

## Executive Summary - Towards a Research & Innovation Club in Sustainable Agriculture

Two of the UK's leading public funding agencies for the environmental and biological sciences are developing an industry-academic collaborative programme to provide new solutions for land-based sustainable agriculture. Industry has a key role to play in determining both the scope and strategic direction of this pre-competitive funding programme. The programme will support innovative research and research translation that is both scientifically excellent and industrially relevant.

Following extensive consultation with industry, the research community and policymakers, the Natural Environment Research Council ([NERC](http://www.nerc.ac.uk)<sup>1</sup>) and Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council ([BBSRC](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk)<sup>2</sup>) have focussed the programme on water and nutrient-related challenges in arable and livestock food production systems.

The challenges presented to NERC and BBSRC suggest three interlinking themes. These themes reside between high-level science challenges of:

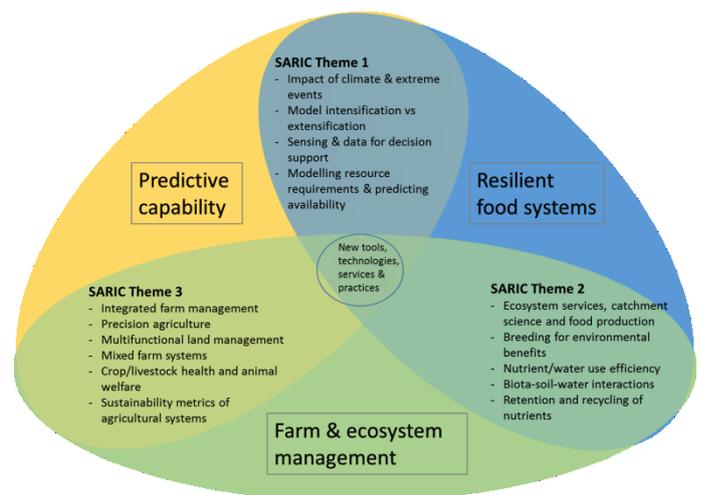
1. Driving predictive capability and modelling for food production
2. Developing resilient food production systems
3. Management and best practice to protect the environment while maintaining a profitable agricultural system.

Industry-led collaborative programmes have been successfully employed in numerous other industry sectors. Company members have reported a range of significant benefits from their involvement with these programmes:

- Capacity to influence research in important strategic areas
- Up to date knowledge on the progress of research projects and early access to results
- Opportunity to work with leading researchers and to build strong relationships with them
- Opportunity to identify the best potential industry recruits
- Guidance on other Research Council activities and funding opportunities
- Promotion of your company through the programme's activities, objectives and outputs

NERC and BBSRC will hold a meeting on 14th Oct 2013 with interested companies to present the proposed challenges that could be addressed by the collaborative programme, introduce the preferred funding model, and refine the scope of the first call for proposals.

To access the full consultation report and to keep up to date with announcements please visit the SARIC web pages at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/business/club.asp>



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/>