

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig | Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

Ymchwiliad Bioamrywiaeth | Biodiversity Inquiry

BIO 10

Ymateb gan : Glandŵr Cymru – Yr Ymddiriedolaeth Camlesi ac Afonydd yng Nghymru

Evidence from : Glandŵr Cymru – The Canal and River Trust in Wales

The [Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee](#) would welcome your views on biodiversity.

Terms of reference:

- How could the Welsh Government's proposed Public Goods scheme, set out in Brexit and Our Land, be applied to restore biodiversity;
- How could the various existing Welsh Government policies and legislation for biodiversity restoration be applied in the design and implementation of the proposed Public Goods scheme; and
- What lessons can be learned from the Glastir Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (GMEP) to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of schemes to support the restoration of biodiversity. How should the new Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme (ERAMMP) be designed and implemented effectively for this purpose?

1) The key benefit of the proposed Public Goods scheme for biodiversity is in Principle 5 "Additionality" – in that funding is expected to pay for new habitat and improvements; and for maintenance of those improvements. These are both essential elements in biodiversity restoration as we need to create new habitat or improve the quality of what we have and then maintain the new level.

For the Trust in Wales, this fits perfectly with our own aims following the Welsh Government funded scheme on the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal helping to develop our approach to habitat improvement on our waterways ([LINK](#) to "Waterway & Wildlife" documents) and we are rolling the approach out to all our waterways as part of our aim to deliver at least 10% increase in "good" quality habitat across our network.

This highlights the need for relatively simple reference standards of what constitutes "good" habitat (as per the approach set out in the Environmental Asset Condition Assessment part of our Waterway & Wildlife guides) to be incorporated into the Scheme.

The Scheme must be open to all (Principle 1) as it is not only farmers who manage land which can and does deliver benefit to the public – ***we should be encouraging participation from all land owners.***

The Scheme should also recognise the benefit of connecting corridors and features – such as hedgerows, watercourses, and waterways – our canals are vitally important corridors for people and wildlife, linking the country to the town; and cross-catchment connectors linking islands of good habitat together through urban areas or poorer quality landscapes as recognised by the Lawton report ("[Making space for nature](#)" s 6.4.2 pp85/86). Some payments

should therefore be for installation or improvement of linear features rather than per hectare of land (as hectareage rates would not make a significant contribution to the management required).

Priorities and rates should also reflect the need for connections and ***be weighted towards those works that will link habitats together or bring habitats within easy reach of people.***

- 2) Existing policies and legislation creates the framework for both defining Additionality (what is not already mandatory legal requirement) and helping to identify the priorities and requirements for a manual of reference standards. ***The Scheme should particularly refer to existing action plans such as*** River Basin Management Plans; designated site Management Statements; Species Action Plans; Habitat Action Plans and local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- 3) We have little experience of Glastir, but ERAMPP should focus on simple standards and definitions to make monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness quick, easy and straightforward for all to understand – ***it should be clear to everyone whether a measure has succeeded or not with minimal investigation.***

The Trust would be very happy to meet or host the committee and provide our evidence first hand should that be useful.