

NIEA Prosperity Agreements

Why are new approaches to environment and heritage needed?

Too many people still think that creating a better environment means weakening our economy. Societies that persist with this fundamentally flawed way of thinking will find success in the 21st Century hard to come by. The challenges of the 21st century require us to invent new approaches to deliver better environment and heritage outcomes. Environment and heritage excellence must become a key part of creating economic prosperity and social well-being.



L-R: Philip Cummings (NIEA), Gerry Maguire (Linden Foods) Mark H Durkan MLA (former Minister for the Environment), Mael Wilford (Linden Foods) at the signing of the first Prosperity Agreement with Linden Foods/Linery.



L-R: Richard Moore (Linery), Mark H Durkan MLA (former Minister for the Environment) at the Linergy plant after signing the first Prosperity Agreement.

What is Northern Ireland's new approach to environment and heritage work?

Following a root and branch review initiated by former Environment Minister Mark H Durkan, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency has adopted four new Operating Principles to shape the way it undertakes its work.

1. We will make it easy for people to do good business and difficult for people to do bad business
2. We will help create a resource efficient Northern Ireland
3. We will help people see our environment and heritage as an opportunity, not a barrier
4. We will be a customer-focused and people-centred organisation

These operating principles will help the NIEA work in new ways to deliver the Department's vision of *'A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.'*

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What are Prosperity Agreements?

Prosperity Agreements are voluntary agreements through which NIEA and an organisation can explore opportunities for reducing environment and heritage impacts in ways that create prosperity and well-being.

Who can sign a Prosperity Agreement?

- Any organisation which interacts with NIEA can sign an agreement eg. a business, an NGO, a Council, an association or professional society, etc.
- Any organisation which thinks that there are potential significant gains for Northern Ireland from partnering in a new way with NIEA can sign an agreement.

What could a Prosperity Agreement do for you?

If you are frustrated by:

- Having to deal individually with different parts of NIEA in an uncoordinated way
- Having to spend too much time on process and not enough time on outcomes
- Missing out on opportunities you think exist to create a better environment and a stronger economy

Then a **Prosperity Agreement** might be for you.

Alison Austin OBE, independent sustainability consultant and former Head of Environment at Sainsbury's said of the first Prosperity Agreement with Linden Foods / Linergy: "This is a genuine step change in how businesses and regulators should work together. It has enormous economic potential for the companies, benefiting farmers in their supply chain as well as local communities and their environment. Other businesses should investigate the value of a Prosperity Agreement with the NIEA for themselves."

Gerry Maguire Managing Director, Linden Foods said: "Today Linden Foods have taken another huge environmental step forward. The formalisation of a partnership approach with the NIEA reinforces our plan to work diligently to reduce our impact across the business in alignment with our sustainability agenda. The agreement affirms our overall commitment and long-term vision and allows us to grow and educate, adapting new ways to contribute to a more prosperous and healthier way of doing business. We continue to invest time and effort so to ensure that we are a market leader and a responsible business."



L-R: Richard Moore (MD of Linergy) Ciaran McShane (Business Development Manager), Mark H Dukan MLA (former Minister for the Environment), Terry A'Hearn, (former CEO NIEA)

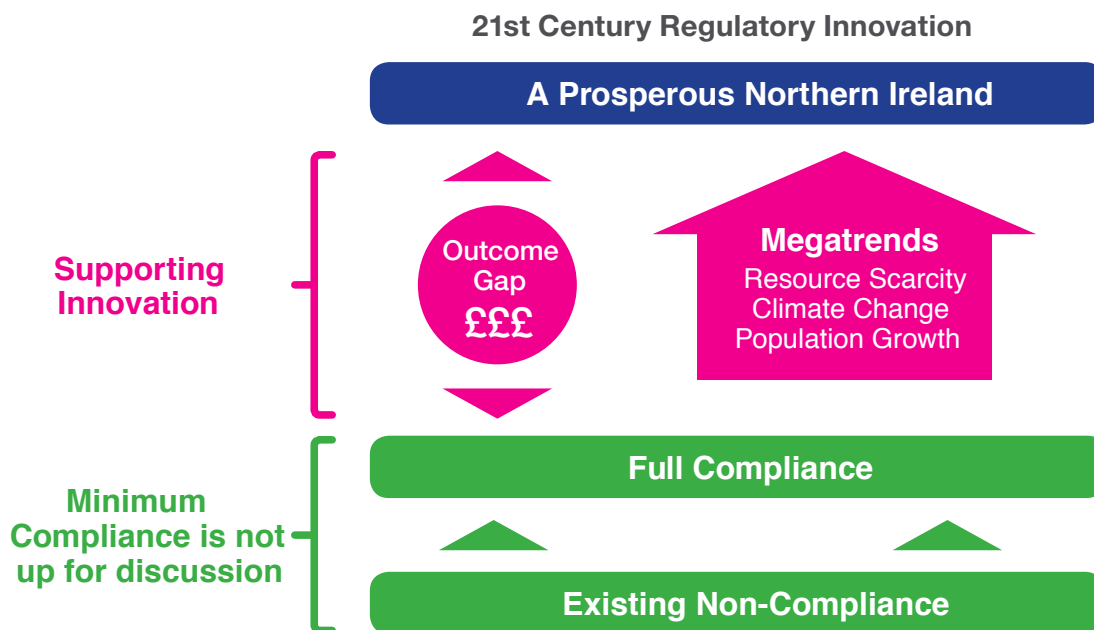
Commenting on the significance of the Prosperity Agreement, Richard Moore Managing Director of Linergy, said: “I am excited and reassured by the implementation and signing of the Prosperity Agreement. Joining forces and resources between Linergy and the NIEA paves a new way for us to do business. Together we can identify areas where improvements are possible and agree how to action them, ensuring that we minimise our impact on the environment and lead the way in our industry. If the business is not sustainable it is not viable and therefore this Agreement reinforces the need for compliance, efficiency and ultimately a way to challenge the business.”

If you are regulated by NIEA, how might a Prosperity Agreement help?

Regulation is critical. It sets essential minimum standards of environment and heritage protection.

But regulation can only stop basic environment and heritage impacts in the future. Regulation does not create a prosperous future based on environment and heritage excellence.

Many businesses realise that going beyond minimum standards can create substantial business value which can help them win in their markets. The diagram below captures this succinctly:



Under a **Prosperity Agreement**, NIEA can support responsible business who seek to move beyond the minimum compliance line and into the territory of harnessing market value from innovation and environment and heritage excellence.

Phil Berry, Director of Sustainability, Stora Enso’s operations in Guangxi, China and former Director of Sustainability for Nike, Inc. commented: “This is an excellent example of how an environmental regulatory agency can protect the environment in a different, and potentially more effective, manner. This agreement helps the company be more competitive and better positioned in international markets. These benefits flow equally to the country’s economy while also achieving the nation’s environmental protection goals. I hope we will see more of this type of innovation and leadership in Northern Ireland.”

Paul Tebo, former Global Vice-President, DuPont said: “I congratulate Linden Foods, Linergy, Minister Durkan and NIEA for establishing the first ever ‘Prosperity Agreement.’ This groundbreaking voluntary public private partnership will achieve regulatory compliance at lower costs, substantial reductions in impacts on the environment, greater transparency and access to the community, stronger financial results for business, and economic growth for Northern Ireland. It is clearly an outstanding example that ‘good for the environment, good for business’ can be achieved through cooperation, innovation and strong leadership.”

What is the first Prosperity Agreement about?

The first Prosperity Agreement was signed with Linden Foods and Linergy Ltd on the 21st August 2014. Linden Foods and Linergy are part of a group of progressive and innovative Agri-food companies. Linden Foods processes top quality beef and lamb delivering a range of own label value added products to high street retailers and to food manufacturers. Linergy operates a state of the art rendering facility using animal by-products and fallen farm animals to produce renewable biomass fuels, tallow oil and meat and bone-meal.

Every action in the **Prosperity Agreement** is voluntary and will improve both environmental outcomes and economic outcomes. Linergy and Linden Foods will continue to meet environmental standards and now also move beyond these minimum standards. They have undertaken to:

- reduce their carbon emissions by 25%
- reduce their water use and reduce waste
- work to influence the supply chain to improve both on farm sustainability and finished product logistics
- create a local stakeholder forum where key issues can be discussed in a constructive manner

At the signing of the first Prosperity Agreement, with Linden Foods and Linergy Ltd, former

Environment Minister Mark H Durkan said: “I told my Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to regulate firmly but also to be more supportive of progressive businesses which have a good compliance record. This first Prosperity Agreement is a great example, helping these progressive and compliant companies in our critical agri-food sector to reduce environmental impact in ways that boost their competitiveness in their markets.

“Under this agreement, NIEA will redirect resources from red tape that creates little value to actions that support Linden Foods and Linergy improve their environmental performance in their own operations and throughout their supply-chain.”

If you are interested in Prosperity Agreements contact:

Prosperity Agreements Programme Manager

Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Klondyke Building
Cromac Avenue
Gasworks Business Park
Belfast
BT7 2JA

T. 028 9056 9839

E: NIEAProsperityAgreements@daera-ni.gov.uk

www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/prosperity-agreements

