

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Meeting Venue:
**Lantra training centre, Royal Welsh
Showground, Builth Wells**

Meeting date:
24 October 2013

Meeting time:
13:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

2 Sustainable Land Management : Oral evidence (13:00 – 13:45)

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E&S(4)-25-13 paper 2 : Farmers Union of Wales

Ed Bailey, President, NFU Cymru

Dylan Morgan, Head of Policy/Deputy Director, NFU Cymru

Gavin Williams, Chair, Land Use and Parliamentary Committee, Farmers Union of Wales

Rhian Nowell-Phillips, Deputy Director Agricultural Policy, Farmers Union of Wales

3 Sustainable Land Management : Oral evidence (13:45 – 14:30)

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E&S(4)-25-13 paper 3 : Wales Young Farmers Clubs

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Ceri Davies, Vice Chair, Rural Affairs, Wales Young Farmers Clubs

Sarah Price, Rural Development Officer, Wales Young Farmers Clubs

Ben Underwood, Director Wales, CLA

Keri Davies, Organic Group of Wales

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Agenda Item 2

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Environment and Sustainability Committee

E&S(4)–25–13 paper 1

Inquiry into Sustainable Land Management : Evidence from NFU Cymru

Introduction

1. NFU Cymru represents 22,216 farmers, managers and partners in agricultural businesses including those with an interest in farming and the countryside, and is pleased to have the opportunity to be able to submit written evidence to this inquiry. Alongside this written submission we welcomed the opportunity to input into the committee's stakeholder workshop on the 3rd July 2013 and we look forward to providing oral evidence to the inquiry in due course.
2. Farmers manage over 80% of the Welsh land area and alongside their primary role of producing food, farmers throughout the centuries, have created and care for the wonderful landscape that we see today. Farmers sustain the balance between agricultural production and environmental management through a variety of methods whilst facing a number of challenges which will be touched upon within this submission.
3. NFU Cymru believes that Welsh farmers have a very positive story to tell with regards to sustainable land management. First and foremost Welsh farmers provide safe, high quality food produced to world leading standards, they are the cornerstone of the £3bn Welsh food and drink sector. Alongside this farmers have created, care for and manage our treasured landscape. We estimate that nearly 800,000 hectares of land in Wales is currently within agri- environment schemes. Farmers are embracing renewable energy through looking at ways to harness the natural resources on their land and over the past 20 years or so we have seen a steady and consistent improvement in water quality.
4. However the industry has dealt with and will continue to face significant economic, environmental and social challenges. Going forward, from our viewpoint, the key challenge must be to ensure the viability and profitability of farming businesses the length and breadth of Wales. We need to ensure that the conditions are put in place to facilitate farmers to be able increase food production, to feed an ever increasing population and at the same time ensuring protection and further enhancement of the environment. This presents a number of challenges that include ensuring farmers receive a fair return from the market place, adequate reward for the positive environmental work that farmers do alongside a Government that promotes, supports and champions the Welsh Agricultural sector.

Sustainable Land Management

5. For agriculture in Wales to meet the challenges highlighted in the previous paragraph, put simply, we need to “produce more but impact less on our environment”. The term ‘sustainable intensification’ was first formally coined by the Royal Society in a report it published in October 2009¹ as a means of encapsulating the most important single response to the global challenges of food security, environmental protection and climate change. Whilst the term can be contentious and different people may have differing views on what it may mean in practice we see it as: producing more, impacting less and we believe that if we strive to reach this goal then we will also be achieving the desired outcome of “sustainable land management in Wales”.
6. Sustainable intensification isn’t an entirely new concept to farmers; it is something that many farming businesses have been making strides towards for some time. They have maintained and in some cases increased production without increasing the overall volume of inputs through technologies such as GPS, variety selection and precision farming. As an example of this the volume of nitrogen fertiliser used on farms in the UK has fallen by some 36% since the mid-1980s.
7. As highlighted earlier in this submission commonly used words/terms in this field of work often have very different meanings to different people and in our view the definition of ‘Sustainable’ is often open to different interpretation. We feel it must cover three arms, environmental, social and economic. All too often we believe that there is not always a requirement to assess the social and economic impact of measures that protect the environment. We would argue that this has been the case with regards to policies and legislation such as the Habitats directive and Nitrates directives. The three different arms of sustainability need to be put on equal footing if we are to deliver sustainable land management across Wales.
8. To deliver “sustainable land management” we need a range of mechanisms and policies to support farmers to help ensure that they can retain the capacity to produce food, to maintain viability and at the same time continue to protect and enhance the environment. In the following paragraphs we will highlight some of the current barriers and potential solutions to deliver on the outcomes that will help deliver sustainable land management in Wales.
9. There needs to be adequate investment in applied research and Knowledge transfer. We need research to help us to understand better the interactions between the impacts of climate change, use of natural resources, wildlife species, habitats and

food production. This knowledge must be transferred to advisers and farmers promptly and practically.

10. We believe that that the UK Government's new agri strategy could help lead to a step change in the efficiency, profitability and resilience of farming businesses. We are especially pleased to note that as a result of this strategy and contributions from other stakeholders Aberystwyth University unveiled plans at the 2013 Royal Welsh Show for an investment of £35m in the development of a new UK innovation and research campus. This offers a tremendous opportunity to take forward research to improve the productive potential of Welsh agriculture, it is vital that this research is quickly and effectively transferred to practitioners in the field.

11. When discussion on agricultural science takes place the highly politicised issue of genetically modified crops (GM) is often raised. As a Union we believe that GM may well be a 'tool in the box' that the farming industry in Wales may require to meet the challenges going forward however no single technology, tool or farming system alone will allow us to produce more whilst impacting less on the environment. Promoting better and more efficient use of resources will involve many techniques, this may include precision farming, collaboration and investment with neighbouring farmers e.g. on machinery / reservoirs, improving the genetic potential of crops and animals and perhaps also alongside this the use, in future, of GM technology.

12. Science is also crucial in terms of our ability to protect our livestock from animal disease incursion. In recent years we have faced many disease challenges some new to this part of the world e.g. Bluetongue, Schmallenberg, others e.g. Bovine TB have caused significant misery and suffering to farmers and their families for some time now. Science can find the solution to some of our problems and the development of a vaccine to provide protection against Bluetongue is an example of this. We hope that in the long term new scientific developments will provide additional tools to help in our battle to eradicate Btb from Wales but it is a source of great anger and disappointment to us that the Welsh Government is currently not prepared to follow a science led approach to tackling this horrendous disease. It is important that we look closely and follow developments in other countries where control programmes on diseases such as BVD are having a positive impact.

13. Agri environment schemes contribute positively to the protection of landscapes, soils, water and biodiversity, it is important that all farmers wherever they are located and whatever their system of production have the opportunity to enter such schemes and that these schemes are practical and achievable to implement 'on the ground'. Previous written and oral submissions to this committee have highlighted our concerns over Glastir and whilst some of these concerns have subsequently been

addressed by Welsh Government we believe that there remains 'room for improvement' to help make this scheme suitable for all farming sectors and land types in Wales.

14. We believe that there is significant merit in moving forward with a 'part farm' element to Glastir. With the right incentives and financial support more intensive holdings that have not previously considered agri environment schemes because of the need to include all land in the scheme would consider this as an option. This would have significant benefits for biodiversity and in helping to achieve water framework directive targets.
15. The development of new mechanisms such as environmental markets for the goods and services that farmers provide should be investigated. Agri-environment schemes provide funding for certain services but because of the income foregone calculation (the required measure under EU Rural Development rules) farmers can only be offered the cost price for environmental work rather than a figure which is closer to the true value of the benefits delivered. We have long argued that this rule needs to be amended to enable agri-environment payments to offer real and consistent incentives to farmers and to take account of the benefits delivered rather than the income foregone. In terms of other market developments for environmental goods we can envisage, for example, the water industry, entering into agreements or contracts with farmers. Carbon trading schemes may have the potential to financially benefit many upland areas. We believe that the committee should investigate these possibilities further as part of this inquiry.
16. Farmers can play their part in reducing the use of fossil fuels within the industry and across the wider economy through the growing of energy crops, the production of biogas and the use of other renewables such as small scale wind, solar, ground source and hydro but Government and regulatory bodies must overcome the barriers currently put in place through unsympathetic planning authorities, environmental permits and the like. We are concerned in particular at delays and problems encountered in seeking approval for small scale hydro schemes and feel that unless Natural Resources Wales are able to address these issues we will see these schemes gravitate to parts of the UK where the regulatory process has been simplified.
17. There is a need for a planning policy framework which recognises the importance and value of sustainable food production alongside protecting the environment. A framework that recognises the diversity of agriculture production systems in Wales, the facilities required to improve efficiencies on farm to meet the exacting environmental standards that farmers must meet, the cost pressures they face and the welfare and food safety measures that they need to achieve. In addition farmers

must have the opportunity to develop alternative income streams wherever they may be located in Wales.

18. Delivering sustainable food supply chains will also help to deliver on sustainable land management and whilst we have seen progress on this matter over the last 12 months with the introduction of an Adjudicator to police the existing legally binding groceries supply code of practice and a voluntary code of practice for dairy contracts there remains much more that needs to be done. Ensuring fairness and transparency throughout the supply chain so that farmers have confidence that they are receiving their rightful share of market returns is vital if they are to have the confidence to invest in their businesses. Developing shorter supply chains between primary producer and retailer alongside public procurement policies that support local and Welsh food production are ways to help build confidence in the supply chain and return a fairer share of the final value of the end product to the primary producer.

19. The sustainability of Welsh Agriculture relies heavily on the ability to be able to sell our product outside of Wales, whether that is to the rest of the UK or in the case of red meat to markets overseas. It is important that we have the investment in Wales to be able to add value to as much as possible of our commodities here in Wales and that we have sufficient budget available to market our product to grow both volume and value in existing markets and to find and develop new markets. The repatriation of levy income lost from Wales as a result of Welsh cattle and sheep slaughtered across the border would help achieve this aim.

20. Whilst this is not the inquiry to spend too much time discussing the CAP it is important that agricultural policies such as the CAP stimulate rather than inhibit sustainable land management. Direct payments play a vital role in providing a degree of income stability and a reasonable hedge against volatility. Market conditions and climatic events of the past 18 months or so have shown that this support is as relevant today as it has ever been. We will see substantial changes both in terms of the budget and policy in Wales over the course of the next EU multi annual financial framework period (2014–2020). It is important that where Welsh Government has the flexibility that they implement policies in Wales that support productive agriculture and ensure that we have fair treatment compared to our counterparts in other parts of the EU with whom we have to compete within the market place.

21. In terms of Pillar 2 of the CAP we accept that as a result of Westminster Government negotiating tactics the Welsh Government is now facing a significant shortfall in Rural Development funding and will need to cut their cloth accordingly. Historically through 'Axis 2' measures rural development support has been crucial to support farmers to manage and care for their land through agri–environment support, LFA

support and support for organic farmers. Whilst the axis approach to the rural development plan will not be continued under the next plan we believe that it remains important that priority in the next RDP is given to land management measures and this should include support for upland farming, a crucial element of LFA farm incomes for decades that the Welsh Government decided to discontinue with in 2012.

22. The call for evidence makes reference to ecosystems services and this has been a phrase that has been much used in recent years but is not very user friendly, understandable or easily communicated. Whilst we are generally supportive of new mechanisms such as environmental markets for the goods and services that farmers provide many of which are viewed as environmental benefits (such as improved water quality), we do have some reservations about an 'ecosystems service approach' and how this will work in practice. For this approach to be progressed there is a need for it to be backed up by clear examples of how it will work in practice on farms in Wales and the opportunities and constraints that it may create.
23. We see a danger that the value of services such as food, fuel and fibre production are undervalued, whilst market data is readily available for current values of agricultural produce we do not feel that these values recognise the future value to society of home-produced produce as supplies in a Global context will tighten in years to come. We do not feel that the importance of maintaining and preserving productive agricultural land for future food security has been properly considered, this has manifested itself with policies associated with flood risk management decision making processes. Conversely the valuation of a number of environmental benefits have the potential to be inflated if not carefully and correctly carried out as often proper consideration is not given to budget constraints. Much more work needs to be done before we can be confident that the correct economic methodology has been found. For the ecosystem services approach to work we need to find solutions to the 'income foregone' calculation that will allow farmers to be paid a figure closer to the true benefits of the environmental work they have undertaken.
24. In terms of the most appropriate geographical scale(s) at which sustainable land management practices should be delivered across Wales by the very nature of our definition of sustainable land management we see this being achieved through adopting a countrywide approach – in effect many farmers and land managers taking small steps across the landscape to deliver this approach. NFU Cymru is convinced that Wales' productive and efficient farmers can continue to produce food to feed a growing population at the same time as also contributing to biodiversity and meeting the challenges posed by climate change. We do not advocate a policy that would see an expansion of the site designation process, our preferred policy is very much

based on countrywide policies that fit in, work alongside and are complimentary to productive agriculture.

25. The inquiry asks how we develop a baseline from which to measure progress. This is a difficult question to answer and one where again we see progress needs to be measured in terms of 'sustainable intensification'. We note that the Land use Policy group have recently published a research report² that has looked at a farm business level how different actions impact at a farm level and part of the vision of the new UK Agri Tech strategy is to *"take a global lead in agricultural informatics and in establishing the metrics and techniques by which progress towards sustainable intensification can be assessed"*. Moving forward it is important that efforts to secure a way to measure progress are co-ordinated within the agri tech strategy and that they are easily understandable and ultimately practical to implement.
26. The committee asks how we can ensure that our sustainable land management policies maintain vibrant rural communities and attract new entrants into the land based sector? Ultimately if we can ensure that farming businesses are profitable and able to make returns on investment, that they are adequately rewarded for the product that they produce whether it be food, fuel or environmental goods, that they have ready access to cutting edge research and technology and that Government actively promotes and supports their sector when and where it can then confidence will grow in the industry, investment will filter out into the wider rural communities and young people will see the land based sector as an area that they wish to build a career within.
27. A vibrant agricultural industry has significant knock on effects for the wider rural community. Whilst we immediately think of the obvious businesses such as agricultural supply merchants, feed businesses and vet practices as relying on farm businesses for their income, builders, electricians, plumbers, accountants and solicitors to name but a few in rural areas of Wales rely heavily on agriculture for their income. Calculating the benefit to the economy of Wales is difficult to determine due to lack of specific data, however, in the UK, agri supply was estimated to contribute £3.6 billion GVA to the UK economy in 2009. We must also not forget that farmers ensure Welsh culture and heritage remains at the heart of the countryside, with approximately half of farmers speaking Welsh.

Conclusion

28. The last 18 months have been particularly challenging for all sectors, the Dairy crisis of the summer 2012, the impact of weather on the 2012 harvest and autumn plantings, the volatility of lamb prices over the past 12 months and the severe

weather storms of Spring 2013 have tested the resolve and resilience of the Welsh farming industry to the core. This inquiry alongside the on-going independent review into the resilience of farming in Wales is therefore very timely and we look forward to providing oral evidence to the committee later on this autumn.

References

1. <http://royalsociety.org/policy/publications/2009/reaping-benefits/>
2. LG Firbank et al, Evidence of Sustainable Intensification among British Farms, *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 173 (2013) 58–65.

Environment and Sustainability Committee

E&S(4)–25–13 paper 2

Inquiry into Sustainable Land Management : Evidence from the Farmers' Union of Wales

INTRODUCTION

1. The Farmers' Union of Wales (FUW) welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the Environment and Sustainability Committee's Inquiry into Sustainable Land Management, with particular reference to how the Welsh agricultural sector can contribute to sustainable land management in the future.
2. The FUW strongly believes that the systems and practices employed by farmers have created the landscape so cherished by residents and visitors alike and is a significant contributor to attracting tourists to Wales¹.
3. The farming systems and practices in Wales have also contributed greatly to the maintenance of the species and habitats that are present today and the fact that over 80% of Wales is subject to some form of conservation or environmental designation is testament to the way that livestock farming has largely retained valuable habitats over the generations.
4. It is also important to acknowledge the vital role farmers have in food production and food security especially given the increasing global population, recent weather conditions and the longer term predictions of climate change.
5. The agricultural sector in Wales has an important role to play in the mitigation of the effects of climate change through the sequestration of carbon in soils and the maintenance of these carbon stores. This not only mitigates agricultural emissions but also provides a net benefit for other industrial sectors.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/Tourism/130605wtvsapril13en.pdf>

Questions

Question 1

How we define the key ecosystems and ecosystem services in a way that makes sense for Wales?

6. The FUW supports the need to look wider than individual species and habitats and believes that in developing new ways in which to consider new evidence streams, the experiences and traditional management methods undertaken by farmers should be inherent to this process.
7. It is important to ensure that the environment and its conservation should be an inherent part of wider ecosystem services such as food production and the sustainable development of the rural economy.
8. In the Unions view, there is a need to ensure that the wider ecosystem services are fully incorporated into environmental protection to provide an innovative new approach to sustainable land management through opportunities for a more holistic view of food production and environmental management.
9. The Union believes that there are significant opportunities for promoting the extensive nature of production systems in Wales, the contribution grazing livestock makes to the ecology of Wales and the retention of carbon sinks in Wales due to traditional livestock production.
10. The definition of an ecosystem has been in use since 1935² and whilst its concept has been debated for a considerable period of time by scientists, conservationists, and environment regulators, it has not yet been recognised by farmers (or indeed the wider public) as part of their day-to-day activities despite the inherent role they play in the overall management and protection of the landscape and ecosystems in Wales.

²<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2435.1997.00081.x/pdf>

³ <http://www.unep.org/maweb/en/Framework.aspx>

11. Ecosystem services are defined as ‘services provided by the natural environment that benefit people’. While there is no single, agreed method of categorising all ecosystem services, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment framework³ is widely accepted as a useful starting point.
12. Ecosystem services provide outputs or outcomes that directly and indirectly affect human wellbeing. Some of these ecosystem services are well known including food, fibre and fuel provision and the cultural services that provide benefits to people through recreation. Other services provided by ecosystems are less tangible and include climate regulation, the purification of air and water, flood protection, soil formation and nutrient cycling.
13. Currently, these wider services are not generally considered within policy appraisal and represent an area where a greater and more systematic consideration could be useful.
14. The term ‘ecosystem services’ has only come into general parlance in recent years. This is despite the fact that farmers have been providing these services, for generations without realising it!
15. Thus, any definition agreed needs to be easily understood, possibly using examples, to provide a context within which farmers can easily relate their own activities to the provision of ecosystem services.
16. In identifying the key ecosystems present in Wales and to maintain simplicity, the Union believes that it would be appropriate to begin the process through the use of broad habitat groups. These groups could be based on the habitats identified as part of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment – Mountains, moor and heath, Semi-natural grasslands, enclosed farmland, Woodland, Freshwater, wetlands and floodplains, Urban, and Coastal margins – as these are representative of the habitats in Wales.

Question 2

How do we develop a baseline from which to measure progress? This includes how we collect, coordinate and use data to support sustainable land management in Wales.

17. Over recent years the Union has expressed concerns over the lack of Wales specific data for air, soil and water, which makes setting realistic targets and measuring progress almost impossible to undertake scientifically.
18. Experience has shown that much of the work commissioned in the past was undertaken on a UK basis, which often fails to reflect the particular geography, topography and climate of Wales.
19. It is clear from the publication of the 'State of Nature' Report, that whilst the data from Wales is incomplete, the national trend of species decline suggests that previous research and monitoring of agri-environmental schemes has not been robust enough to highlight these trends.
20. The FUW is aware that the Glastir Scheme has in place a more robust monitoring and evaluation process which should go some way to improving the level of baseline data albeit within a relatively narrow range of parameters.
21. The Union is also aware that there is a great deal of data available from a range of public, private and third sector sources, but that the collation and reporting of this data needs to be improved to ensure that it is available to all.
22. Farmers are also becoming increasingly frustrated at the negative perceptions which are often associated with farming's contribution to the management of the environment. It is therefore vital that the contribution made by farming to the maintenance and protection of habitats and ecosystems is fully acknowledged as part of any evaluation of progress.

23. The FUW believes that consideration should be given to how data, which covers non-market ecosystem services, such as carbon storage and the regulation of water flows, and the benefits they provide to wider society, should be recorded as a means of measuring progress of these services over time.

Question 3

What incentives we can provide land managers to develop sustainable practices, and in particular, any new sources of investment we can attract to support these?

24. The Union believes that if the ecosystem services approach is to be fully integrated and adopted by land managers, then the wider delivery of 'public goods' should attract a market value like any other commodity.

25. Currently, agri-environmental payments supported under Pillar II of the CAP are made on the basis of compensation for profit foregone plus costs which cannot include a profit element. This means that there is little real incentive for farmers to adopt the wider provision of public goods and services on improved land or undertaking high nature value farming practises on semi natural areas.

26. If the ecosystem services approach is to be successful in Wales, consideration must be given to enhancing the resources available under Pillar 2 of the CAP with additional incentives which would then make relatively small schemes more attractive to land managers.

27. Examples of this would be to look at ways in which corporate money could be invested into schemes which would help offset carbon, provide alternative energy sources or upstream water quality/storage improvements

28. Given its climatic, geographical and topographical influences, Wales' agricultural sector is dominated by extensive grass-based farming systems which is most effectively utilised by grazing animals.

29. The FUW is concerned that the current rate of de-stocking in the hills and uplands due to a combination of factors such as the loss of Tir Mynydd, poor market realisations and the unprecedented weather of the past few years, could lead to land abandonment to the detriment of ecosystem services and the wider rural economy
30. The ecosystem services approach relies on a vibrant farming industry which can only be achieved through sustainable incomes for farmers and land managers. Farming makes a crucial contribution to the rural economy through the multiplier effect of its spend within the local area and thus, in order to achieve its wider societal objectives, farming needs equitable returns for all of the services it provides.
31. The development of the Rural Development Plan post 2013 provides another opportunity for the concept of ecosystem services to be piloted. The FUW believes that there are a number of incentives which could be considered, including, part farm schemes, targeted at specific objectives i.e. to meet Water Framework Directive priorities, targeted landscape scale co-operative ventures or the development of innovative projects under LEADER to move the ecosystem services approach forward.
32. There are a number of 'pots' of money available to the public, private and third sector and there is a need to consider whether a more collaborative approach to accessing funding opportunities would be possible in order to maximise the use of available resources and to provide match funding for larger projects..

Question 4

How we ensure that our sustainable land management policies maintain vibrant rural communities and attract new entrants into the land-based sector?

33. If rural communities are to prosper and survive they need to be able to continually evolve and develop over time. The Union is concerned that the proliferation of statutory and non statutory designations in rural areas can have a negative impact on

sustainable development which can create the stagnation of the Welsh countryside at the expense of thriving rural communities and its indigenous industries.

34. The Union believes that instead of designations, which can foster resentment in rural areas, more effort should be made to encourage a partnership approach to conservation and sustainability through positive policies and initiatives such as community engagement, agri-environment schemes, encouraging diversification and working with rural people.
35. The FUW supported the concept which underpinned the proposed Sustainable Development Bill believing that a sustainable development duty would be particularly pertinent in rural areas to encourage the retention and development of businesses and services which would, ultimately, result in vibrant rural communities and a thriving rural economy.
36. The FUW believes that the sustainability outcomes envisaged by Welsh Government, particularly those relating to a sustainable economy and a sustainable society with a varied demographic structure, will only be achieved in rural areas if there are associated improvements to the provision of services including alternative energy infrastructure, broadband availability, public transport, local education facilities and local amenities.
37. As outlined above, farmers and land managers need to make an income from their activities, not only to allow them to remain on the land, but also for the wellbeing of the rural economy, as many local businesses, services and facilities are dependent on farming families remaining in the area.
38. The Union has been proactive in looking at ways in which to encourage new entrants into farming, through its 'Younger Voice for Farming' Committee and its support for a range of initiatives which help facilitate succession.
39. One of the fundamental requirements for attracting new entrants into the Landbased industries is a sustainable and

profitable sector so that young people see it as a realistic business opportunity for the future.

40. The availability of agricultural land, for new entrants to start their own businesses, is of concern, particularly as the number of County Council owned holdings have decreased significantly over recent years. The FUW believes that the Welsh Government should focus on identifying ways in which Local Authorities can be dissuaded from selling off or amalgamating these holdings so that they remain a valuable 'first rung' for new entrants.

Question 5

The most appropriate geographical scale(s) at which we should be delivering sustainable land management policies and practices in Wales?

41. It needs to be recognised that the individual species and habitats that form an ecosystem do not respect defined boundaries and therefore it might not be appropriate to identify a 'one size fits all' approach to the delivery of sustainable land management policies and practices.
42. Given the wide variations in the geography and topography of Wales, the Union believes that consideration should be given to the use of a regional approach for the delivery of sustainable land management policies and practices as this will allow specific interventions to be developed and adopted to reflect local needs.
43. The FUW believes that, to maintain simplicity and to enable comparisons to be drawn on the progress of sustainable land management policies and practices over time, there needs to be commonality with existing data. Therefore, it would suggest that consideration be given to using a geographical scale which is based on the identification of broad habitat groups. As identified earlier, these groups could be based on the broad habitats identified as part of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment.

Question 6

If there are key actions we can take to deliver short-term 'quick wins' and the actions we should be taking for the long-term?

44. The development of a fully integrated ecosystem services approach is likely to be a long term aspiration although there are a number of short term 'fixes' which can help facilitate these aims.
45. In the short term, the FUW believes that progress needs to be made on improving the dialogue between farmers and conservationists in order to break down the lack of trust that has been built up over many years.
46. The Union also believes that the concept of the ecosystem services approach needs to be communicated more widely and perhaps the term 'ecosystem services' itself could be changed to aid the understanding of all the processes that are involved.
47. As outlined previously, it is important to ensure that the work already done on farms under agri-environment schemes is not lost and that the programmes developed under the next Rural Development Plan, both build upon these and also incorporate part farm elements which can meet specific objectives for Water, biodiversity etc.
48. The FUW also believe that developing partnerships between private, public and third sector is extremely important as is ensuring resources are pooled where possible to maximise agreed objectives.
49. Following agreement on the next CAP, the reduced budget and other reforms agreed as part of the process is likely to impact on farmers as they adapt to the new regime. It is important that Welsh Government puts in place the support and guidance needed to help them adapt their businesses to ensure a profitable and sustainable sector into the future.

11th September 2013

Agenda Item 3

Wales YFC's Response to the National Assembly for Wales Environment and Sustainability Committee's Inquiry into Sustainable Land Management



Introduction

YFC Wales would like to thank the National Assembly for Wales Environmental and Sustainability Committee for the opportunity to put across their points of view.

Background

Wales YFC is made up of just under 6,000 Young members aged between 10 -26 from across Wales. We are a progressive movement that readily embraces change for the better and encourages the development of the countries rural youth.

What do we want sustainable land management in Wales to look like and what outcomes do we want to deliver in the short, medium and longer term?

Sustainable land management in Wales needs to cover three main areas: environment, wildlife, but crucially, livestock production. Any farmer knows that the three go hand in hand and that one cannot be successful without the other.

Sustainability too often is understood to mean maintenance of an environment. However, an environment has very little value for the future without people in it. Therefore, for land management to be sustainable in Wales, it must not only mean that we safeguard our environment, but also that we safeguard the future of our communities and those living and working within them. If we neglect the latter, then communities will wither and die.

As farmers we hear much talk about how Welsh and British farming can cope with the ever increasing world population. However, before we look at the world, we need first to look at ourselves. We believe that a sustainable land management system in Wales first needs to sustain us, the people of Wales and Britain.

Short term goals in farming (at least those of any real value) are hard to achieve. We therefore think that we need to look at the long term success, with making Wales more self-sufficient as a priority. This is alongside the environmental aspects of farming and land management. There are savings to be made in the reduction of our carbon footprint by precision farming, improved breeding which require lower inputs, and innovative equipment. An unproductive Wales will always require high input which will generate a higher carbon footprint.

What are the barriers preventing us from delivering these outcomes now? How do we overcome these challenges?

Some of the barriers in existence are created by the focus purely around the environment and small wildlife: almost a blinkered approach "for the being" rather than considering a long term, joined up strategy. Whilst we fully support the new Glastir schemes, we also need to remember that our countryside is also there to protect our livestock. An example to illustrate this point is the double fencing and replanting of old hedges. Whilst this is good farming practice and provides habitats for wildlife, a useful and sustainable addition to this would be allowing the hedge to regrow and then laying the hedge in the traditional styles, with a tight fence so that the hedge affords wind and rain protection during hard winter months to new born stock. A hedge which is tightly trimmed will remain thick at the base for considerably more years than a hedge that is allowed to grow out and up. This will provide good conditions of wildlife, whilst also achieving an objective in assisting with livestock. However, our understanding of the schemes at present is that overlapping payments are not permissible. Therefore, if a payment has been received under one system, then the farmer's hands are somewhat tied.

Whilst an improving picture, we believe that public perception of how tax-payers' money is spent amongst British agriculture is poor. A further attack on the public perception of our industry is the badger cull in England, and the coverage that this has received. This coverage has focussed very much on the badgers, with too little consideration of the heart-break suffered by farmers

losing their livestock which in certain cases has taken generations to build. This has reinforced for us that far stronger links need to be made with the British, and in this case Welsh, public. Whilst we can (and do) strive to address this, we cannot do it alone.



Our opinion is that the public perception of how the tax-payers' money is spent is poor. The perception is that large amounts of money are given to farmers, and they do not understand where the return is. In reality, this money is provided to help the population feed their families for less. With ever-increasing costs, our end product has to generate more than break-even. However, there is a fine line between making enough to survive and pricing ourselves out of the market.

If we are happy to compete with producers in Brazil who have liberalised land management rules and producers in New Zealand who have access to a wider variety of medications and a liberalised approach to pest control, then something has to balance with that, if we want to continue to have food production carried out within Wales in future.

Therefore, with the in-coming CAP payment reforms (the detail of which is still under consultation) this is likely to become still tighter. The new CAP payments will one of the main driving factors behind how food production is delivered and confidence needs to be built amongst the agricultural community that we will be in a position to cope with the cuts in payments in years to come. We understand that the playing field is far from flat, but we also need to feel that our government is prepared to work alongside us, rather than regularly moving the goal posts.

What are the main policy drivers and how can these be shaped to overcome these challenges?

As mentioned above, we often hear talk of how farming will cope with the increasing world population. This suggests that the government wants us to produce food. However, this is then contradicted by the "greening" element of Glastir, encouraging 75% permanent pasture; the two simply do not co-exist (assuming that our understanding of what is meant by permanent pasture is correct). A clearer message needs to be provided: it is exceedingly difficult to plan a sustainable business enterprise when priorities and agendas are changed with frequency.

We consider that a key driver must be limiting the carbon footprint of our food production. Carbon loss can be minimised by encouraging and incentivising the use of innovation (for example slot seeding and stitching of land) that delivers more productive methods which keep efficiency high. Higher efficiency from land will mean lower fertilizer use and fuel and accordingly a lower carbon footprint.

As stated above, we await the outcome of the new proposals for CAP. This poses a dilemma, as our clear feeling is that these two issues need to be approached hand in hand, and our response to this consultation, may be altered if the proposals for CAP change.

How we define the key ecosystems and ecosystem services in a way that makes sense for Wales?

Ecosystems are about balance, but this balance should not just be concerned with the natural environment. The population of Wales is growing, and we need to ensure that the balance within the ecosystems is preserved, but in a way that works for our population and makes sense for Wales. This includes our needs to eat and to live. Therefore, we need to consider the need to produce food, energy and housing in a sustainable way to satisfy these needs.

There must be a responsible use of renewables in conserving eco-systems. Further work can be done to encourage farmers, landowners and the population at large to embrace renewable energy. However, we need to consider that there is only so much land mass within Wales, and therefore if we are to sustain growth balancing each of the above needs, then building on what we already have has to be the way forward. For example, encouraging use of roof-top solar panels, rather than moving to solar fields.



We also should ensure that the balance between wildlife is preserved, whilst considering how farming has historically been a part of that ecosystem. For example, the rise in the incidence of bTB has coincided with the ban in on-farm burial of fallen stock. Whilst not in possession of empirical data, we question whether this interruption of feeding sources for carnivorous scavengers such as badgers has led to greater roaming areas, and accordingly a wider spread of disease. It can also not be coincidental that numbers of ground nesting birds and small mammals have fallen in tandem with this.

How we develop a baseline from which to measure progress? This includes how we collect, coordinate and use data to support sustainable land management in Wales.

The consultation requests a suggested baseline from which to measure progress as to how self-sufficient we are as a country. In the early 1980s, we were 78% self-sufficient, and today 58.9% self-sufficient. This means that a staggering 40% of what we consume is imported into the country. The Welsh population alone has grown by 5% since 2001 to 3,063,456 in 2011. This is a trend that is likely to continue. We therefore suggest that 58.9% is used as a baseline and that we encourage our farmers to continue to produce some of the best quality food in the world and to expand production accordingly.

How we ensure that our sustainable land management policies maintain vibrant rural communities and attract new entrants into the land-based sector?

You ask how we can ensure that policy maintains vibrant rural communities and attracts new entrants into the land-based sectors. We consider that before we look at encouraging new entrants, we need to secure a future for those who are already in those sectors. We see many young farmers who have to hold multiple jobs in order to permit them to stay afloat or to get that first step on the ladder towards self-employment. The land-based sector will not look appealing until it is a profitable career. Whilst we can look to other income streams, such as renewable energy, to generate additional income, but the fact remains that we call ourselves farmers and we are here to produce.

Attracting new entrants to the land-based sector has to take a focus on young people. We are well placed to assist in the delivery of this objective given our membership demographic. We hear from our members the complaint that careers advice (especially for academic young people) is poorly informed of the opportunities within the land-based sectors and an understanding of the avenues for entrance could be greatly improved. When taking decisions about future careers, young people will consider whether they can make a sustainable future for themselves in their career of choice. This goes back to having adequate food, housing, and cheap energy. Too often rural communities suffer from limited affordable housing, high fuel costs and limited access to broadband. The drive towards online only provision of services is problematic if those trying to access those services simply cannot get online. This has to be taken into account when policies are developed relating to the dissemination of information and how rural communities are supported. Also, for many rural young people, the ability to live near where you work is a critical factor in a sustainable future. Planning rules must reflect the needs of the community as a whole, not just the establishment whose voices are loudest.

Finally, the message we often receive from our members is that they need to be allowed to farm, rather than being straitjacketed by paperwork or required to become rangers. We want to produce food for our country, and in doing so, we believe that we can also deliver a sustainable land use as high productivity is entwined with good land management practices.

If there are key actions we can take to deliver short-term 'quick wins' and the actions we should be taking for the long-term?

It is difficult to achieve quick wins when there are so many "unknowns" at present (in respect of how CAP will develop in future and the support that will be available). However, one suggestion would be to incentivise use of solar panels on roofs and other existing structures to safeguard the Welsh land mass from being used for this.

Also, a key priority should be that civil servants and those charged with administering whatever schemes or controls are put in place are fully trained and familiar with those schemes and the options available to those using them. This applies equally across multi-agencies, as too often, staff are not able to assist and “no-one seems to know the answer” with unrealistic deadlines set. Thorough planning is vital to sound delivery.



Again, promoting pan-Welsh access to high speed broadband that allows rural businesses to function fully is essential before any move is made towards compulsory use of online facilities. This means that face-to-face and telephone support must remain available until that time.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this in more detail.

Environment and Sustainability Committee

E&S(4)–25–13 paper 4

Inquiry into Sustainable Land Management : Evidence from CLA Wales



1. INTRODUCTION

The Country Land & Business Association (CLA) represents approximately 4,000 members in Wales. Our members both live and work within rural areas; they operate a wide range of businesses including residential, agricultural, tourism and commercial ventures – at the last count the CLA represents some 250 different types of rural businesses. CLA members own or manage approximately half the rural land in Wales including edge of settlement locations and some urban portfolios.

2. SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

Sustainable land management involves the sustainable management of all land, including the agricultural and forestry sectors, whilst safeguarding ecosystem resilience. Farm and other land-based rural businesses must be economically, as well as environmentally and socially sustainable.

A vital consideration in achieving sustainable land management is to adopt a whole farm approach. Farms are integrated businesses. Land management includes agriculture, forestry, environmental service delivery, tourism, recreation, food and forest product processing and marketing, sporting shooting and property

management. There are strong interactions between these activities and there are strong and complex relationships between the environmental variables

Ecosystem Services

Sustainable land management is best delivered through an ecosystem approach. Ecosystem services are a broader range of environmental services that land managers provide, or could provide, to society than simply the saleable products of farming, forestry and rural recreation. These services are characterised as: provisioning (food, timber, fibre, water); regulating (carbon sequestration, water purification, air, soil erosion, disease outbreaks); supporting (soil formation, nutrient cycling); and cultural services (recreation and tourism, landscape, wildlife). Together all these services of the natural environment are vital for human well-being. The Welsh countryside is managed primarily for provisioning services (food and timber).

Most Welsh ecosystem services are, and can only be, provided by farmers and foresters. Historically, the costs of managing the ecosystem services falls on farmers and foresters, yet the main benefits farmers and foresters can realise is from the marketed services such as food and timber. It is therefore hardly surprising that the non-marketed, or public good and services, are under-provided. Society wants them, but has few ways of paying for them. This is a classic example of market failure and is pervasive in rural land management.

A sustainable living standard will not be achieved by dependence on selling agricultural products alone. Land managers should not be expected to cross-subsidise the delivery of environmental public goods and services from their market returns. It is therefore necessary to ensure that proper public payment for the value of public goods and services delivered is guaranteed.

We need to find new ways to pay for all the habitats, biodiversity and other environmental benefits that society wants and which only farmers and landowners can provide. Diversification of revenue sources is key to sustainable land

management. Newer opportunities come from selling other ecosystem services, such as renewable energy from biomass, wind and hydro; water and climate protection by storing water and carbon and by purifying water, and by providing biodiversity and cultural landscapes services. The critical requirements are to develop the right frameworks for public and private payment for more of these non-market services, and to ensure that rural infrastructure and the planning system support rural economic development.

Farming businesses currently receive the majority of their funding for managing the environmental measures on the farm through Government funding agri-environment schemes. The next CAP reform, due to commence in 2015, will see this pot of money significantly lowered. It is vital that opportunities for supporting ecosystem services are explored beyond such schemes, in order to move to a source of private funding which provide rewards greater than income foregone and can be relied on in the longer term.

The Welsh Government should look to drive action at a local and landscape scale to develop mechanisms to improve the delivery of ecosystem services. It is imperative that the Government engages with landowners at the earliest opportunity.

Core Principles

Rural land managers have been practicing sustainable development for generations. In essence, the vast majority of landowners want to hand on to their successors an asset that is at least as economically, environmentally, and socially valuable as it was when they took it on. This strikes us as going to the core of what sustainable development means in practice.

It is very difficult to envisage any land manager being successful without practicing sustainable development. The overwhelming majority of them need to derive an income from their land and are keen for their successors to continue to do so too.

As such every land manager needs to ensure that his exploitation of the land does not result in it been harmed over the long term. He/she needs to ensure, for example, that good soil and water quality is retained so successors can continue to farm sustainably.

Similarly, much of what the land provides can only be delivered over the long term. As a result, the more prudent landowners undertake activities that will not yield any results in their own lifetime, but which will provide an income for their children or grandchildren. The planting of woodlands and creation of watercourses would be common examples of this.

The CLA believes that a number of core principles underlie sustainable land management, which can help provide solutions to environmental problems. These are that society should:

- take an inter-generational time view
- in a science-based approach
- engaging the voluntary participation of those affected
- using measures proportional to the issue/ problem
- where possible, relying on a decentralised approach
- working with natural cycles
- and do all this with a presumption of private property rights and responsibilities.

3. CLIMATE CHANGE

The Welsh Government's Climate Change Strategy sets an annual 3% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Wales. To give full effect to delivering this target, the Welsh Government should establish a long-term land management policy to mitigate climate change.

The land-based contributions to mitigation are to:

- reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions
- store carbon in soils and trees

- help energy substitution by producing land-based renewable energy
- help material substitution by enabling greater use of timber and its products to replace more GHG-emitting building materials.

Managing ecosystems at a landscape scale will be integral to encouraging effective adaptation to the effects of climate change on species populations and distribution, through the linking of habitats and features across the agricultural landscape.

Greenhouse Gas Action Plan

The CLA and other organisations representing the agricultural industry in England have signed up to a voluntary Greenhouse Gas Action Plan (GHGAP) setting out how the industry will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by three million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents from 2018–2022 without compromising domestic production.

The Action Plan focuses on how farmers, regardless of their farming system, can become more efficient to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions while making cost savings per unit of production. The Plan aims to make the most of existing initiatives such as the "Industry Roadmaps" and nutrient management ("Tried & Tested"), and will report on the progress made by farmers and land managers as they improve their use of energy, nutrients and their own carbon footprint. The Welsh Assembly may wish to consider adopting a similar initiative for Wales.

In the longer term farmers and land managers will have to do more than improve efficiency to meet the emissions targets and will have to consider how actual emissions could be reduced which would involve land use change, for example, planting trees .

The Welsh Government should consider how best to encourage efficiency savings for agriculture and what mechanisms should be put in place to properly incentivise and reward tree planting.

Peat Management

The stock of carbon stored in peatland is a significant environmental asset, with 400 million tonnes of carbon stored in peatlands in Wales' uplands. It is essential the appropriate management techniques for maintaining peatland are introduced to allow land based businesses to help moderate climate change.

Importantly peatland restoration projects in Wales have the potential to generate carbon credits for the GHG benefits they deliver through the voluntary market. This could be a new source of funding for land managers if companies are prepared to buy credits from domestic peat carbon projects.

For this to be viable, companies would need to have complete confidence that a specific restoration project would deliver quantifiable GHG benefits. The Welsh Government needs to take steps to facilitate this approach.

4. ADVICE

Advice is an essential element when implementing environmental schemes, to ensure ownership of the scheme and best placement of options. The Welsh Government should consider how to ensure advice is provided on local priorities for agri-environment. This level of support will be extremely valuable as we move into the next period of CAP.

5. BIODIVERSITY

CLA fully supports the desire to improve biodiversity, but policies to achieve this must recognise the need to produce food and run other land based businesses efficiently

The Welsh Government should ensure that the right balance is secured. This can be achieved by:

- acknowledging that biodiversity cannot be so heavily reliant on Pillar 2 agri-environment payments, which are already facing drastic cuts and are the source of the most targeted funding for on farm environmental measures.
- exploring the potential for market based solutions such as biodiversity offsetting
- ensuring agri-environment schemes continue to be flexible and tailored to farm level whilst remaining accessible to all
- acknowledging that whilst protected sites, such as SSSIs (14% of SSSIs in Wales are in the uplands), have been effective at stopping further rare habitat destruction, their restrictive nature often increases the cost of management of sites, resulting in economically unviable management for farmers. Designations must work with a changing landscape, so as not to restrict the land use within them solely to management for the environment, which in itself is unsustainable.

6. PLANNING

The planning system must provide for a stable and flexible regime that can deliver quicker, less expensive decisions while taking a balanced approach to the concept of sustainable development by:

- promoting and encouraging a mix of development in rural areas
- providing for a sufficient infrastructure of employment sites, housing, transport, public and private services to support the long-term sustainability of rural communities
- recognising that environmental stewardship is best achieved with the willing and active commitment of landowners and land managers
- recognising the changes in land use that will occur as the implications of climate change become more apparent.

7. REFORM OF THE EU'S COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)

The CAP is a main policy driver influencing land managers. It is vital that reform of the CAP results in a direct payment system that supports land managers in adopting sustainable land management. The CLA would go further in advocating greater support for upland farms.

We need a CAP that both provides a level playing field for farmers across the EU and which recognises all the work farmers do for biodiversity and the natural environment.

European direct payments received under the CAP are channelled in very different ways through different EU Member States; The CLA welcomes this flexibility to be able to reward environmentally sustainable land management in Wales; however the Welsh Government must ensure that payment support does not have attached conditions that go significantly beyond those of other Member States. To do so could jeopardise the competitiveness and fairness of the CAP for Welsh landowners and managers.

8. BIOTECHNOLOGY

Biotechnology provides a much broader application of science than GM; GM is just one of many areas comprised by biotechnology. Genetic Modification provides one of the most significant tools in delivering sustainable land management allowing increased yields, healthier livestock and environmental protection.

The livestock sector arguably has more to gain from biotechnology, where genetic-based research is preventing disease, improving overall welfare and reducing input costs. The CLA argues that this sector's existing work must be encouraged and supported by Welsh Government for it to flourish.

The UK has one of the best traditions of agricultural technology research in the world, and the Welsh Government needs to get on board and champion our excellence in the sector.

9. BARRIERS

The CLA believes the principal barriers to achieving sustainable land management goals are:

- an economic system that undervalues the role of the natural environment
- land managers access to relevant information and advice and knowledge transfer
- the ability to attract new sources of funding
- provision of a reliable, affordable, high speed internet connection
- the planning system
- science led approaches taken to any decision on restricting or withdrawing chemical inputs.

Red Tape

One of the key constraints in the rural economy, both in terms of agricultural and non-agricultural businesses, is the increasing impact of Government red tape. While it is recognised that Government efforts to reduce the negative impact of red tape, it is still the case that it is one of the greatest barriers to realising the potential of the rural economy. According to the Commission for Rural Communities, the failure to fully exploit this potential costs the rural economy some £361 billion per year.

Present and future efforts that focus on securing savings through the greater use of digital are laudable. However, such efforts fail to realise that for many who live and work in rural areas still have no access to an effective and affordable broadband connection. The CLA believes that if red tape is to be reduced through this mechanism, those who are impacted the most must be able to utilise a suitable digital connection

Regulatory burdens

The CLA remains concerned by the regulatory barriers introduced concerning the use of plant protection products, as a result of limited scientific evidence. Ensuring that a sustainable long term approach is taken to managing chemical inputs, such

as pesticides and herbicides as part of land management in Wales is important. Achieving the right balance of biodiversity in respect to areas of fauna, foliage and grassland requires proactive decision making from land managers. Land managers must be able to have as many tools at their disposal to prevent unwanted encroachment of scrub or invasive species such as bracken. Controlling these requires a thorough long term management approach from landowners and the Welsh Government.

Agenda Item 4

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Meeting Venue: Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: Wednesday, 16 October 2013

Meeting time: 09:00 – 12:50

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



This meeting can be viewed on Senedd TV at:

http://www.senedd.tv/archiveplayer.jsf?v=en_400000_16_10_2013&t=0&l=en

Concise Minutes:

Assembly Members:

Dafydd Elis-Thomas (Chair)
Mick Antoniw
Russell George
Llyr Gruffydd
Julie Morgan
William Powell
Antoinette Sandbach
Joyce Watson

Witnesses:

Jeff Cuthbert, Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty
Alun Davies, Minister for Natural Resources and Food
Jane Hutt, Minister for Finance
Andrew Charles, Welsh Government
Christianne Glossop, Chief Veterinary Officer, Welsh Government
Julia Hill, Welsh Government
Fiona Leadbitter, Welsh Government
Jo Salway, Welsh Government
Andrew Slade, Welsh Government

Committee Staff:

Alun Davidson (Clerk)

Naomi Stocks (Second Clerk)
Catherine Hunt (Deputy Clerk)
Gwyn Griffiths (Legal Advisor)
Nia Seaton (Researcher)
Chloe Corbyn (Researcher)

TRANSCRIPT

View the [meeting transcript](#).

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

1.1 Apologies were received from Julie James. There were no substitutions.

2 Draft budget 2014–2015 : Scrutiny of the Minister for Natural Resources and Food

2.1 The Minister for Natural Resources and Food and officials responded to questions from members of the Committee.

3 Draft budget 2014–2015 : Scrutiny of the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

3.1 The Minister Communities and Tackling Poverty and the Minister for Finance responded to questions from members of the Committee on mainstreaming sustainable development in the budget process.

3.2 The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty agreed to provide specific figures to demonstrate how the draft budget had been amended as a result of considering sustainable development impact on programmes.

4 The Control of Horses (Wales) Bill : Evidence from the Minister for Natural Resources and Food

4.1 The Minister for Natural Resources and Food and officials responded to questions from members of the Committee.

5 Papers to note

5.1 The Committee noted the minutes.

Draft Budget 2014–2015 – Paper from the Minister for Culture and Sport

5.2 The Committee noted the paper.

Draft Budget 2014–2015 – Paper from the Minister for Housing and Regeneration

5.3 The Committee noted the paper.

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for item 7

6.1 The Committee agreed the Motion.

7 Consideration of evidence

7.1 The Committee considered the evidence it had received on the draft budget 2014 – 15 and the Control of Horses (Wales) Bill.