

52 **ABBREVIATIONS**

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54 AR: Agricultural Revenue RP: Raw Product DK: Capital Depreciation AV: Added Value

55 CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

56 DC: Dairy Cows

57 DM: Dry Matter

58 EU: European Union

59 ha: hectare

60 KL: 1000 litres

61 MMB: Milk Marketing Board

62 NVZ: Nitrate Vulnerable Zone

63 Pbs: Pembrokeshire

64 UK: United Kingdom

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66 **LEXICON**

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68 Real Term: Economic value after the effect of rising prices is considered

69 Direct Payment: Payment directly given to the farmer

70 Coupled payment: Payment linked to farm's output

71 Decoupled payment: Payment not linked to farm's output

72 Historical reference: Payment computed from a given time period farm output

73 Milk Marketing Board: Monopoly Cooperative on Milk from 1932 to 1992.

74 Remuneration: Provides an income for the farmers as a family business

75 Profitable: For the farm as a business

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103 **INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT:**

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105 **1.1 Preamble – origins of this paper**

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107 Land is recognized among the most important production factor in farming therefore it had an
 108 important place in the conception of the second half of the 20th century agricultural development
 109 (Hodge, 2007). Its goals were to increase production by increasing the use of all production factors
 110 and inputs becoming available for the farming system combined to increases in labour productivity.
 111 As Part of the government policies to promote this, has been a support to family farms, tasked to
 112 implement it. To reach this goal a stable farming economic environment, including more tenant-
 113 favourable tenure types were introduced to enable family farms to implement this revolution (Cochet,
 114 2008). This was successful but meant that as farms expanded, high prices of land and a shortage of
 115 land for expansion were identified, under the analysis of the actors at the time the market was
 116 deemed malfunctioning due to an supply shortage linked to the post-war tenant-favourable tenancy
 117 framework (CAAV 2005). In Wales, the problem was considered worse given the dense network of
 118 small family farms (compared to England).

119

120 The 1980s with the rise of neo-liberalism in UK politics saw successive governments choosing amongst
 121 the most liberal approach to farming policy in the European Union, and this as quickly as possible.
 122 Either inside the increasingly flexible Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) framework or in the UK
 123 context. As part of this liberal shock, to address the land supply shortage, new landlord-favourable,
 124 flexible tenancy laws were introduced to incentivize owners to rent-out what was under-used. This
 125 context of reducing support in an increasingly competitive environment led to a differentiation of
 126 farms with different ways to access production factors, including land (Lenormand *et al.* 2021). Under
 127 successive iteration of the CAP, Wales that had gained devolution of agricultural policy chose to
 128 gradually decouple subsidies from production as in most EU countries from 2003.

129

130 Today, a new radical shock is due to take place with Brexit in terms of policy and trade environment.
 131 The agricultural policy is set to focus on sustainable agriculture and payment for ecosystem services
 132 (Welsh Government, 2020), ahead of most of Western Europe (Farm to Fork Strategy). While over the
 133 There has been various approaches to try to understand the possible impact on farms of future
 134 scenario, most of them are focused on the economic viability of farms (e.g. ERAMMP model). But so
 135 far there has been little research on the role of the liberalised land market is playing in farm's evolution
 136 mechanism and its impact on economic, social and environmental sustainability of farming system,
 137 though it has been recognized as an important driver of agriculture development (Hodge, I. 2016). In
 138 general, the existing literature shows that the change in the general policy environment impacted the
 139 land market and led to price increases linked to subsidies (Ciaian, *et al.* 2019 or Traill, 1977), the
 140 market in the UK has mostly been analysed through a broad supply/demand scope (e.g. CAAV 2021 or
 141 Defra 2006). But the little price and supply data available (Savills, Farmland Market 2021) or Defra,
 142 Business Rent Survey, 2020) tend to show the diversity of approaches to gain access to farmland
 143 (renting agreements, partnerships) and some strong differences in trends between upland and
 144 lowland areas that are unexplored.

145

146 **RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

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148 **To try to understand those elements we would like to understand; How did the land market**
 149 **liberalisation impacted farm evolution in Wales in the wider context of Agricultural Policy change?**
 150 **This in different conditions. What was the impact of the liberalisation on the sustainability of farms?**
 151 **What lessons do we need to draw at the eve of a second shock?**

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154 **INTRODUCTION: The land markets as an under-researched influence on farm structural change**

155 **1.1 A secure family farm favourable land market as part of the post-war farming development**

156

157 After the Second World War western Europe countries focused their agricultural policy on increasing
 158 output, by using pro-production agricultural policies. To reach this goal a focus was operated on family
 159 farms that were to implement output focused technological evolution also increasing labour
 160 productivity (Devienne, 2003).

161

162 A secured framework was provided for farms to work in, much in line with post-war social policies
 163 package. Agricultural outputs markets were controlled through a combination of quotas, safety net
 164 for prices, storage capacities, subsidies on export or consumption... There were several programmes
 165 aimed at guiding farm evolutions towards implementing this package, retirement, or investment
 166 subsidies. There were also some programmes aimed at subsidizing farming in challenging areas
 167 (Campbell 1985, Bowers and Cheshire 1983).

168

169 As in France the family-farm tryptic combining total control of the capital, work and land was favoured,
 170 in this regard the access to land was particularly secured/regulated in the aftermath of the second
 171 world war (Cochet 2008, Quinn *et al.* 2010). But in the UK, contrary to other EU countries, no structural
 172 tools were needed to reorganise landholding (e.g. France with SAFER); indeed farms were already
 173 larger and coherently organised than in most of Western Europe due to the past agrarian history. But
 174 a new heavily regulated tenancy system in favour of the tenant was introduced in 1948 and
 175 strengthened in 1986 (Cf Fig. 2), social farm renting was also available with the County Council farms
 176 (Prince 2012). Combined to the continued use of heavy succession taxes. The proportion of tenant
 177 farmers stood at 88% in 1908 but by 1994 this had reduced to just 24% (MAFF Statistics; Howell *et al.*
 178 1999). As a result, many estates, large traditional landowners disappeared but most managed to retain
 179 at least part of their land.

180

181 By 1992 Welsh farms had specialized on different livestock productions but also increased in size with
 182 reduced labour, mostly by buying land and implementing labour productivity improvements historical
 183 statistics show. A selection among farms had already taken place but as farms were incentivized to
 184 expand and increase output or leave the industry, they were further incentivized in this through
 185 specific capital taxation policies as shown in Gibbard and Ravenscroft 1993, for example the
 186 inheritance tax relief for farms (Butler 2015). Since 1984, active owner-occupier farmers pay no
 187 inheritance tax on farmland and benefit from a hefty rebate on other farm elements (while landlords
 188 are only exempted for 50% of the tax), allowing successors not to bear the full brunt of land value
 189 appreciation (J. Butler 2015). This further consolidated existing farms and the shift in landholding to
 190 owner-occupancy. It also led to a disconnection between the price of vacant land versus the one of
 191 tenanted land but also disjointing the rent value from the price of land as described in (Gibbard and
 192 Ravenscroft 1997 or Traill 1977).

193

194 As a direct consequence of those policies, landowners were disincentivized to lease-out land (farmers
 195 or large landowners) and there was less and less land available on the rental market (CAAV 1996 or
 196 statistics from the MAAF), most of it being farmed directly, or under risk-sharing agreements (Cf
 197 fig.1)(including by traditional landowners) or grey rental agreements (Cf Fig.1). These reports do not
 198 enable us to understand local differences in the local land market context.

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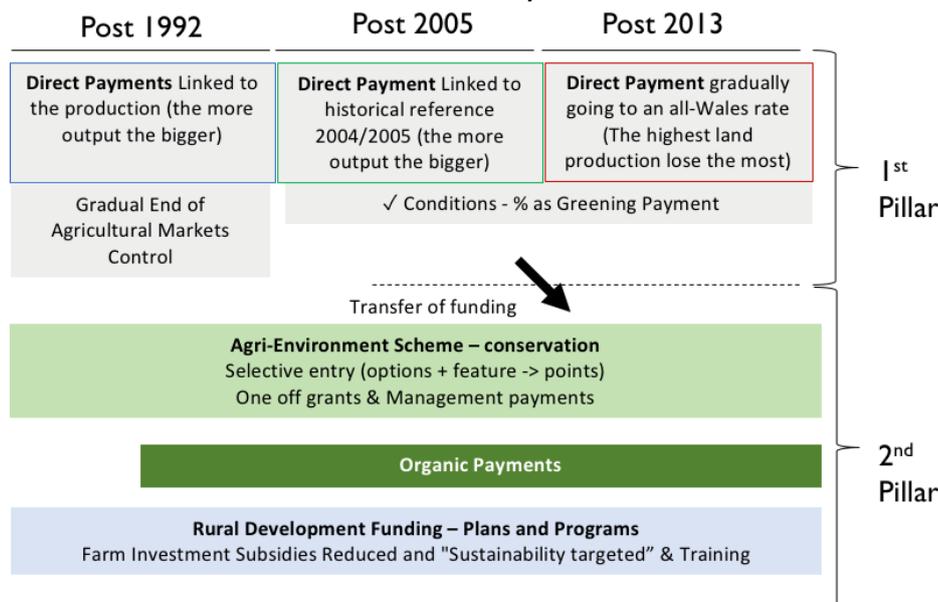
200 **1.2 From 1980, a liberal shock took place for agriculture's environment**

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202 Although a neo-liberal conservative government was in place in the UK from 1982 onwards,
 203 agricultural policy was largely determined in Brussels and thus retained its traditional focus, they
 204 nevertheless set out the political scene for the following 35 years, and as soon as possible the UK made

205 the most liberal and less costly choices possible linked to the UK rebate (D'alfonso 2016). The first
 206 liberal choice was to free the quota markets in the UK, so that the right to produce could be traded as
 207 a commodity between individual farmers and landowners. For the UK, the CAP reform of 1992, gave
 208 the opportunity to control the cost of the agricultural policy while it evolved into a twin-track model
 209 (Cf Fig 1.): one focused on markets, economic outputs, and farm incomes (Barthélémy *et al.*, 1999)
 210 while the other was centred on environmental and rural development measures (Dobbs *et al.*, 2008).
 211 Related to this broadening of goals, choices on the CAP were gradually devolved, enabling national
 212 and regional governments to choose the precise implementation of key elements in the package.
 213

214 **FIGURE 1: SIMPLIFIED POST 1992 CAP IMPLEMENTATION IN WALES (BY THE AUTHOR FROM THE**
 215 **LITERATURE)**



216 Within this process of reform, the market support measures of the ‘first pillar’ were reduced and direct
 217 payments were introduced as a compensation mechanism, this was driven by European tactics within
 218 the emerging global trade liberalisation process. The UK moved to break up its post-war agricultural
 219 marketing monopolies in response to strengthening EU internal market and competition rules and set
 220 the safety net of market support even lower (using the mechanism of the green pound). By 1998, farm
 221 output prices were aligned on fluctuating world market levels (Hobbs *et al.* 2008).

222 But the second axis which introduced Agri-Environment schemes paying for non-market benefits and
 223 was compatible with the trade outlook, with the Environmentally Sensitive Areas introduced from
 224 1987 in the UK (Buller 1999) protect sensitive environmental landscapes in particular parts of the
 225 country. Those payments were linked to few changes in management, mostly focused on grazing
 226 density on mountain land and protection for some landscape features (Boatman *et al.* 2008). A more
 227 flexible menu-based approach, Tir Cymen, was subsequently piloted in 3 parts of Wales from 1992
 228 prefiguring later schemes. Finally, agricultural regulations were tightened most notably in the form
 229 of an expanded implementation of the EU Nitrates Directive (Burt *et al.* 2010).

230 **1.3 Can the changes in witnessed on the land market be attributed to the liberalisation of 1995?**

231
 232 In this changing environment, the tenancy market was liberalized from 1995 with a broad agreement
 233 across the sector; traditional landowners, farmer’s unions... (Defra 2006 or Gibbard and Ravenscroft
 234 1997). Indeed, further farm expansion was supposed to mitigate the difficult context in farming. The
 235 land tenure legislation was partially liberalised through a new flexible approach of variable-term ‘Farm

236 Business Tenancies’, from 1995 (Hill *et al.* 1985). This reversed the balance of power, with landlords
 237 able to adopt a best-price, best-time approach to renting land, with greater possibility to retain control
 238 of land at the end of each term (Savills Research UK, 2018)(Cf Fig 2.).
 239

240 **FIGURE 2: A DRIVER OF CHANGE, RANGE OF TENANCIES, FROM 1995. A BEST-PRICE APPROACH**
 241 **FOR LAND PRICES WITH LANDLORDS IN CONTROL (INTERVIEW FINDINGS COMPLEMENTED BY**
 242 **BUTLER ET AL 2008, B. ROHÉ 2018)**

| | Type of Agreement | Length of the Agreement | Breakpoint | Lease price for land |
|----------|---|--|--|---|
| Formal | Full Agricultural Tenancy (FAT) 1986 Not available anymore. Land and Buildings | Very Long Term - Lifetime lease until retirement (county council farm) - 3 generations (private landlord) | At the end of the agreement If no direct succession | CAP subsidies to the farmer. Regular rent reviews (every 3 years) Agreement on improvements/investments and possible compensations. Relatively low compared to FBT. Price per acre or holding price. |
| | Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) Since 1995 Bare Land (and Buildings) | Medium to Long-Term min : 1 year max : 15-30 year Average: 5 years | <2year : At the end of the agreement >2year : At least 2 years before | CAP subsidies to the farmer (except grey agreements, except high rent to integrate CAP payments) By tender/application or by agreement between the parties. Agreement on improvements/investments/management and possible compensation. High compared to FAT. Price per acre or holding price. |
| | Grazing License Bare Land | Short to Medium Uncertain max: 2 years | At the agreement's end. Unregulated. | CAP subsidies to the farmer (except 11months agreements) Right to graze. Possible restrictions of use. Higher compared to FAT, lower than FBTs, possible amicable agreements. |
| Informal | Gentleman/Handshake Agreement Bare Land | Short to Medium Uncertain Length : <1year Mostly: 11 months | At the agreement's end. Unregulated. | CAP subsidies to the landowner (except amicable agreement) Prices vary strongly. Depending on the closeness of management from the landlord; - Services included in the rent (Fertiliser, hedges...) - State and quality of the land and improvements agreed - Multiple users or Restrictions of use Usually higher than FBTs, except amicable cases. Price per acre. |
| | Output Specific Fodder Grower | Very Short Term Harvest the crop | « At will » Unregulated. | CAP subsidies to the landowner Only having the right to harvest the crop (grass, cereals...). Management by the landlord. Usually by bidding, tender or agreement. Price per acre. |
| | « Grazing » Bare Land | Very Short Term Months maximum | « At will » Unregulated. | CAP subsidies to the landowner Right to graze during a specific time. Price per head. |
| Formal | Contract Farming, Sharefarming, Partnership Land, Building, Capital and Work. | Medium to Long-Term 1 year to 30 years | « At will » Following the agreement's rules. | CAP subsidies included in the land value remuneration. Agreement negotiation. |

243 Subsidy decoupling from direct agricultural production followed gradually from 2003 to 2019 (Cf Fig.
 244 1), it was reported that it led to an increase in the price of land not explained by the market parameters
 245 on agricultural subsidy impact on the land market (Savills Research UK 2021 or Ciaian *et al.*, 2019)(Cf
 246 Fig 3.). The result of this context was that from 1992 the number of active farms continuously reduced
 247 while an expansion and specialisation of subsisting farms responding to the different drivers as shown
 248 in Lenormand *et al.* 2021.
 249

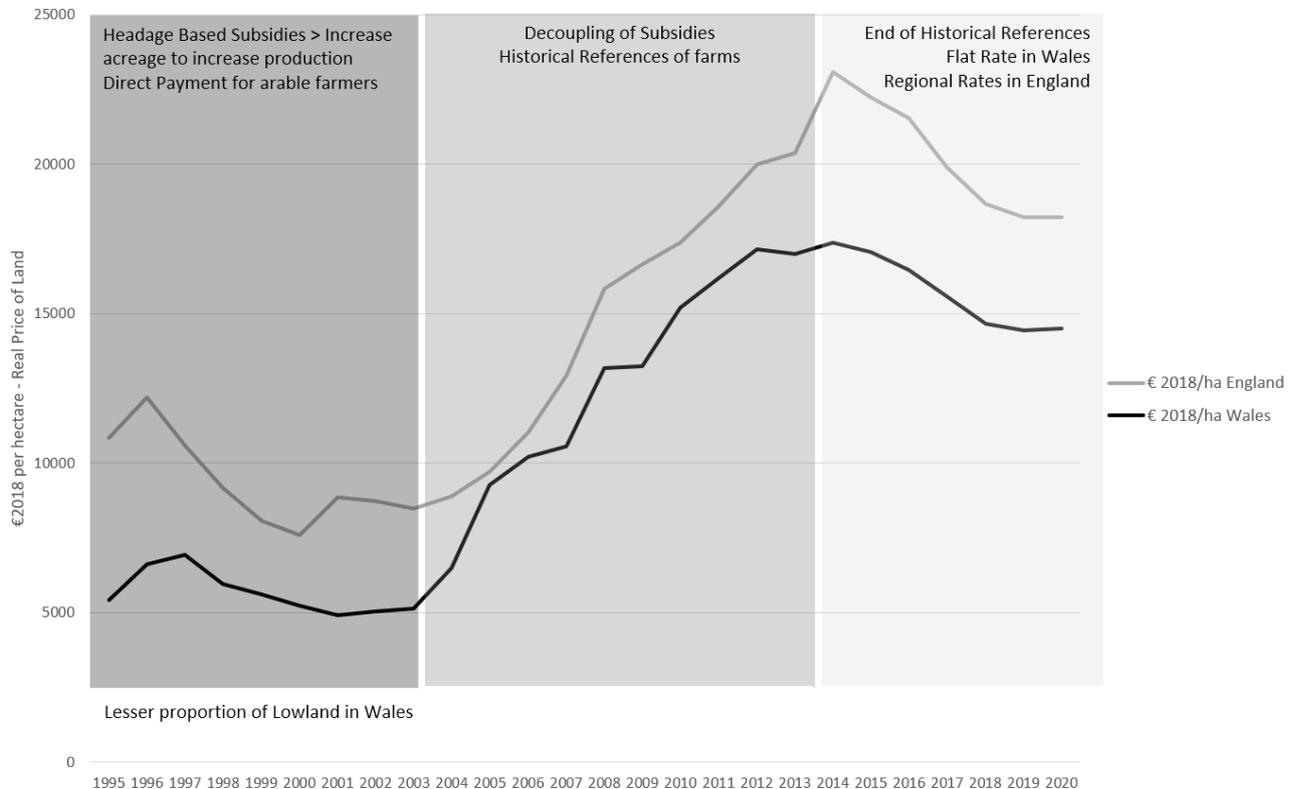
250 But after an initial increase in the balance of tenanted land under regulated agreements; FBTs after
 251 1995, the additional of tenanted land reduced rapidly to much lower levels from 2003 (CAAV 2005
 252 and 2021). At the same time the amount of land made available on the land market reduced quickly.
 253 Loughrey *et al.* 2020 showed percentages hovering around the 0.5% mark for five different EU
 254 countries over 10 years; the figure was 0.4% for England but 0.2% for Wales (Savills, 2021). Besides,
 255 existing actors and land-use are in competition on this thin market with rural newcomers; large
 256 corporations and financial investors (e.g. pension funds, insurers) as well as NGOs and wealthy
 257 philanthropists with very different sets of objectives for their land (Dwyer and Hodge, 1996), most
 258 recently including rewilding or sequestering carbon (Savills Research UK 2020).
 259

260 Academic work on the land market and its functioning have focused on the general supply/demand
 261 pattern and land values at the country level, linking it heavily with the subsidy system functioning
 262 (Střeleček *et al.* 2010). Those do not explain the apparent supply and cost issues on the market and
 263 do not explain the evolution of farms or the mechanism by which the farms dealt with those. And
 264 while there is clear evidence that there has been different dynamics (later increase of upland land
 265 value) for different productions and land types that do not match the macro-economic approach. This
 266 is partly linked to the level of information collected being restricted to land sales (since 1990) and

267 rented land with formal agreements, only detailed surveys tend to have a comprehensive view (Buller
 268 *et al.* 2007). Far from the amount of data collected by the SAFER in France (Reports and presentations
 269 2019).

270
 271

FIGURE 3: REAL AVERAGE PRICE OF FARMLAND IN ENGLAND AND WALES IN €2018 (SAVILLS, 2020)



272

273 Finally, while the tenancy reform of 1995 was deemed a milestone, several types of unregulated ways
 274 of renting-out land were already available to landowners (Cf Fig. 1). Those are very difficult to follow
 275 in the data available given their unregulated nature (CAAV 2021), but they were particularly important
 276 for farms (expansion pre-1995), or large landowners (ways to retain control of their land) as shown in
 277 Defra 2006). Combined to the structural ‘laissez-faire’ around transactions on agricultural land
 278 compared to several EU countries in terms of purchase control (limitations, conditions) (Safer 2015),
 279 there is an admission that the diversity of actors in the land market and relationships inside it are
 280 extremely complex (Butler *et al.* 2008).

281

282 **1.3 Land markets are not well understood and not recognized among the challenges by policy**

283

284 In preparation for leaving the EU, the devolved governments of the UK began a process in 1997 to
 285 review agricultural policy and design future frameworks for farming and land management support.
 286 The future Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) of the Welsh Government, to be implemented after
 287 2022, sits in this vision and aims at shifting the focus of support away from its significant farm income
 288 support focus and closer to a multi-faceted sustainability (inc. economic and environmental goals
 289 together), with payments for public goods (UK House of Commons, 2019; National Assembly for Wales
 290 - Climate Change, 2019; Welsh Government White Paper 2020). There is a clear willingness to set
 291 farmers in a role of land stewards, in this respect. This echoes the EU Farm to Fork strategy for the
 292 future CAP.

293

294 Though land as a production factor has clearly been under pressure recently (Savills 2021), it has so
 295 far not been identified whether the land market structure, particularly liberal had an impact on farm’s

296 evolution and their sustainability in isolation to other factors. Many challenges have been identified
 297 for farms in the post-Brexit era, but access to land for farming and other uses has not officially been
 298 recognized as a policy issue in Wales (Brexit and our land 2018 or Welsh Government 2020), in contrast
 299 to Scotland (Williams 2015). Actors and the literature tend to identify it as a barrier to entry in farming
 300 (Zagata et al. 2017), but the evidence available does not enable us to isolate the land market element.
 301 It has been absent of most modelling, or analysis done to assess the impact of EU-exit (e.g. ERAMMP
 302 model) except for long-held expectations that the change of subsidy system would release land and
 303 reduce land prices (Gibbard and Ravenscroft, 1997; Roberts 2018).

304
 305 As the next section of this paper discusses, empirical work in case study areas of Wales has highlighted
 306 the importance of the land market in patterns of farm differentiation, as well as the little-known
 307 intricacies of its structure. Taking the analysis to a level closer to the ground to at the same time isolate
 308 the land market specific impact from local determinant (as described by Dwyer 2021). We suggest that
 309 this challenging land market has a greater influence than is commonly reported in the UK literature;
 310 via its influence both upon renting (tenant farming) and buying (farm ownership and management).
 311 Those needs can be answered by the agrarian diagnosis approach allowing us to link the functioning
 312 of the land market to the farming system functioning through an understanding of the agrarian system
 313 processes.

314

315 **2. METHOD**

316 **2.1 The Agrarian Diagnosis an original approach to the landholding challenge**

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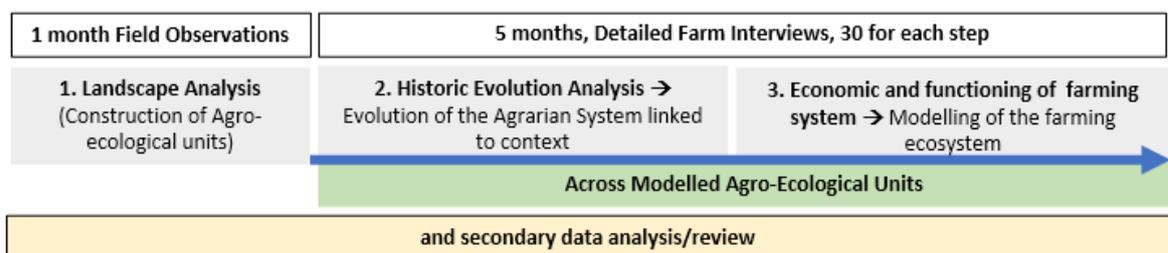
318 The method of agrarian diagnosis (Cochet and Devienne 2007) from the French ‘comparative
 319 agriculture’ theory enables a holistic systems-based approach to analyse any typical small agricultural
 320 area (40-50 km²); providing a fine-grained qualitative construction of quantitatively-defined models,
 321 connected to the wider context and history.

322

323 The typified field study entails three successive and interdependent steps (Cf Fig. 4). The first step is
 324 studying the landscape through desk review (geology, geomorphology, soil science, secondary data...) and
 325 field observations (identifying long-term patterns of change). This is followed by in-depth semi-
 326 structured interviews with retired farmers who have witnessed and took part in the agricultural
 327 transformations of recent decades. During those, quantified technical, economic, and qualitative
 328 environmental and social changes on the farm are discussed as precisely as possible. The aim is to
 329 understand farmers' motivations in relation to their environment. This enables a specific and in-depth
 330 understanding of farming system differentiation across the agro-ecological units in the landscape. An
 331 analysis of trajectories of farm change takes place using the reconstruction of farm systems through
 332 time, generating a typology of farms within that territorial setting. These modelled farm types are
 333 linked to their historic differentiation in the landscape.

334

335 **FIGURE 4: THE AGRARIAN DIAGNOSIS A 6 MONTH IN-DETAIL STUDY OF A SMALL AGRICULTURAL**
 336 **AREA. THREE INTERDEPENDENT STEPS. (BY THE AUTHOR FROM COCHET AND DEVIENNE 2007)**



337 This typology forms the basis for a targeted sampling of farms where a second round of interviews will
 338 take place. These are in-depth agronomic and economic examinations of existing farming businesses’
 339 functioning, based upon the characterisation of all the main farming systems present in the landscape,

340 identified via the typology, and defined as distinct ‘archetypes’ (Cochet, 2011).

341

342 This diagnosis at different scales makes it possible to characterize the operating logic of each
 343 production system, including elements relating to its use of land and its history. For example, the
 344 method identifies the historic accumulation of the land necessary to the operation of the farming
 345 system and its operation, indicating how it has affected farm evolution and farmers’ room for
 346 manoeuvre. to the approach enables us to prioritize between the economic and environmental
 347 challenges and constraints faced by each farm type, as well as to examine how they combine and how
 348 their shape change. In this way, and through interactive and continuing triangulation against
 349 secondary data sources and relevant literature.

350

351 The Agrarian Diagnosis is therefore an adequate tool to understand the combined role played by a
 352 liberalized land market and consecutive reforms of the CAP at a local scale on farm evolutions, as well
 353 as the functioning of the land market in relation to those. It also provides an extensive record of the
 354 access to land by farms within a regulated framework or not.

355

356 **2.2 Two Agrarian Diagnosis case-studies in Wales**

357

358 The generalization of findings of an Agrarian Diagnosis relies on the ability to scale its findings up by
 359 comparing with other areas and different contexts. UK farmed land is commonly split between
 360 Lowlands (<300m of altitude, dairy or arable focused, best land available) and Uplands (>300m of
 361 altitude, beef and sheep focused, a mix of rough mountain/hilly land and grazed and enclosed
 362 grassland). Two typical Welsh small agricultural areas have been studied with the agrarian diagnosis
 363 method in 2019 and 2020 – Cf Appendix 1:

364

365 **The South Pembrokeshire study area** is located at the south-western tip of Wales: it is a coastal
 366 lowland broadly representative of South Wales. The study area covered a diversity of bedrock and a
 367 gradient of oceanic influence from Narberth to Castlemartin. South Pembrokeshire (Pbs) is a hilly
 368 lowland area under 200m of altitude with a “*bocage*” landscape (a landscape with fields delimited by
 369 tree lined hedges and lots of grassland); it features a North-South soil and climate gradient, typical of
 370 South Wales lowlands. This diversity gives a range of typical Welsh lowland agricultural production to
 371 take place including milk, beef, sheep and potatoes. Pbs farming is very much focused on livestock
 372 and grassland. Most traditional estates (privately-owned) have disappeared over time, and today,
 373 most farmers own their homestead and holding (authors’ fieldwork, Welsh Agricultural Statistics
 374 2018).

375

376 **The Bala area, around the upper Dee valley catchment**, in North-West Wales. It is organized around
 377 the Dee valley, enshrined in the middle of a plateau up to the lakes of Llyn Tegid and Llyn Celyn. An
 378 area relatively isolated and scarcely populated, at the border with Snowdonia National Park and with
 379 a diversity of landscapes illustrating a typical Welsh upland landscape. The lush, wide alluvial valley
 380 transitions up to green hills (brown-topped with semi-natural vegetation) or slopes more steeply to
 381 reach the more mountainous parts (higher in altitude – up to 700m - and wide ridges arrangement,
 382 rough-grazing with rocky outcrops and screes). This general organization from the Alluvial Valley -
 383 more lowland conditions (V) to the Hills/Slope (H) and then the Mountain (M) can be found in every
 384 upland area of England and Wales. Farming in the Bala area has specialized in mainly beef and sheep
 385 production with a gradient of possibilities depending on the position of farms in the landscape. The
 386 landholding structure is a mix of owner-occupied farms and relatively traditional, large estates
 387 (privately owned – by individuals or investors- or by landowning institutions such as the NGO the
 388 National Trust, which holds land for conservation and amenity purposes, for the benefit of the nation).
 389 (authors’ fieldwork; Welsh Agricultural Statistics, 2018)

390

391 In each of these areas, the historical, geographical and economic analysis of farm differentiation in the
 392 agrarian diagnosis was used to understand the role played by the land market on a range of farm types
 393 in different landscapes, and vice-versa. Then the economic results of farm archetypes were considered
 394 in relation to the land market situation, to reflect on the possibility of an agro-ecological transition.

395

396 **3. RESULTS – HISTORICAL APPROACH TO DIFFERENTIATION AND THE LAND MARKET**

397

398 In the run up to the 1990s, uplands and lowlands had very different situations in terms of demand for
 399 land. Upland farms historically tend to be larger, and these were still gradually implementing the
 400 various elements of the 20th century agricultural revolution and its enhanced tools for labour
 401 productivity (e.g. quad-bikes for shepherding, big bale silage...). The capacity to expand land wise was
 402 not as strong as in the lowlands, where new tools, supplying greater labour productivity were
 403 emerging for dairy farms.

404

405 **3.1 Period 1: From 1992 to 2003, a very competitive farming environment, the land market, an 406 enabler**

407

408 **In general**, the impact of the liberalisation described above was gradual. The first element was the
 409 introduction of quota trades, selling on a free market the right to produce for livestock production
 410 (only on breeding stock and dairy cows) representing a high cost barrier to expansion. Particularly for
 411 dairy farms given the level of the quotas awarded to the UK (Barthélémy et al. 1990). Aside the scope
 412 to expand was very limited (land available to buy or rent; the number of farms around; difficult
 413 investment context) even in a supportive market price for agricultural outputs (Cf Fig.5). From 1996,
 414 those collapsed successively on the different livestock productions, as the result of crisis (BSE - beef,
 415 Foot and Mouth-sheep) but linked to the market deregulation (Milk). In this context, an extremely
 416 narrow window appeared to increase farm incomes using the latest labour productivity and land
 417 productivity tools, balancing low prices by low input prices and direct subsidies on the farm
 418 output/livestock (Cf fig.5). For expansion, loans would not be granted if the farm was not profitable
 419 or capitalized. The new tenancy framework therefore lowered the investment threshold to increase
 420 the size of the farm and made available some land.

421

422 Indeed, it was not only large landowners that took advantage of the new framework but also farmers
 423 approaching retirement age. You could rent-out your land while retaining a relatively high control of
 424 it and secure a risk-free income. The appetite for this was greater in Pembrokeshire than in the Upper
 425 Dee Vale; perhaps because for dairy farmers, this strategy could be combined with leasing out or
 426 selling your milk quota as an asset.

427

428 Social renting through the county councils was dependent on the policy of each local authority and
 429 was gradually wound down from 3-4% of the land to around 1% by 2016, mostly by selling land to
 430 sitting tenants to finance their functioning (Prince 2012). Gradually reducing their importance in the
 431 landscape for the community, particularly for young farms.

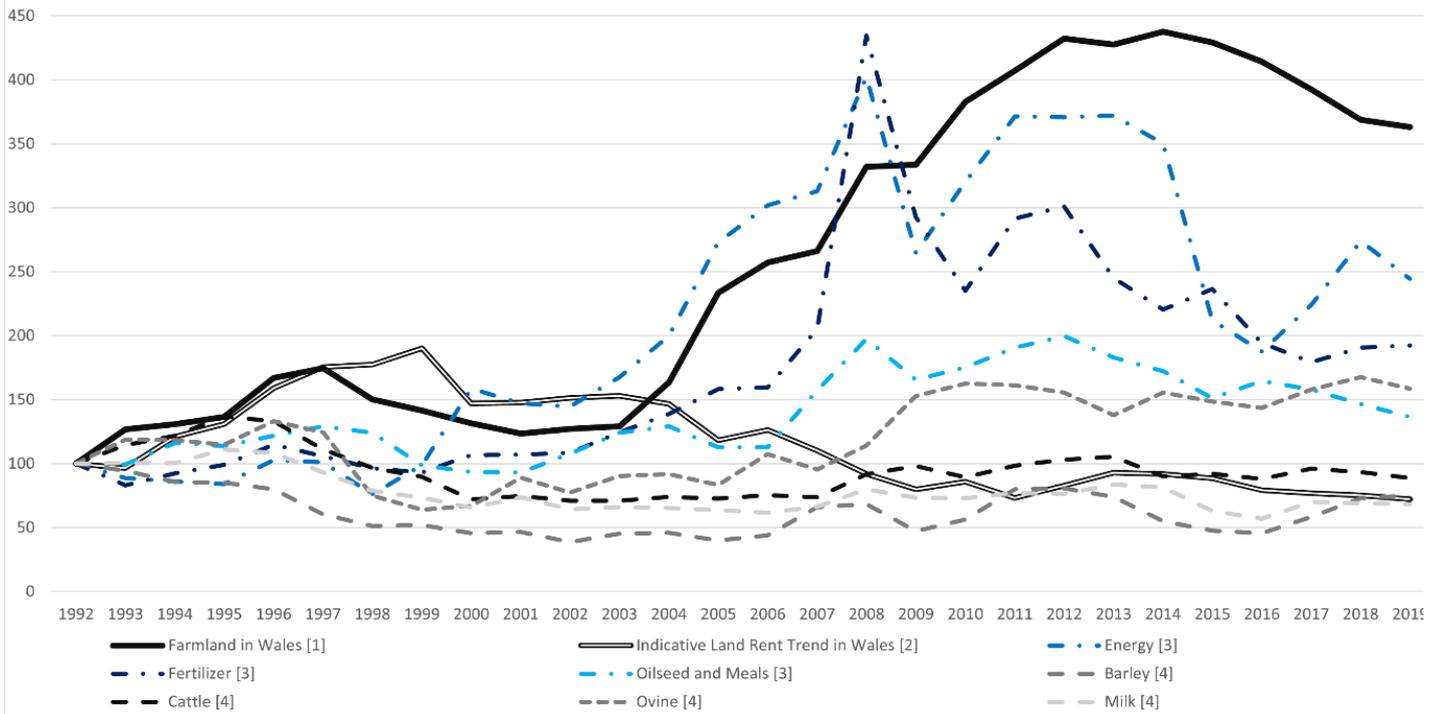
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433 **In Pembrokeshire**, 40% of farms went out of dairying from 1996 (Cf Fig. 5.) with a price-based selection
 434 taking place among dairy farms, therefore many reduced the intensity of their land use either retiring
 435 or going into beef production (sucklers or finishing). The lesser demand on the land, allowed some
 436 land to be rented-out to expanding farmers.

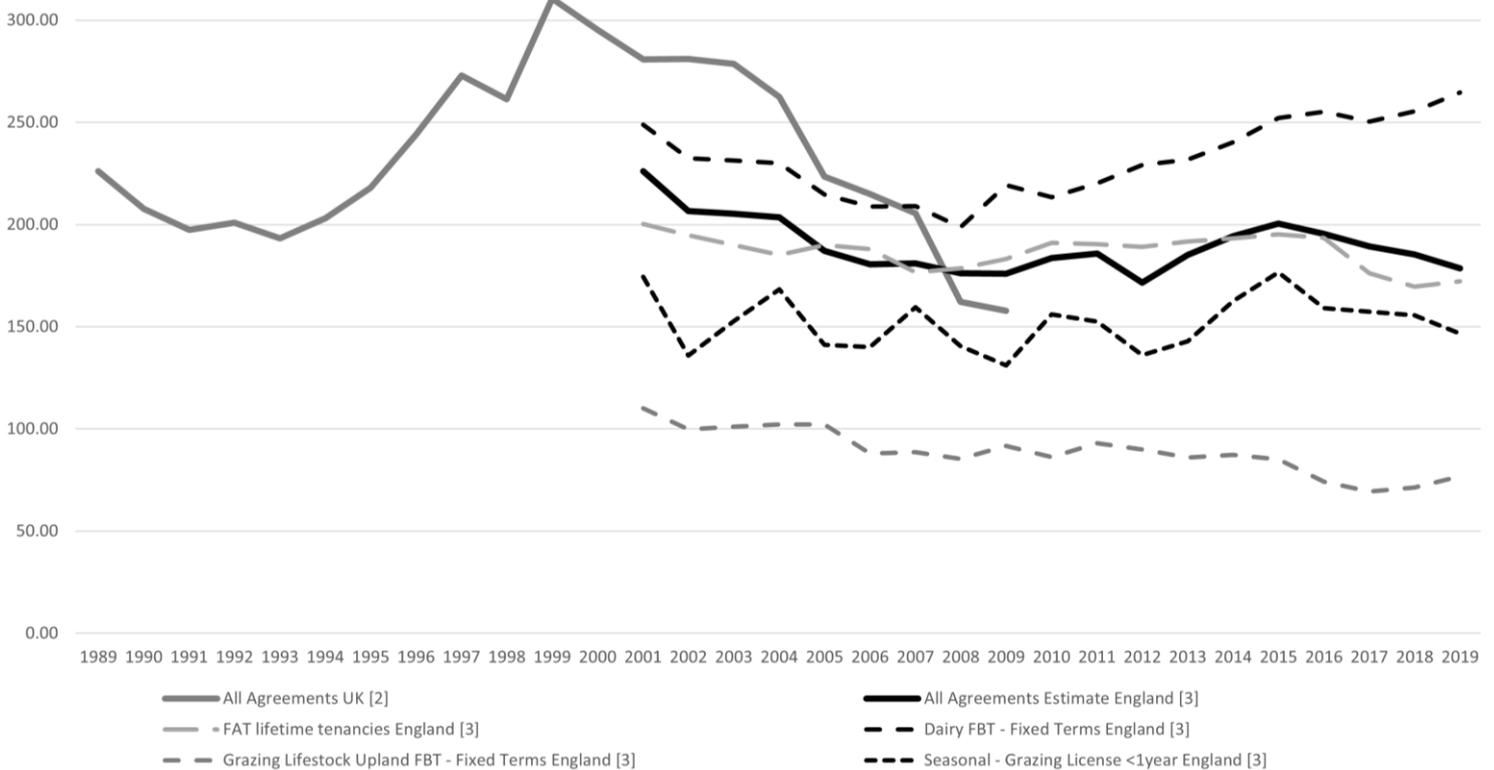
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438 In response to the FBT, large landowners in lowland areas changed their renting policy, renting out
 439 land that might previously have been farmed directly or sold, due to the constraints of the rental
 440 markets. In a relatively starved market, renting became a relatively risk-free and possibly more
 441 remunerating option. So, farms coming out of long-term historical tenancies would often be rented

442 **FIGURE 5: COMPARED PRICE EVOLUTION FOR FARMGATE OUTPUTS AND A RANGE OF**
 443 **PRODUCTION FACTORS FROM 1992 TO 2019**
 444 **[1]SAVILLS 2021 [2]EU COMMISSION FARM ACCOUNTANCY NETWORK DATA 2009 [3] WORLD**
 445 **BANK DATA 2020 [4] FAOSTAT 2021**



446 **FIGURE 6: RENT PRICE EVOLUTION IN ENGLAND FROM 1992 TO 2019 BY AGREEMENT TYPES AND**
 447 **LAND USE IN £2018/HA [1][2] FARM ACCOUNTANCY NETWORK DATA 2009 [3] DEFRA FARM**
 448 **BUSINESS RENT SURVEY 2021**
 449



450 on FBTs of anything between 5 and 20 years, the market gradually settling around a 15-year period as
 451 the most common model for farms and 3 years for bare land (CAAV 2021), seen as short leases by
 452 farmers.

453
 454 Subsisting dairy farms were trying to expand to subsist in a defavourable context. Those with young
 455 farmers or several family members- the price of rented land was already quite high, sometimes over
 456 200£/ha/year (Cf Fig 6.), there was a general competitive, best-price, best-terms approach to renting
 457 land. More security and flexibility in the lease would mean a higher price tag, for example under a FBT
 458 compared to unformal agreements (Cf Fig.1).

459
 460 As many farmers renting-out land were attached culturally to their land, some would rent-it out on
 461 preferential terms to local trusted farmers, sometimes at a lesser price, most likely to smaller farmers,
 462 or would retain some element of control (Cf Fig.1). Expanding farms were still trying to buy when
 463 possible, balancing capital growth of the production system and profit tax reduction. As a result, dairy
 464 farms were intensifying their land management to pay for the cost of land taken on, the additional
 465 infrastructure, the borrowing cost, and the quotas (Townsend Chartered Surveyor 2016).

466
 467 At this point land of a former farm would be rented-out in one block, but when whole farms came on
 468 the market to be sold, they would most often be split in order to find interested bidders in a difficult
 469 investment context. Those buying land would also be specialized beef and sheep farms for which the
 470 newly introduced headage payments were profitable. As a result, on beef and sheep farms, the
 471 pressures described for dairy farms was not as strong, the farms that expanded the fastest would have
 472 a large family.

473
 474 Finally, the same changes provided for a revival of potato farming, historically a significant feature
 475 which had declined during the 1970s and 1980s as farms concentrated and specialised. This came to
 476 fruition thanks to this reduction of the land production intensity on many farms, it would pay for very
 477 short lets on the best quality of land up to 400-500£/ha/for a crop, also requiring adequate rotation
 478 in between, it started in the second half of the 1990s.

479
 480 **In Bala area**, the amount of land released by farms retiring was much lower. Upland valleys dairy farms
 481 were pushed out of dairying and converted to beef and sheep production, but the rest of the hills and
 482 valleys increased its land use intensity. Indeed, during the 1990s the weight and meat quality
 483 standards on beef and sheep markets were hiked up requiring many adaptations to maintain the same
 484 remuneration, while the subsidy focus was on hiking up breeding stock and finishing numbers (the
 485 subsidy payment was more interesting than on dairying). Both were achieved more by using increased
 486 amounts of inputs than by taking on more land. However, some large expansions were made by
 487 farming families who required more land. Renting and buying, to support an increased number of
 488 family members. An example of this lesser pressure on the market would be that farms were still be
 489 sold as one block or the lesser rent prices (Cf Fig 6.). The agreements could be informal as well but
 490 tended to be relatively secure and lower priced. The appetite for expansion was lesser post 1996 as
 491 farmgate prices reduced under the impact of several crisis. Reinforcing the subsidy dependence of
 492 upland farms.

493
 494 On farms with mountain land where bio-physical conditions prevented intensification, the 90s marked
 495 a change of paradigm, from production to ecosystem conservation. The first ESAs targeted mountain
 496 land, paying for income foregone due to the reduced level of stocking required in the agreements. As
 497 a result, the impact of lower production potential, translating in lower incomes was reduced.
 498 Nevertheless, mountain land remained relatively unattractive at the time and would still be sold
 499 (Savills 2021). Hill or Valley floor farms would buy it, usually farms with the largest family workforce,
 500 operations, and capital.

501 **Summary of the section:** We note that different strategies have been witnessed over the different
 502 landscapes by different actors giving a very nuanced view. Uplands with their 3 agro-ecological
 503 altitude steps had a land market that was less challenging than in lowlands. The influence of the
 504 subsidy system and off inputs/outputs markets was low in lowlands but higher in the uplands. It
 505 explains the only slight increase in land price due to a limited demand versus the supply (Cf Fig 3.) and
 506 the quick increase in rented land prices, particularly in lowlands (Cf Fig 6.). The land market structure
 507 allowed and selected farm's expansions over this period.

508
 509 **3.2 Period 2 and 3: The decoupling of subsidies in 2 phases from 2003 had a bigger impact in Uplands**
 510 **than Lowlands**

511
 512 **Period 2:** In 1999, the UK introduced devolution of certain powers to Wales. The newly formed Welsh
 513 government gained powers to set its own agricultural policy in response to Europe's Agenda 2000 CAP
 514 reforms. From 2003, it was decided to implement the first Pillar subsidy partially linked to output,
 515 using historical output reference levels (Boinon *et al.* 2003), it removed the incentive of further
 516 production increase out of market considerations but still benefited highest subsidy recipient at the
 517 time, the large and intensive beef and sheep systems.

518
 519 **Period 3:** From 2013, a Wales-wide, uniform flat-rate decoupled Single Payment Scheme was
 520 introduced. Though it had a redistributive element which favoured smaller holdings, it favoured
 521 holdings with large acreage. Full decoupling was finally attained in 2019 (Hart 2015).

522
 523 **Period 2 and 3:** On the 2nd Pillar, from 1999 two 'all-Wales' Agri-Environment schemes followed one
 524 another, Tir Gofal and then Glas-Tir (from 2012) focused mostly on the protection, management or
 525 creation of environmental and historical features through 5-year contracts including annual acreage
 526 payments (management) and environmental grants (investment support) (Wynne-Jones 2013). Those
 527 payments were still based mainly on income foregone. The Welsh government also developed
 528 enhanced business support for farming over that period.

529
 530 Buying land with subsidy rights was an attractive option. A farm would pay between 2 and 4 years of
 531 subsidies for the entitlements, therefore guaranteeing further income. There were no alterations to
 532 the framework around land use. But the context on agricultural markets fluctuated wildly for farms
 533 (Cf Fig 5). Indeed output prices improved slightly as demand increased, but still remained at a lower
 534 level compared to 1992. They also fluctuated up and down considerably quicker. On the flipside,
 535 inputs prices went up. The investment context only eased up from 2008 onwards after the financial
 536 crisis (due to the quantitative easing policy) and quota prices rapidly collapsed, removing two barriers
 537 to expansion (Townsend Chartered Surveyor 2016).

538
 539 **General:** Retiring out of direct farming activity, renting-out some land as a smallholder, was now even
 540 more interesting. Indeed, with the definition of active farmer in the CAP rules, it was possible to rent-
 541 out the land and claim the subsidies. The rented land supply reduced tremendously on the formal
 542 market (CAAV, 2020). The land sold reduced in anticipation from 2001 (approximately halving in Wales
 543 according to Savills, 2021), despite many farms retiring under continued market and crisis pressure.
 544 On the flipside there was an increase in out-of-farming buyer's demand, sometimes letting it back
 545 (Savills, market reports 2021, interviews of 2021).

546
 547 In this context of reduced supply, there was increased interest in buying land in the balance described
 548 above due to the payments. Farms coming on the market were now split even more in the face of the
 549 supply/demand balance, the incorporation of subsidy rights in the land price only explaining part of
 550 the increase witnessed (Cf fig. 3 and 5). This is also true for rented land, whole farms became
 551 increasingly rare to find on the rental markets in high pressured areas, like Pembrokeshire.

552 **In Pembrokeshire**, selection pressure of farms based on their remuneration reduced, but a
 553 differentiation of farms happened in response to the challenging input/output market context and not
 554 so much to subsidies. The land market plays its part, sometimes restricting farms into pathways:

- 555 • Farms that had expanded on a high output, high input strategy further felt the need to scale-
 556 up following the removal of barriers to expansion in the difficult context; they required large
 557 amount of land quickly, therefore how choosy they could be in terms of location. This
 558 further consolidated the farms into increasingly inside/autumn calving dairy system, it
 559 reduces the need for a large grazing platform near the homestead.
- 560 • Dairy farms that didn't expand massively in the 1990s followed an opportunistic step by step
 561 expansion, therefore trying combine relatively favourable leasing terms, convenient land and
 562 the family workforce availability. If the land is dispersed despite being on favourable terms in
 563 case of further expansion it can get complicated.
- 564 • The development of New-Zealand type, dairy grass-fed farms with large herds requires a large,
 565 grouped grazing platform. Few landowners can supply it (namely few large family farms or
 566 traditional estates) and few neighbours would be able to complement it. But the low input
 567 low output nature of this system is compatible with a high remuneration of the land price and
 568 low prices, though it needs a secure lease given the investment required on the land
 569 infrastructure.
- 570 • More farms went into organic farming, incentivized by schemes and the growing market,
 571 those need a real lease security given their commitment in the organic scheme, additionally
 572 they need to compensate a lower output per hectare by farming wider acreages. It means that
 573 their opportunities in the lease market would be lower, and the price paid possibly higher.

574
 575 Finally, if a high subsidy-stripped land rent is paid it means a high added value must be returned to
 576 remunerate the different production factors and the land. It explains that the available supply of land
 577 to rent for beef and sheep system in areas dominated by dairy farms became extremely reduced as
 578 those systems needed subsidies to balance their remuneration, the only farms in this category that
 579 could deal without it were more remunerating finishers and those with high historical references.
 580 Opportunities would also come up from amicable lease from landowners (institutional, private, or
 581 retired) with a compatible price-tag and potentially restrictions of use attached to it.

582
 583 **Since 2010-2013**, the defavourable crunch between outputs and inputs prices combined to the
 584 growing demand drove more dairy farms to expand and specialize their milk production in relation to
 585 what resources were available (including landholding). Beef and sheep farms on the contrary reduced
 586 their land use intensity, particularly those that had made the most of the subsidy and cheap inputs. A
 587 selection kept happening, now mostly on beef and sheep farm maintaining a lower stream of new
 588 unformal leases stream. Rented land prices increased as inputs prices had risen, producing fodder out
 589 of the land was increasingly interesting.

590
 591 For farms expanding, to deal with the increasingly spread-out nature of their operation, a mix of
 592 buying, renting, and outsourcing some parts of the production system was introduced. The
 593 outsourcing is a testimony of the highly specialized areas on dairying; the appearance of support
 594 farmers, producing fodder, rearing youngstock for landlocked farms sometimes in other landscape.

595
 596 **In Bala area**, until 2003 the subsidy profile was not in favour of the upland, particularly hill and
 597 mountain farms with limited margins to increase outputs from the land. But gradually, it started to
 598 favour the largest farms, and particularly farms with mountain land. Indeed, second pillars subsidies
 599 were still easier to deal with in terms of compromise than was the case for purely hills or valley farms.

600
 601 On the supply side, there was a continuous drive out of farming due to the price pressure and less
 602 supportive subsidy regime with retirements, diversifications out of farming, part-time working.

603 Particularly among small and medium sized, hill and valley farms and most of all on those fully
604 tenanted. On the hill and valleys, the amount of land sold reduced but the amount of land available
605 to rent increased gradually. With the new subsidy system, very little mountain land would now be
606 sold.

607
608 With the continuing poor economic results of beef and sheep farms and rising inputs price, farms tried
609 to reduce their inputs' use. But to maintain their remuneration -particularly whenever a new family
610 member joined - the answer has been to expand the size of the farm to cope. One of the strategies,
611 was to continually purchase some land as it was becoming available, particularly if one had successors.
612 For renting it worked more by opportunity in terms of conditions, location and price paid given the
613 smaller room for manoeuvre economically. As a result, some farms have extremely dispersed land of
614 different types constraining the farming system heavily. Those tend to focus more on sheep farming
615 than cattle farming, nevertheless it had a lesser impact on the evolution of farming systems than in
616 dairy farming areas.

617
618 **The demand on the Upland renting market has been increased over the last 10 years, particularly**
619 **close to lowland areas**, with the development of new high added value specialized types of farming,
620 upland dairy spring calving farms, heifers rearing for lowland farms or poultry farming.

- 621 • The first ones usually transform hill or valley land into grazeable land on which higher yielding
622 systems wouldn't be able to operate. In the upland, there is the possibility to find larger
623 grazing platforms than in the lowlands, with large farms that grew over 50 years or from
624 traditional estates.
- 625 • The heifers rearer can deal with a more spread-out grazing platform, but both require large
626 amount of silage grade land that can be more difficult to find.
- 627 • Poultry farms, needs land to spread the manure and some workforce, they also have some
628 biosecurity challenge for spreading.
- 629 • Finally, the development of organic farms is done through multiplying by 3 the amount of
630 land to keep the same amount of livestock.

631 All those differentiated farms look for to "long-term" renting potentially for a premium (up to 250-
632 275€/ha) with or without buildings, sometimes through integration, sometimes by sharing the risks.
633 Those would not necessarily rely on the subsidy payment.

634
635 **In the uplands, the pressures coming from the non-agricultural sector are stronger.** Either residential
636 pressure for homes or second homes (including to convert in holiday lets), electricity generation or
637 now to promote conservation or carbon capture. Some of those might supply the land back on the
638 rental market with potential management conditions restricting systems that can access it – namely
639 relatively low output beef and sheep system. Closer to population centres residential buyers are
640 particularly important. Investors are even more interested in buying land, now as a way to offset
641 carbon emissions.

642
643 **Summary of the section:** We witnessed a co-evolution of farms and the land market, though direct
644 subsidies have played a part they are only a side of the environment favouring landowning.
645 Incumbents' landowners in the agrarian system have been favoured when it comes to the land market
646 and making the most through the land capitalisation either for now or for the future (with the tax
647 regime), mostly family farms and few buyers, building on capital and often going through tough times
648 (health, stress, financially). There has been a concentration of land control by few farms combined to
649 some land concentration by large actors (private estates, trusts...). While the land ownership is still
650 relatively dispersed in lowlands it is not the case in the uplands.

651
652 There is a state of expectation by many subsidy-reliant farms to see what will come after Brexit, this
653 has constrained both the supply and the demand. In difficult market conditions farms have changed

654 their orientations looking for ways to add value through different productions, economic activities or
 655 different managements, but most have expanded. In this context the Brexit process has only
 656 marginally tweaked the land market evolution in those areas where the dominant pressure is currently
 657 associated with market drivers. In lowland areas even more landlocked in terms of land “quality”
 658 prices have increased much higher up to the level of the Netherlands.

659
 660 Therefore, new entrants trying to settle in farming by themselves have struggled, they enter either on
 661 the few favourable tenancies relet as such (private estates, county councils) or out of their own wealth
 662 (including working aside) and depending on the agricultural market fortunes. Instead, there is a
 663 growing pathway of capital building through high added value productions sometimes combined to
 664 the ladder of share-farming in order to compensate for the challenge of entering the very capitalized
 665 industry without collateral while still needing to cover a commercial rent.

666
 667 The highest bidder approach has created a disperse and diverse landholding pattern that does not
 668 favour the best approach from an environmental or farming system point of view, it locked some
 669 farms in pathways that do not lead to an overall sustainable land use; with high land productivity,
 670 inefficiencies linked to spread-out land...

671

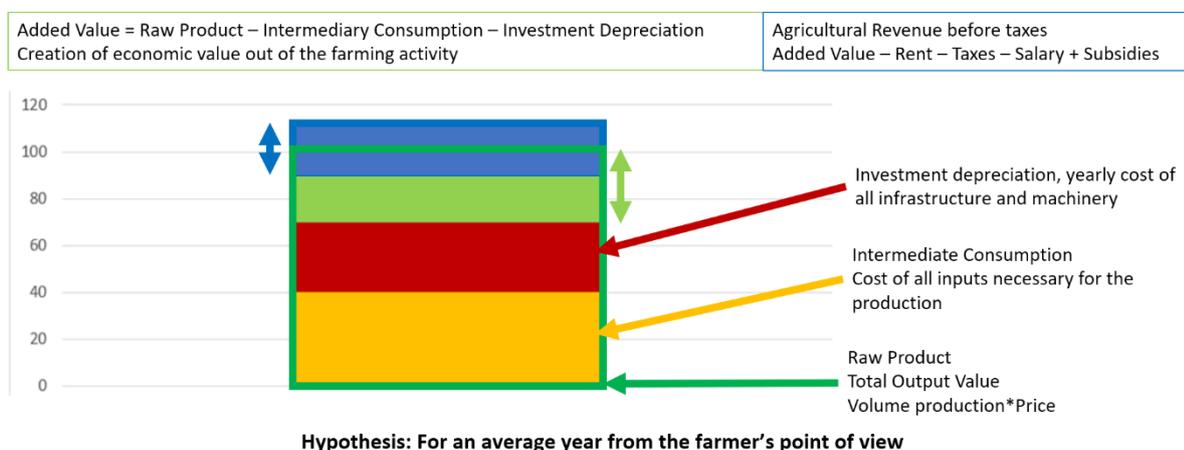
672 **4 RESULTS – ECONOMIC RESULTS OF FARM ARCHETYPES COMPARED TO THE LAND MARKET**
 673 **SITUATION**

674 **4.1 Introduction**

675 For this section we use the data from the modelled archetypes as described in the method section.
 676 On each we have range of information about their functioning, be it from the economic point of view
 677 or the agronomic point of view (Cochet and Devienne 2007). To simplify the results, we grouped farm
 678 archetypes by broad categories to represent different strategies from the landholding structure.

679 With the agrarian diagnosis we analyse farm economics from the family farm point of view (Cf Fig 7.).
 680 The Added Value (AV) is the difference between the output of the farm and the costs, it represents
 681 the economic value created because of on-farm production. By looking at the agricultural revenue
 682 before income tax (Added Value - Taxes - Interest - Rent + Subsidies) from the family point of view we
 683 can compare different farms regardless of their business structure. All economic data is given in
 684 €2018¹.

685 **FIGURE 7: THE SPECIFIC APPROACH TO ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF FAMILY FARMS OF THE**
 686 **AGRARIAN DIAGNOSIS (BY THE AUTHOR FROM COMPARED AGRICULTURE SCHOOL DEVIENNE, S.**
 687 **2019)**



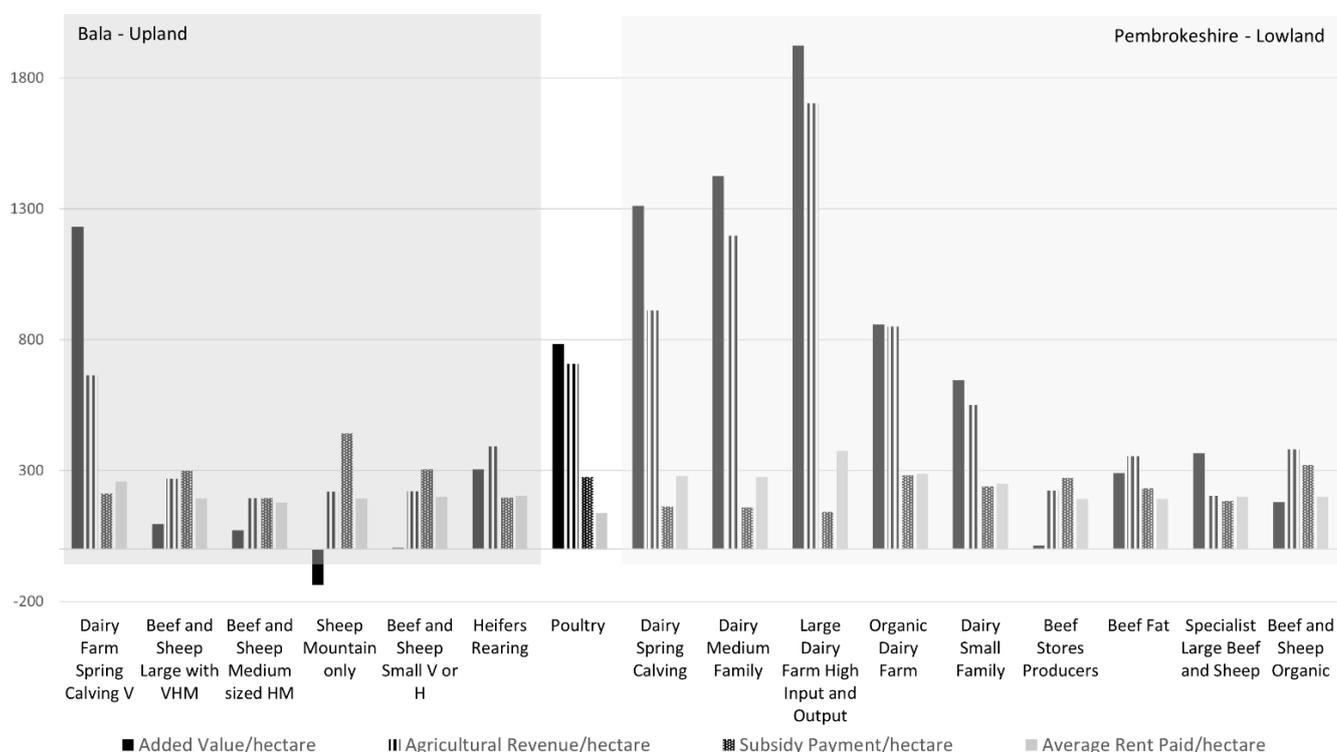
688 To analyse the economic performance, we grouped together archetypes that presented similar
 689 landholding structure they we gave an example of their structural organisation in Appendix 2 and 3.

690 **4.2 The opportunity of taking more rented land**

691
 692 Comparing the economic performance of farming systems (Cf Fig. 8) enables us to separate the farms
 693 in 2 categories; Ones that have an added value per hectare over the rent and the others.
 694 We therefore analyse the interest of renting more land by looking at the potential added value that
 695 can be gained from each additional hectare (under the assumption that it is within the other parts of
 696 the system capabilities)
 697

698 On **Bala** area, archetypes span over three agro-ecological altitude steps, the alluvial valley (L), the
 699 rolling hills (H) and the mountain (M), supplying a gradient of conditions. The picture is quite striking,
 700 none of the beef and sheep systems (even organic ones that are included in the groups) manage to
 701 attain the threshold, even more so as we climb up in altitude. The more mountain land, the closer to
 702 zero they are, showcasing the low output and low valorisation of outputs from the rough land. But all
 703 those systems use relatively little rented land, most of it being on preferential stable terms. On the
 704 flipside, dairy spring calving system, heifers rearing, and poultry farms manage to sustain their rent
 705 level from their output but are heavily dependent on renting, they are relying on more expensive land,
 706 and a higher proportion of rented land.

708 **FIGURE 8: FARMING IN WALES, ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE PER HECTARE FOR DIFFERENT**
 709 **MODELLER FARM CLASSES COMPARED TO SUBSIDIES, LAND RENTING OR OWNING THE LAND (ALL**
 710 **VALUES IN €2018). FROM FIELDWORK AND AGRARIAN DIAGNOSIS, 2019, 2020. V- VALLEY H- HILL LAND M -**
 711 **MOUNTAIN LAND**



712
 713 When it comes to the level of agricultural revenue that can be achieved, Beef and sheep system always
 714 higher, or very close to the average rent paid. The subsidies close the gap linked to the low
 715 remuneration out of traditional production systems (store cattle and relatively light and late lambs),
 716 or more production focused one. We also notice that small beef and sheep farm tend to be unable to

717 cover the price of renting land in all cases explain. High added value production despite the high level
718 of rent (or land value remuneration if share farming) still return reasonable incomes/ha for farms
719 making the case for expansion.

720
721 For **South-Pembrokeshire** farming systems, spanning over 2 landscapes small (S) and wide (W) ridges,
722 the later supplying the more versatile agro-ecological conditions. We have a different context
723 regarding the average rent paid, it fluctuates a lot more with much higher upper limits, and much
724 more unformal and uncertain agreements. The levels of added value per hectare that farming systems
725 can achieve are much higher and this is reflected in the rent level. We notice that beef finishers and
726 specialist beef and sheep farmers tend to be able to cover the price of the rent from the farm activity
727 alone, making the case for an expansion based on rented land. This is not the case of stores producers
728 with an added value per hectare close to zero. In Pembrokeshire the dependence on renting of those
729 systems tend to be slightly higher than in the lowlands. Even moderate levels of commercial rents
730 tend to be very difficult to pay on some beef and sheep farms, if the farm is not family owned, it is
731 difficult to operate. Dairy systems in Pembrokeshire have a clear case for expansion by renting land
732 even at expensive prices, reflecting their high added value and production per hectare, the bigger they
733 are, more intensive they are the more they rely on expensive uncertain leases.

734
735 **Overall**, the subsidy payments per hectare vary, being higher for farms with mountain land, organic
736 farms, those that own all their land or in favourable renting terms that do not share their subsidy
737 payment, in turns impacting the opportunity of buying more land or renting more to expand. In the
738 end the only farms that cannot access the rental market are unattractive income-wise small farms on
739 traditional productions and in a difficult landscape position (Beef stores, late lambs...). Others can
740 access the land market but only if subsidies are attached to it, others depend mainly on their own land
741 and can still rent without subsidies, but the gains are small. Finally high added value system can afford
742 very high rents/land-value return without getting the subsidy and still manage to get a farm income
743 per hectare.

744
745 If we look at the supply side on the uncertain land market, the income achievable by support farmers,
746 producing fodders and rearing heifers it sufficient to sustain a living, but renting-out land might require
747 a supplement by a side-job or a pension.

748
749 **This analysis shows that the rental market is mainly driven by the dominant agricultural markets**
750 **more than the subsidies but also, that there is a clear 2-sided rental market; one amicable including**
751 **subsidies and more reasonable rents and another relatively expensive, sometimes very uncertain**
752 **and stripped from its subsidies. This has clear implications for the functioning of farming system**
753 **having an impact on their functioning and constraining some.**

754
755 **CONCLUSION – is an Agro-Ecological transition possible in this liberal land market:**

756
757 Farming in Wales faces a period of likely significant change, following the UK's exit from the EU. We
758 have shown how the Welsh land market, as in the UK in general has seen prices greatly inflated partly
759 due to the subsidy regime. The fieldwork confirmed that it is a more and more immobile and selective
760 market, each bit of land according to the statistics would be sold on the market every 500 years.

761
762 The extremely competitive environment in the agricultural sector during the last 30 years has
763 contributed to a selection amongst farms. The liberal land market has played a part in allowing the
764 selection to happen, removing one the barriers to expansion or retiring at first, particularly in
765 lowlands. But also representing an obstacle for some farming systems and driving farm evolutions into
766 some pathways, sometimes to exit the industry or to expand continuously. The dynamics on renting
767 and buying farmland market have been different in lowlands and uplands with different

768 consequences.

769

770 In the recent years constrained supply faced a land hungry market which is no less hungry today, still
771 selecting among potential new users and owners for farmland. We saw that only high added value
772 production can remunerate the rental market without subsidies, there is a clear difference in terms of
773 pressure on the land market between historically specialized areas on remunerating productions and
774 the uplands which recently have seen the development of high added value productions. To deal with
775 the increasing demand. The strategies for farms outside of the highest bidders are more complex and
776 rely on opportunities from other landowners that do not follow the best-price objective.

777

778 **Rent prices are adjusted to the added value while land prices have locked in value and now mirror**
779 **the scarce offer meeting a dynamic demand that can afford it.**

780

781 In the short-term, we are looking towards a new shock, in Wales it is going to be stronger with the
782 newly introduced country-wide Nitrate Vulnerable Zones rules. It is likely that a new selection that a
783 new selection is going to take place among farms.

784

785 High added value systems with high stocking rates will have to adapt. It means finding more land to
786 spread manure or other outsourcing some of the livestock to other farms, in other landscapes. Further
787 going towards hyper-specialized farming on dairying for example (Lenormand *et al.* 2021).

788

789 The future SFS paying will not be up to the level of support of the CAP. Those that are the most
790 dependent on the CAP, beef and sheep systems are starting to seek more remunerating orientations
791 (including in the uplands) with more demanding land use as a result if they feel they will not be able
792 to fit in the future scheme.

793

794 In the medium-term there will be a clearer emergence of a two-speed land market linked to a two
795 speed Welsh agriculture. One focused on production, bidding high, income focused working on
796 volatile market, another functioning by opportunity less demanding in terms of land use and seeking
797 other objectives maybe less dependent of markets – with other more benevolent actors -. They will
798 compete for the same finite supply of land thus maintaining land values to buy or rent, because the
799 incentive is to expand.

800

801 The access to land of the farming sector to new entrant is still extremely complex (Williams 2015) and
802 focused on high added value productions and with specific paths or by opportunity limiting the new
803 entries particularly on more diversified and alternative agro-ecological and lower added value
804 systems.

805

806 An agro-ecological management calls for a long-term vision of the farming system in line with
807 biological processes (e.g. carbon building, soil structure, hedge quality...) or farms business cycles,
808 requiring to think about the ways to foster a more sustainable development of environmentally
809 sustainable farms (Devienne 2019), this conflicts with the current situation where the land value
810 remuneration and the control of the landowner are favoured in a short-term vision for a large part of
811 the market. A situation which is set to get worse.

812

813 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

814

815 The fieldwork that permitted the writing of this paper was funded by the Daniel et Nina CARASSO
816 foundation in 2018-2019. This PhD has been funded by the EEP (Environmental Evidence Programme),
817 a research arm of the Welsh Government, the Countryside and Community Foundation.

818

819 **ENDNOTES**

820 ^{1.} Common Agricultural Policy payments were until 2020 based in euros (before conversion),
821 thus the choice of €2018 for the model, constructed in 2019.

822

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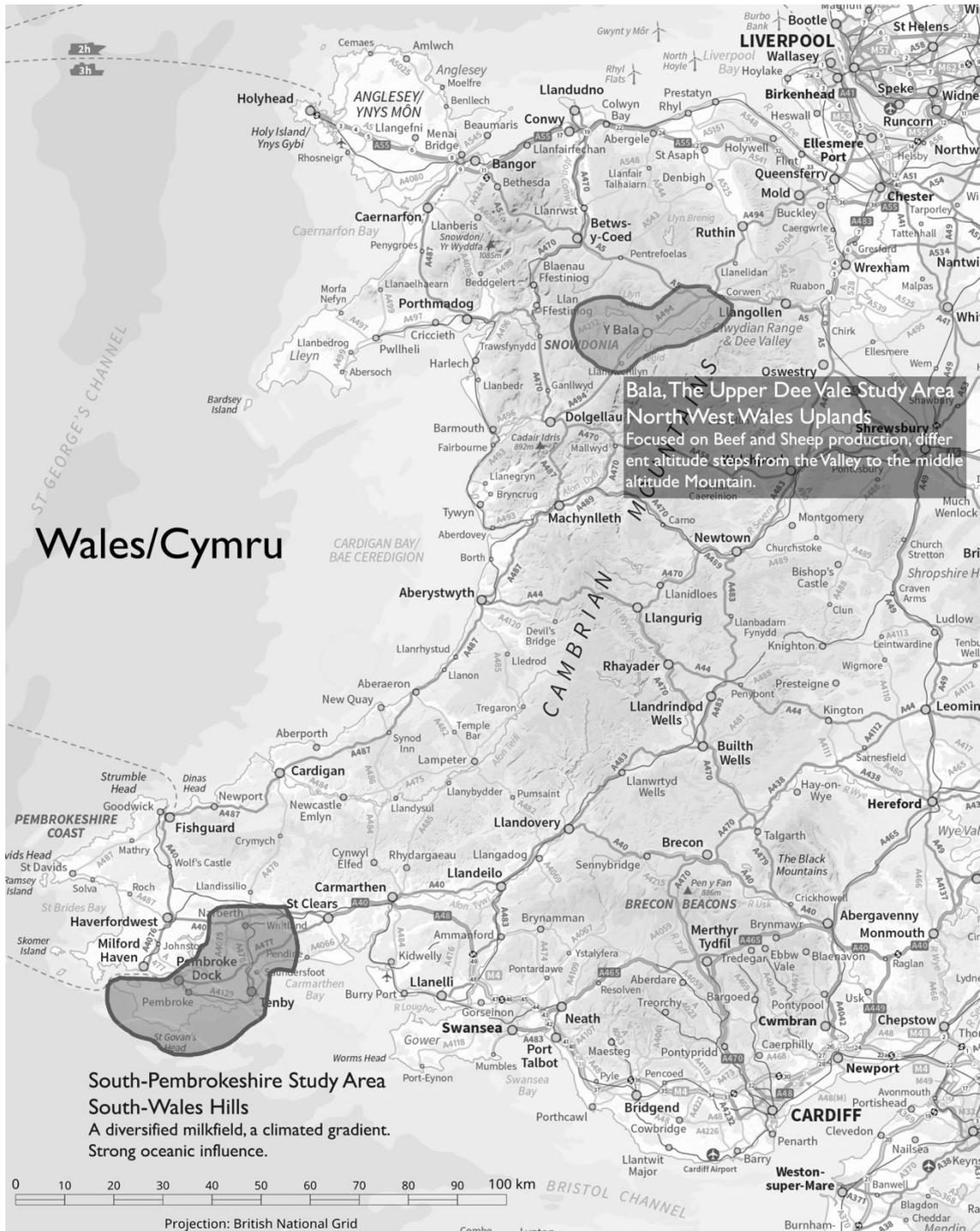
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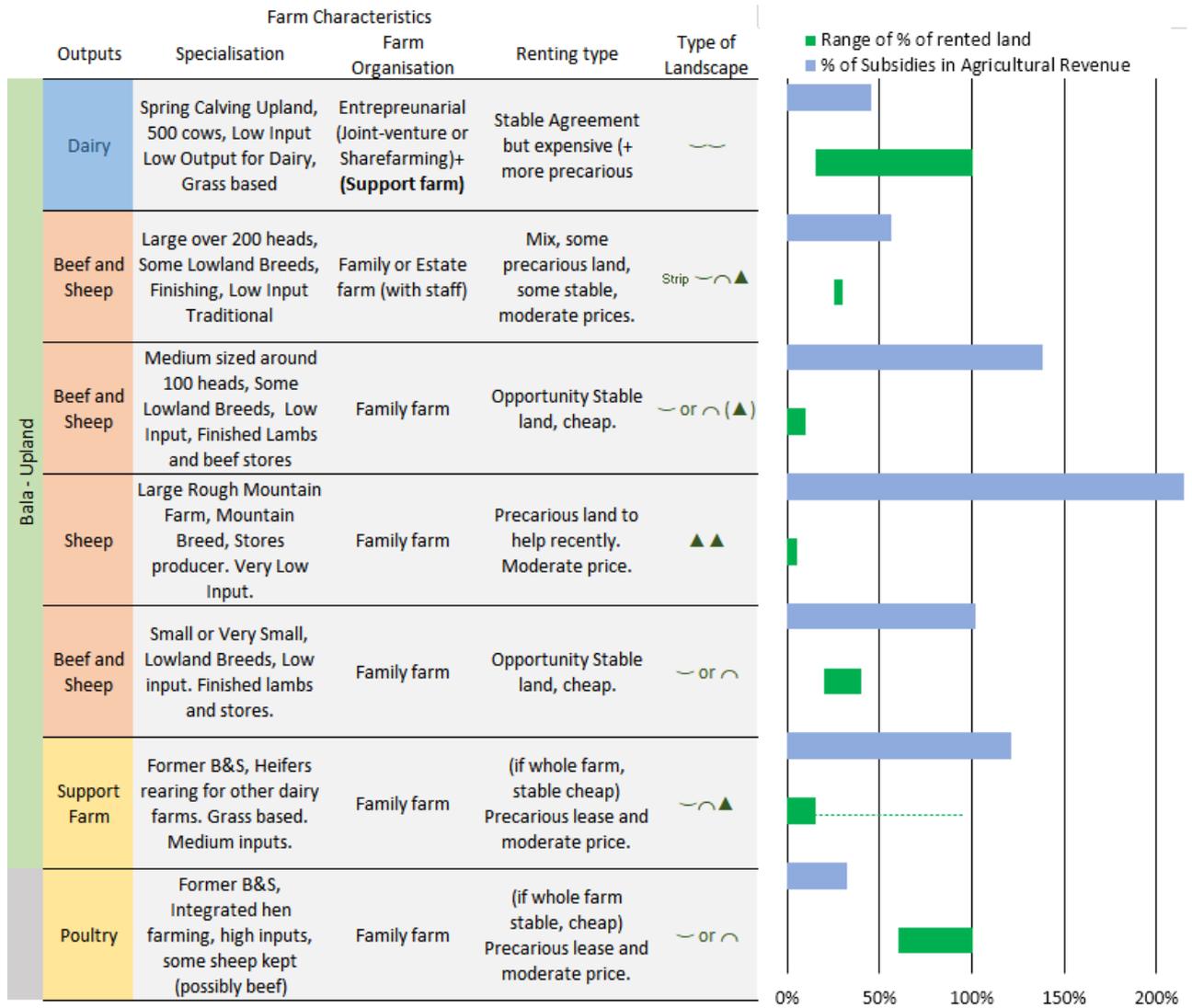
APPENDIX 1: LOCATION OF THE 2 STUDY AREAS IN WALES AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS. BY THE AUTHOR ON DIGIMAP, FROM ORDNANCE SURVEY DATA.



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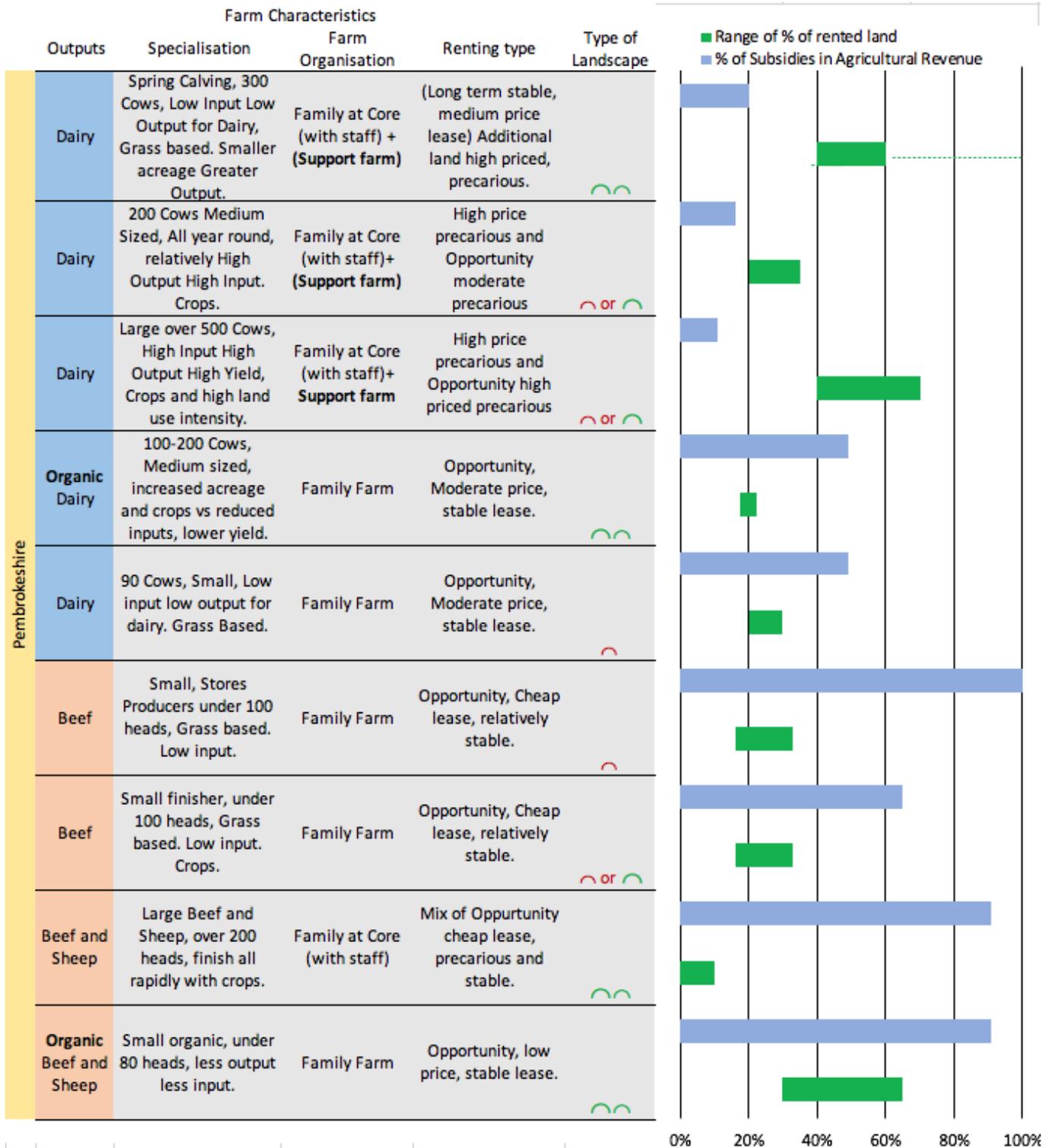
APPENDIX 2, BALA AREA FARM GROUPS (BY AUTHOR FROM FIELDWORK):



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APPENDIX 3, SOUTH-PEMBROKESHIRE AREA FARM GROUPS (BY AUTHOR FROM FIELDWORK):



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