Previously, Andrew led the sustainable finance practice at the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership for 10 years, and he remains a Senior Associate. He was responsible for CISL’s long-term collaborations with over 50 institutional investors, banks, insurers and their regulators across five continents that evolved business practices so that finance supports a more equitable and environmentally sustainable economy.

Andrew is member of the Strategic Advisory Board for the Sustainable Soils Alliance, is a Fellow at the Royal Geographical Society and was an Academic Visitor at the Bank of England from 2015-2018.