Study shows Falkland Islands' potential to become carbon negative

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A new study by the UK Center for Ecology and Hydrology suggests that restoring the Falkland Island peatlands could lead to up to £47 million

worth of carbon offsets.

These findings came in a report co-authored by Jonathan Ritson, a Research Associate at the University.

With a UK target to reach net-zero by 2050, peatland restoration offers the potential to help as peatlands are capable of absorbing and storing large amounts of carbon dioxide. With the right restoration efforts made, the world's peatlands have the potential to store 14 million tons of CO2e annually. They offer additional climate change benefits too, helping to prevent flooding, protect soils and improve biodiversity.

With peatlands making up around 40 percent of the islands, the Falklands are one of the most peat rich places in the world. This puts them in a particularly unique position to benefit richly from restoration, with the study suggesting that restoring them could save up to 1 million tons of CO2e a year.

The restoration projects could prove valuable to the community both economically and ecologically. Restoring peatlands will mean the recovery of wildlife habitats, helping the island's world-famous wildlife thrive, consequently supporting the tourism sector and conservation efforts. There are opportunities for new revenue streams for the local community too, such as selling offsets to business with net zero-emission goals.

Co-author Jonathan Ritson, from the School of Education, Environment and Development (SEED), said: "This report shows there's amazing potential for carbon sequestration in the Falkland Islands, however, we need further investment to trial peatland restoration methods and get the governance structure in place to ensure that everyone on the Islands can benefit."

In order for any restoration projects to go ahead, the study's authors acknowledge that there would need to be alterations to land management and agricultural practices through close collaboration and support from farmers and landowners. But with the report suggesting the potential for the Falkland Islands to become a carbon negative society and the conservation of rare wildlife species, it's an investment worth considering.

More information: The full study is available online: documents.manchester.ac.uk/dis … lay.aspx?DocID=51014

Provided by University of Manchester

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