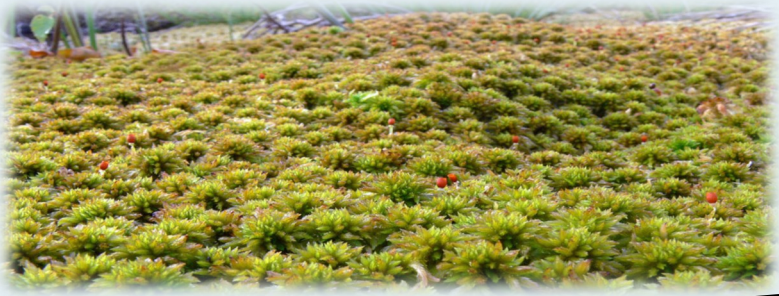
Interreg
North-West Europe
CCONNECTS
European Regional Development Fund

3% of the world's land surface is covered by Peatlands, which are deep concentrations of organic matter accumulated over millennia, with Europe containing 265,000 km^2 of various peatland types. Peatlands store twice as much carbon as all of Earth's standing forests, but currently cause of one third of global CO^2 emissions due to ecological degradation. The importance of ecologically healthy peatlands as a carbon sink and for water storage reducing flood risk is becoming more widely understood.

Carbon Connects (CConnnects) is €4M project funded by Interreg which will reduce the CO^2 emission and enhance C-sequestration of mismanaged peatlands in North Western Europe with sustainable business models. CConnnects will reduce CO^2 emissions from European agricultural peatlands by 50% through the promotion of alternative agricultural practices that reduce carbon by raising water levels, introducing new crops and isolating carbon in land outputs. CConnnects will also develop financially viable business models by developing value chains & use blue and C-credit schemes to enable widespread implementation and scaling-up without public subsidies.



The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty supported by the Wear Rivers Trust will deliver the following objectives through the 4 year Carbon Connects programme 2018-2022:

- Restoration of 10 ha of degraded blanket bog
- Facilitate the development of 25 Countryside Stewardship Agreements supporting peatland restoration
- Develop a robust supply chain for all plant species necessary to support large scale long term peatland restoration

Peatland restoration activity over the North of England is constrained by the limited supply of a range of species required for the re-vegetation of bare and degraded peat, growing the "wrong vegetation". Peatland restoration will continue over extensive areas of upland England for decades as a crucial means of enhancing carbon storage, combating climate change and reducing flood risk. The current limited supply chain will be enhanced through the establishment of new specialist upland plant nursery capacity, necessary to ensure funders have the confidence that sufficient capacity exists to support the level of restoration activity planned. This project represents an important and sustainable opportunity for source seed collection, existing nursery expansion and new capacity through farm diversification.

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WEAR Rivers Trust

NORTH PENNINES
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty