

Business & economy

Sectoral workshop comments summary

Agriculture

- Pests and diseases – impact upon agriculture, forestry etc;
- Changes in crops, yields and pests – better and further research needed;
- Opportunity to grow new crops;
- Need to look at global climate change predictions – likely need for UK and EU to increase food production (with global changes). Greater investment in R&D needed;
- Reducing food miles;
- Energy crops are very thirsty. GM crops may be a solution – need to diversify with resistant crops. Better land management;
- Water usage will increase at a time when less is available;
- Impact of reduced river flows on water availability and irrigation;
- Impacts on livestock rearing;
- Potential problems as warming winter temps mean problems for plants that need colder temps such as strawberries and rhubarb. Impacts on the 'rhubarb triangle';
- Reduced costs for crops that require heating (i.e. in greenhouses) as temperatures increase;
- Impact of severe rainfall on crops. Hard to adapt;
- High quality training needed for the agricultural sector;
- Changes may have socio-economic impacts on the farming sector;
- Impacts on people working intensively on the land – heat stress and sun stroke incidence rising.

Tourism and Leisure

- Area will become more attractive to tourists as temps rise. New opportunities with UK and overseas visitors;
- More outdoor pursuits in winter with changing weather. Possible detrimental impact on natural habitats;
- Growth in outdoor tourism and leisure activities – longer tourism season. May have an impact on available workforce as sector often dependent upon seasonal labour supply;
- Impact of extreme weather on cycle paths and footpaths. Opportunity to re-align paths proactively now;
- Impact of drought on the region from a visual/aesthetic point of view. Must ensure high quality management of national parks, public spaces;
- Changes in the types of plants being grown or in natural landscapes to those more tolerant of the expected conditions;
- Rising number of moorland fires. New restrictions and improved monitoring required;
- Change in the key characters/appearance of the landscape – the things that bring many people to the area in the first place;
- More rainfall in winter – adapting activities to suit;
- Damage to landmarks, historic buildings and tourist attractions due to severe weather;

- Coastal erosion leading to reduction in quality of beaches.
- Total loss of beaches which are vital to tourism;
- Loss of native species with consequent loss of appeal to visitors.

Manufacturing

- Impact of rising temps and air pollution episodes on manufacturing and engineering – mainly West and South Yorks. New buildings must be built to high specifications, able to withstand and operate efficiently in warmer temperatures;
- Rising costs to businesses struggling with high energy bills for air conditioning etc. Better design is vital – retrofitting; improved efficiency, planning conditions – enforce. Use micro-renewables as widely as possible. Enforce high BREEAM standards and introduce passive heating and cooling;
- Vulnerability to power failures and outages - Increasing on-site renewables and reduce energy wastage to build resilience.

Retail

- Importance of urban areas staying cool – use of natural shade and passive building design. Spatial planning needs to look at longer timescales;
- Impacts of flood events on businesses. Avoid inappropriate development on floodplains. Moorland restoration will help to store rainfall in the catchment areas.

SMEs and other key areas highlighted in the Regional Economic Strategy

- Impacts on transport infrastructure – large economic impacts of severe events. Bridges closed in high winds, airports shut. Roads shut due to flooding;
- Lack of business continuity - better warning systems; resilient building designs; proactive approaches taken, better planning and more long-term thinking; more people working from home;
- High risk areas (eg from flooding) may be neglected bringing a need for LAs to address;
- Business may need to relocate.