

## Environment and Sustainability Committee

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Meeting Venue:

**Committee Room 4 – Tŷ Hywel**

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Meeting date:

**Wednesday, 9 July 2014**

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Meeting time:

**09.40**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

**Alun Davidson**

Committee Clerk

029 2089 8639

[ES.comm@wales.gov.uk](mailto:ES.comm@wales.gov.uk)

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### Agenda

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Informal pre-meeting (09:40 – 09:50)

#### **1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions**

#### **2 Inquiry into energy efficiency and fuel poverty in Wales: Evidence from Ofgem (09:50 – 10:20) (Pages 1 – 15)**

E&S(4)-18-14 paper 1: Ofgem

David Fletcher, Head of ECO Policy

Zoe McLeod, Senior Manager, Vulnerable Consumers

#### **3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business for items 4 and 5**

#### **4 Genetically Modified Organisms: Factual briefing from Welsh Government officials (10:20 – 11:05) (Pages 16 – 41)**

Chris Lea, Deputy Director, Land, Nature and Forestry  
Martin Williams, Head of Plant Health and Bio-Technology Unit

**Break (11:05 – 11:15)**

**5 Genetically Modified Organisms: Factual briefing from the European Commission (11:15 – 12:00)**

Céline Valero, Deputy Head, Biotechnology Unit, DG Health and Consumers

**6 Inquiry into energy efficiency and fuel poverty in Wales: Evidence from Calor Gas (12:00 – 12:30) (Pages 42 – 46)**

E&S(4)-18-14 paper 2 : Calor Gas

Holly Sims, Corporate Affairs Manager

**7 Papers to note (Pages 47 – 48)**

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June

# Agenda Item 2

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## **Ofgem evidence to inquiry into Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty in Wales**

**Ofgem E-Serve response to a call for evidence from the Environment and Sustainability Committee of National Assembly for Wales (13 June 2014).**

### **Contents**

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Number of measures installed across Great Britain .....	1
3.	Geographic breakdown of measures installed.....	2
4.	Types of measures installed .....	3
5.	Supplier progress.....	3
6.	Effect of government's proposed changes to ECO .....	4
7.	Carbon and cost savings achieved .....	5
Annex A – Geographic distribution of ECO measures by local authority area, installed by 31 December 2013 .....		6
Annex B – Geographic distribution of ECO measures by local authority area, installed by 31 December 2013 .....		8

### **1. Introduction**

1.1. Ofgem is grateful to the Environment and Sustainability Committee for providing us with the opportunity to respond to its inquiry into Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty in Wales. Ofgem's role in the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) is to administer the scheme. Under the ECO legislation, we are responsible for determining suppliers' obligations, reporting to the Secretary of State on supplier progress, monitoring compliance and taking enforcement action where appropriate. The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) is responsible for the underlying policy and legislation for the scheme. Our response to this call for evidence is given in our capacity as ECO administrator. The evidence presented here relates to the Committee's review of the implementation of ECO to date by the major energy suppliers in Wales. We will be happy to provide further information or clarification to the Committee should it be required.

*Please note that much of the information provided here is sourced from DECC's quarterly release for Green Deal and ECO. The most recent statistical release was published in March and relates to measure installed up to 31 December 2013. DECC are due to publish the next statistical release later in June. We would be happy to provide the Committee with an updated version of this written evidence once at that time.*

### **2. Number of measures installed across Great Britain**

2.1. Regular monthly updates of the headline figures for the ECO delivery can be found from two published sources. These sources do not provide a breakdown of ECO measures by geographical region but instead give total figures for all of Great Britain.

- 2.2. DECC publishes the Domestic Green Deal and ECO Monthly Statistical Releases. Table 5a of DECC's report shows the provisional number of ECO measures installed under each of the three obligations. This is the number of measures notified by suppliers to Ofgem. The latest figures show that up to the end of March 2014 a total of 776,369 measures had been installed at 647,950 properties. The table below shows these measures split by the three obligations; the Carbon Emission Reduction Obligation (CERO) which focuses on hard-to-treat homes, the Carbon Saving Communities Obligation (CSCO) which targets lower income areas, and the Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) which targets fuel poor living in private accommodation.

**Table 1: ECO measures notified by obligation up to the end of April 2014**

Obligation	CERO	CSCO	HHCRO	Total
Total Measures Notified	335,647	122,163	318,559	776,369

- 2.3. Ofgem publishes a monthly ECO Compliance Update that reports the number of ECO measures **approved** by Ofgem.<sup>1</sup> The latest figures published in May (relating to measures installed by 31 March) show that a total of 495,806 measures had been approved by Ofgem. The table below shows these measures split by obligation.

**Table 2: ECO measures approved by obligation up to the end of April 2014**

Obligation	CERO	CSCO	HHCRO	Total
Measures Approved	114,994	99,527	281,285	495,806

- 2.4. Of the measures which were notified to Ofgem but not yet approved some have been sent back to obligated suppliers for data correction or completion of missing information, some are undergoing further checks to ensure that they are valid measures under ECO and some are being processed and are expected to be approved shortly.

### 3. Geographic breakdown of measures installed

- 3.1. DECC publishes a quarterly statistical release that provides a geographic breakdown of measures installed under ECO. The most recent release was published in March<sup>2</sup>. Table 1.11a of that document provides a breakdown of the provisional (i.e. notified) number of households in receipt of ECO measures by country and by local authority. Table 3 below shows the number of measures installed in England, Scotland and Wales respectively. The table shows that a higher number of ECO measures have been installed per 1,000 households in Scotland and Wales than in England.

**Table 3: ECO measures installed by country up to 31 December 2013**

Obligation	CERO	CSCO	HHCRO	Total	ECO measures per 1,000 households
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/energy-companies-obligation-eco/public-reports>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-deal-energy-company-obligation-eco-and-insulation-levels-in-great-britain-quarterly-report-to-december-2013>

<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>193,337</b>	<b>96,093</b>	<b>239,456</b>	<b>528,886</b>	<b>20.5</b>
England	160,532	86,161	192,158	438,851	19.9
Scotland	24,184	6,166	27,708	58,058	24.5
<b>Wales</b>	<b>8,566</b>	<b>3,765</b>	<b>19,478</b>	<b>31,809</b>	<b>24.4</b>

3.2. The table in Annex A shows the number of measures installed in each local authority in Wales. The chart in Annex B compares the number of installations per 1,000 households across Great Britain.

#### 4. Types of measures installed

4.1. ECO is a market-based scheme and suppliers are therefore naturally incentivised to install measures which cost the least amount per tCO<sub>2</sub> saved for CERO and CSCO and per £ heating cost saved for HHCRO. Table 5a of the Domestic Green Deal and ECO Monthly Report<sup>3</sup> published by DECC provides provisional information on the number of each measure type installed under ECO. These figures are summarised in table 4 below, for the measures which are installed at highest volumes across Great Britain.

**Table 4: Type of ECO measure notified by obligation up to the end of April 2014**

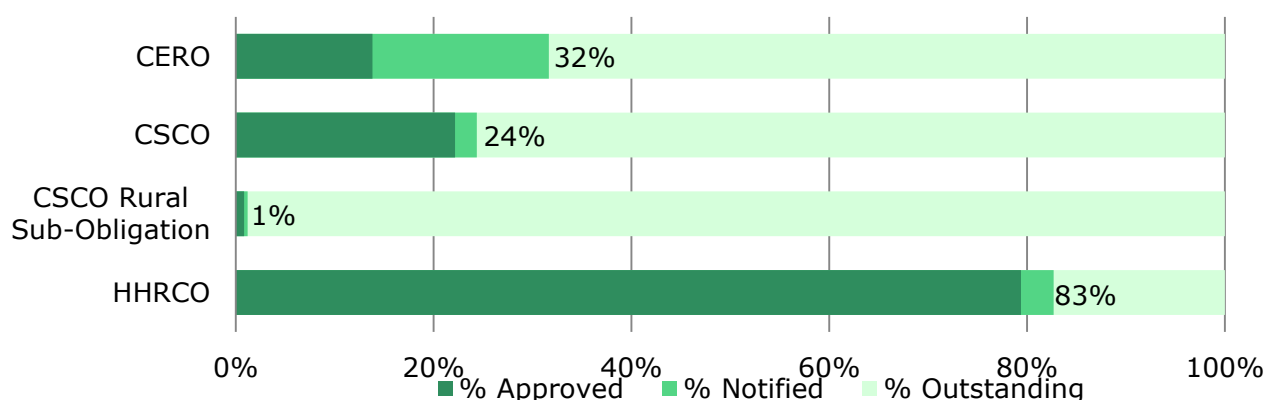
ECO measures delivered	Obligation			Total ECO measures delivered
	CERO	CSCO	HHCRO	
External Wall Insulation	46,078	1,933	10	48,021
Internal Wall Insulation	3,320	49	0	3,369
Cavity wall insulation	235,990	34,915	10,373	281,278
Loft Insulation	46,180	82,606	36,657	165,443
Other Insulation	2,486	1,780	80	4,346
Boiler	N/A	N/A	224,832	224,832
Heating Controls	N/A	N/A	46,591	46,591
Other Heating	1593	880	16	2489
Total number of measures	335,647	122,163	318,559	776,369

#### 5. Supplier progress

5.1. Ofgem's monthly ECO Compliance Update shows aggregated supplier progress towards obligations. With less than twelve months remaining in which to meet the 2015 obligations, suppliers are making steady progress towards their targets. Figure 1 below shows aggregated supplier progress towards the three main obligations and the CSCO rural sub-obligation.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-deal-and-energy-company-obligation-eco-monthly-statistics-may-2014>

**Figure 1: Progress towards total obligations, to April 2014**



5.2. They are now close to meeting the HHRCO obligation. Progress has been slower against the CSCO obligation and suppliers will need to step up their work in this area in order to meet their legislative obligations. The CSCO Rural sub-obligation, which targets the fuel poor living in rural areas, is a particular area of concern and we regularly meet with suppliers to stress the importance of compliance with their obligations and remind them that, should they fail to meet 100% of their obligations by the end of the scheme, we will consider taking enforcement action. Progress towards the CERO obligation has increased in recent months. This is thought to be a result of suppliers seeking to capitalise on early progress uplifts included in the government's proposed changes to ECO.

5.3. The figure excludes excess actions that suppliers may carry over from the previous CERT and CESP schemes. Our estimates suggest that, under the current ECO Order, excess actions will add roughly 9% to supplier progress against the CERO and CSCO obligations combined.

5.4. In addition, each quarter Ofgem publishes an annex to the ECO Compliance Update showing individual supplier progress towards each of their three ECO obligations. The most recent annex was published in April 2014.<sup>4</sup>

## 6. Effect of government's proposed changes to ECO

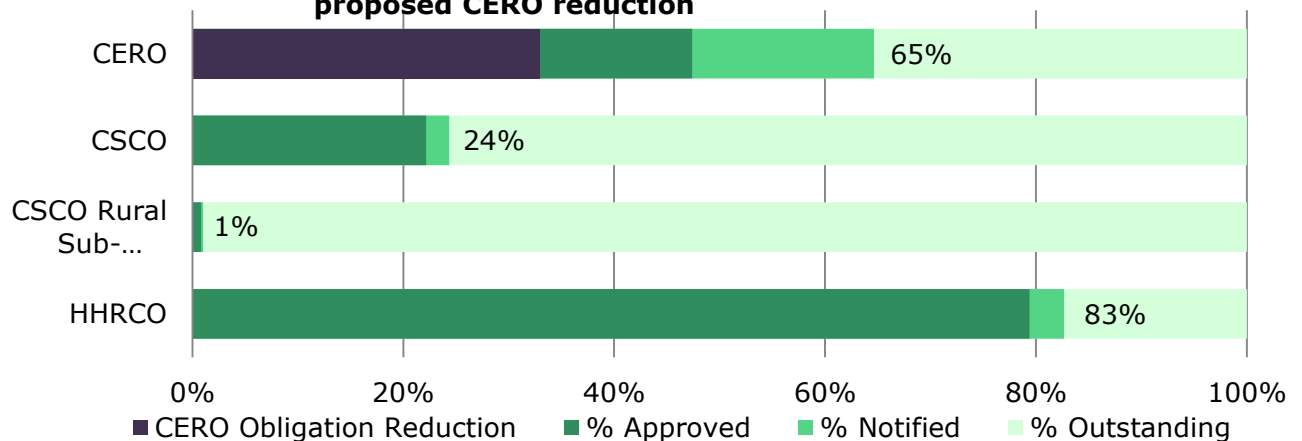
6.1. If introduced in their current form, the changes to ECO being proposed will improve suppliers' positions against their CERO obligation; in particular through the proposed 33% reduction of the CERO target, the introduction of lower cost primary measures in CERO, and the uplift to certain CERO measures. The March 2015 CSCO and HHRCO obligations will remain unchanged. DECC has proposed that all three obligations will be extended from March 2015 to March 2017 and will be increased on a pro-rata basis at the revised level.

6.2. Figure 2 below shows overall supplier progress when the government's proposed 33% reduction to the CERO targets is applied. If the proposed CERO reduction is introduced as expected suppliers will be on track to meet the CERO target by the end of the scheme.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ofgem-publications/87182/energycompaniesobligationecocomplianceupdateandquarterlyannex-april2014.pdf>

6.3. The figure excludes excess actions and any uplifts resulting from early progress. The proposed changes to ECO would increase the amount of excess actions that suppliers could carry forward into ECO from CERT and CESP. Although the impact of the proposed changes on the CSCO rural sub-obligation is likely to be positive, we are not confident regarding full compliance at this stage. We are therefore stepping up our engagement with suppliers and stressing the risk of non-compliance.

**Figure 2: Progress towards total obligations, to April 2014, including proposed CERO reduction**



## 7. Carbon and cost savings achieved

7.1. Table 1.15 of DECC's Quarterly Statistical Release provides data on the energy and carbon savings delivered through CERO and CSCO. The table shows that total carbon savings of 5.16 million lifetime tCO<sub>2</sub> have been delivered through measures installed up to 31 December 2013.

7.2. Table 1.12d of the same publication provides data on the heating cost saving delivered through HHRCO. The table shows that total lifetime heating cost savings of £2.7 billion have been delivered through measures installed up to 31 December 2013.

**Annex A – Geographic distribution of ECO measures by local authority area, installed by 31 December 2013<sup>5</sup>**

Country	Local Authority Area	Obligation			Total number of ECO measures delivered	Valid percentage of ECO measures delivered <sup>1</sup>	Households with at least one usual resident <sup>3</sup>	ECO measures per 1,000 households
		CERO	CSCO	HHCRO				
<b>Great Britain</b>		<b>193,337</b>	<b>96,093</b>	<b>239,456</b>	<b>528,886</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25,738,820</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>England</b>		<b>160,532</b>	<b>86,161</b>	<b>192,158</b>	<b>438,851</b>	<b>83.0</b>	<b>22,063,368</b>	<b>19.9</b>
<b>Scotland</b>		<b>24,184</b>	<b>6,166</b>	<b>27,708</b>	<b>58,058</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>2,372,780</b>	<b>24.5</b>
<b>Wales</b>		<b>8,566</b>	<b>3,765</b>	<b>19,478</b>	<b>31,809</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>1,302,676</b>	<b>24.4</b>
	Rhondda Cynon Taf / Rhondda Cynon Taf	456	532	3,211	4,199	0.8	99,663	42.1
	Caerphilly / Caerffili	773	408	1,534	2,715	0.5	74,479	36.5
	Merthyr Tydfil / Merthyr Tudful	43	152	637	832	0.2	24,264	34.3
	Neath Port Talbot / Castell-nedd Port Talbot	602	210	1,219	2,031	0.4	60,393	33.6
	Blaenau Gwent / Blaenau Gwent	92	192	734	1,018	0.2	30,416	33.5
	Cardiff / Caerdydd	1,443	921	2,331	4,695	0.9	142,557	32.9
	Torfaen / Tor-faen	649	100	509	1,258	0.2	38,524	32.7
	Newport / Casnewydd	629	326	987	1,942	0.4	61,172	31.7
	Bridgend / Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr	307	234	1,252	1,793	0.3	58,515	30.6
	The Vale of Glamorgan / Bro Morgannwg	484	61	719	1,264	0.2	53,505	23.6
	Conwy / Conwy	375	41	758	1,174	0.2	51,177	22.9
	Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	155	49	696	900	0.2	40,546	22.2
	Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	422	92	868	1,382	0.3	63,781	21.7
	Swansea / Abertawe	462	199	1,541	2,202	0.4	103,497	21.3
	Pembrokeshire / Sir Benfro	505	79	321	905	0.2	53,122	17.0
	Carmarthenshire / Sir Gaerfyrddin	269	79	879	1,227	0.2	78,829	15.6
	Wrexham / Wrecsam	265	51	436	752	0.1	57,029	13.2

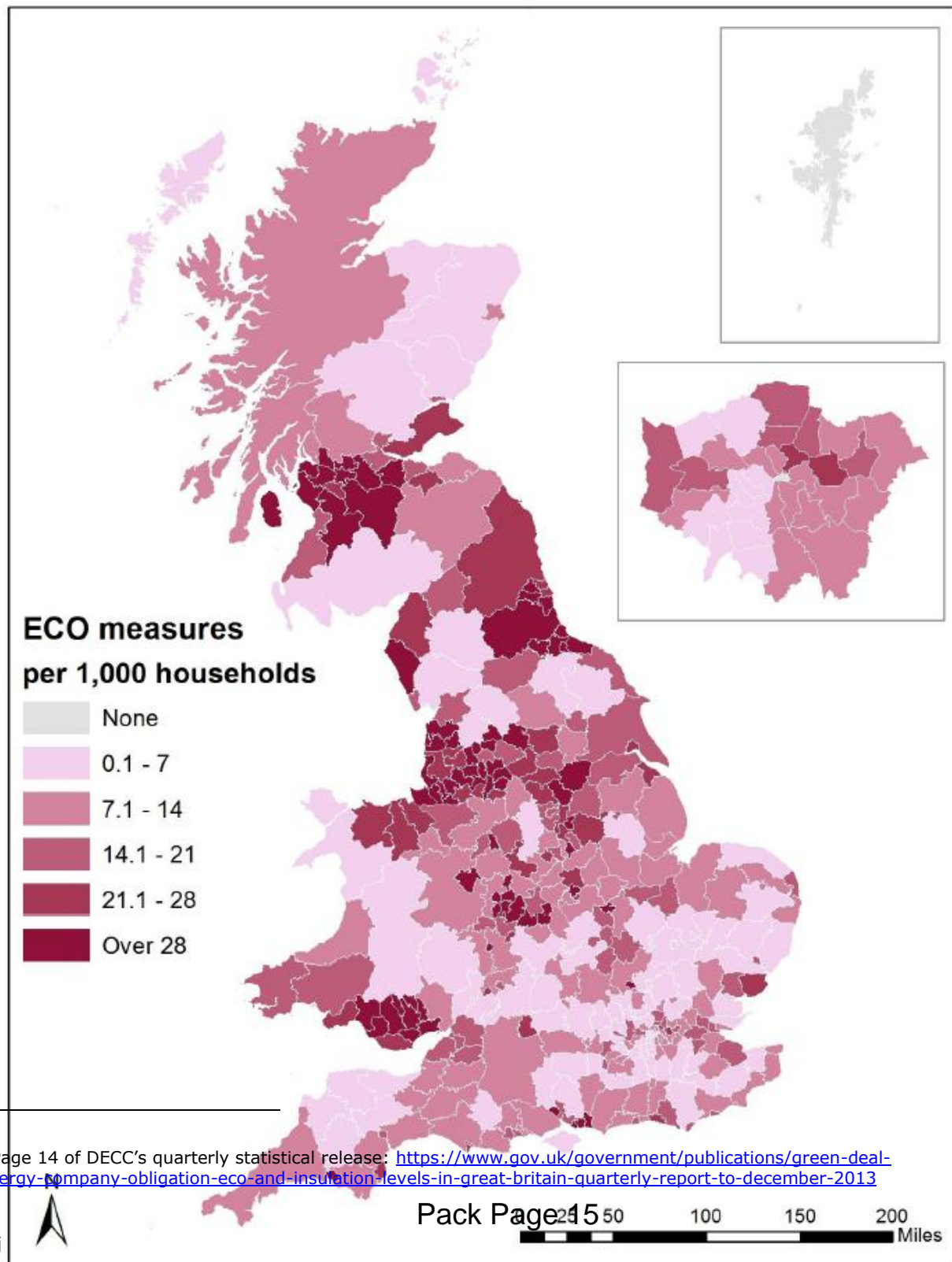
<sup>5</sup> Table 1.11a of DECC's quarterly statistical release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-deal-energy-company-obligation-eco-and-insulation-levels-in-great-britain-quarterly-report-to-december-2013>

	Monmouthshire / Sir Fynwy	280	1	189	470	0.1	38,233	12.3
	Ceredigion / Ceredigion	107	3	125	235	0.0	31,562	7.4
	Gwynedd / Gwynedd	115	18	221	354	0.1	52,473	6.7
	Isle of Anglesey / Ynys Môn	28	14	141	183	0.0	30,594	6.0
	Powys / Powys	105	3	170	278	0.1	58,345	4.8
Unknown		55	1	112	168	-		

**Annex B – Geographic distribution of ECO measures by local authority area, installed by 31 December 2013<sup>6</sup>**

**ECO Measures Installed by LA per 1,000 Households**

All ECO measures installed by 31st December 2013



<sup>6</sup> Page 14 of DECC's quarterly statistical release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-deal-energy-company-obligation-eco-and-insulation-levels-in-great-britain-quarterly-report-to-december-2013>

# Agenda Item 4

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# Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs): The authorisation process for cultivation

July 2014

## Introduction

GMOs are authorised for cultivation at European Union (EU) level following an application by a company. The legislative process involves several stages including scientific risk assessment, public consultation and a final decision where Member States may approve or reject the European Commission's (the Commission) proposal by qualified majority.

The Welsh Government has devolved competence over GMO policy in Wales but is required to act in accordance with European legislation. As the Member State, the UK is responsible for representing Wales on this issue at an EU level. Therefore if the Welsh Government wished to ban the cultivation of an EU crop in Wales it would need to do so through the UK.

In many cases to date Member States have failed to reach a qualified majority with a clear split emerging within the Council. In this instance the Commission may grant authorisation provided that a positive opinion is reached after the completion of a risk assessment. The split between Member States has led to long delays in the decision making process.

In 2010 the Commission set out a proposal for a Regulation to revise the current authorisation system and the reoccurring 'stalemate' between countries. The proposal stalled following concern from Member States but has recently been re-visited following complications surrounding the

authorisation of maize 1507. The aim of the proposals is to grant Member States more flexibility to restrict or prohibit GMO cultivation based on ethical and moral criteria as well as scientific.

This Research Note provides a summary of the current process and the proposals for change.

## The current authorisation process

GMOs are authorised for cultivation at EU level following an application by a company with the resulting decision applying to all EU countries. Applications can be submitted under **Regulation (EC) N° 1829/2003**<sup>1</sup> on Genetically Modified (GM) food and feed or under **Directive 2001/18/EC**<sup>2</sup> for the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment.

### Risk Assessment

Following an application under Regulation 1829/2003 the **European Food Safety Agency (EFSA)**<sup>3</sup> assesses associated risks to the environment, human health and animal safety. In the case of cultivation the EFSA delegates the environmental risk assessment to a Member State which sends EFSA its risk assessment report. Normally the EFSA performs its assessment within 6 months of the application and issues a scientific opinion published in the **EFSA Journal**<sup>4</sup>. EFSA submits its opinion to the Commission and to EU countries.

The procedure is slightly different under Directive 2001/18. Companies must apply to the competent authority of the EU country where the GMO will be initially marketed. That country prepares an assessment report within 90 days. If another EU country reasonably objects to the assessment report the application is sent to the EFSA.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) **N° 1829/2003** [accessed 14 February 2014]

<sup>2</sup> Directive **2001/18/EC** [accessed 14 February 2014]

<sup>3</sup> **EFSA** [accessed 14 February 2014]

<sup>4</sup> **EFSA Journal** [accessed 14 February 2014]



## Public Consultation

The EFSA makes the application summary available to the public, except for confidential aspects. Once published the public may comment (for 30 days) on the Commission website<sup>5</sup> for applications under Regulation 1829/2003, and on the Joint Research Centre website<sup>6</sup> on the assessment report by the 'lead' EU country under Directive 2001/18.

## Final Decision

Within 3 months of receiving EFSA's opinion the Commission should grant or refuse the authorisation. Representatives of Member States approve the Commission's proposal by qualified majority in:

- The **Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFAH)**<sup>7</sup> if the application was submitted under Regulation 1829/2003;
- The **Regulatory Committee under Directive 2001/18/EC** if the application was submitted under Directive 2001/18.

The proposal is adopted if either Committee approves it. If there is no opinion, the Commission may summon an **Appeal Committee** where EU countries can adopt/reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee makes no decision, the Commission may adopt the proposal.<sup>8</sup> Authorisations are valid for 10 years and are renewable.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission **Public consultations on GM food & feed authorisation applications under Regulation 1829/2003** [accessed 19 February 2014]

<sup>6</sup> Joint Research Centre **Deliberate Release and Placing on the EU Market of GMOs - GMO Register** [accessed 14 February 2014]

<sup>7</sup> European Commission **The Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health** [accessed 14 February 2014]

<sup>8</sup> Council Decision of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission (**OJ L 184, 17.7.1999, p. 23**)

## The 'safeguard clause'

- **Article 23 of the Directive 2001/18**, the 'safeguard clause', allows Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation or use of an authorised GMO product if they have new or additional scientific evidence that proves the product is a danger to the environment and/or human health within their territory. In order to prove that there is sufficient evidence the Member State must undertake a review of the original environmental risk assessment that was completed when the GMO was first consented. To assess the scientific merit of the claims the Commission may submit the Member State's evidence to the EFSA who will provide an opinion on the validity of the new evidence. Having received a scientific opinion from the EFSA the Commission will submit draft proposals to the SCoFAH calling for the Committee to either agree with the Member State's prohibition or to repeal the ban. The Committee will vote to adopt or reject the Commission's proposals. If the Committee fails to reach a decision the proposals will go to the **Council of Ministers** (the Council) for a decision. If the Council fails to respond to the proposals within a set timeframe the Commission will adopt the proposal.<sup>9</sup>

## Maize 1507

On 26 September 2013, the **General Court of the European Union** delivered a ruling finding that the Commission failed to act on an application by **Pioneer** (now 'DuPont Pioneer') for the authorisation of **maize 1507**<sup>10</sup> for cultivation submitted in 2001 under the Directive 2001/18.

Pioneer initiated a first action against the Commission in 2007 for failing to present a decision of authorisation for voting to the Regulatory

<sup>9</sup> The decision making procedure is set out in **Article 5 of Decision 1995/486/EC** [accessed 19 February 2014].

<sup>10</sup> The genetically modified maize 1507 (Bt maize) was developed to confer resistance to specific harmful moth larvae for maize such as the European corn borer. It is currently authorised in the EU for food and feed uses, but authorisation for cultivation is on-going.



Committee. This action was closed by the Court following the Commission's submission of the proposal to the Regulatory Committee in February 2009, for a draft authorisation decision. The Committee, however, failed to deliver an opinion. In 2010, Pioneer launched a second action against the Commission for not having referred a proposal for an authorisation decision to the Council following the absence of opinion by the Regulatory Committee, in line with the comitology procedure applicable at the time.<sup>11</sup>

The Commission, in line with this ruling, referred the cultivation request to the Council where it was the responsibility of the Ministers to take a position by qualified majority on the request. The EFSA had already submitted a positive opinion on the request in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2012.<sup>12</sup> On 11 February 2014 following a roundtable discussion (after countries backed a French-led push for formal talks rather than a 'written procedure'<sup>13</sup>) there was a split-vote among the Member States. The Commission is now obliged to approve the cultivation of maize 1507 (the first significant biotech crop in over a decade becoming the second GM maize crop in the EU) since the 19 countries opposed to cultivation did not have the required qualified majority to block the proposal.<sup>14</sup>

The DuPont Pioneer Communications Manager in Europe said after the Council vote,

We are now confident that the European Commission, based on the seven positive safety opinions published by the EFSA, will adopt the decision for approval again as required under E.U. law. 1507 maize meets all EU regulatory requirements and should be approved for cultivation

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<sup>11</sup> Council Decision of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission (**OJ L 184, 17.7.1999, p. 23**)

<sup>12</sup> Europa, **GMO: Commission asks Council to agree on its proposal to grant Member States more subsidiarity on cultivation** 6 November 2013 [accessed 17 February 2014]

<sup>13</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 02/14 10 January 2014

<sup>14</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 11/14 12 February 2014

without further delay...The European Union has a legal obligation to itself, to its farmers and scientists and to its trade partners to follow the revised EU biotech legislation...<sup>15</sup>

Spain, the only country likely to widely cultivate maize 1507, has welcomed the authorisation and has urged the EU to 'allow farmers the technology that can solve real problems and reduce use of insecticides'.<sup>16</sup>

However, the legislative process surrounding the authorisation of maize 1507 has been criticised by environmental NGOs and Marco Contiero (Greenpeace's EU agriculture policy director) said:

The Commission cannot ignore the scientific, political and legal concerns voiced by a large majority of countries, by two thirds of the European Parliament and supported by most EU citizens.<sup>17</sup>

MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) did not support the move saying it could endanger butterflies and moths urging the Commission to halt approval or renewal of GM crops until risk assessment methods are improved.<sup>18</sup>

On 12 February 2014 the European Parliament's Greens group threatened to table a motion of censure against the Commission, following its approval to authorise maize 1507.

The complications surrounding the authorisation of maize 1507 with the split stance of the Member States has led to a call for the revival of the stalled proposals tabled by the Commission three years previously (2010)<sup>19</sup>. The Commissioner for Health

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<sup>15</sup> Truth about trade and technology, **DuPont Pioneer Seed Corn Clears EU Regulatory Hurdles, But...** 20 February 2014 [accessed 17 March 2014]

<sup>16</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 11/14 12 February 2014

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid* and AGRAFACTS No. 04/14 17 January 2014

<sup>19</sup> European Commission **Proposal for a regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory** 13 July 2010, COM(2010) 375 final [accessed 19 February 2014]

and Consumer Policy, Tonio Borg, has welcomed resurrection of the plans 'to provide a solution to the current deadlock on the authorisation process...' <sup>20</sup>

## Proposed changes in legislation

### The Proposal for a Regulation revising Directive 2001/18/EC

In July 2010 the Commission published a draft proposal for a **Regulation revising Directive 2001/18** (COM(2010)375). <sup>21</sup> This revision would attempt to provide a legal basis for Member States to decide on GMO cultivation on grounds other than those based on scientific assessment of environmental and health risks. These include ethical and moral criteria, granting Member States more flexibility. Member States would be able to restrict or prohibit GMO cultivation in part or all of their territory without having to use the safeguard measures which up to now have not been backed by EFSA (though health and environmental concerns can continue to be raised under the existing safeguard clause). Decisions would not need to be authorised by the Commission, but Member States would have to inform other Member States and the Commission one month prior to the adoption of their measures (in the original proposal). The Member States would also have to respect the general principles of the Treaties and the Single Market, and be consistent with the international obligations of the EU.

The proposals are subject to the Co-decision procedure where both the Council and European Parliament have to reach an agreement on them.

<sup>20</sup> Europa, **GMO: Commission asks Council to agree on its proposal to grant Member States more subsidiarity on cultivation** 6 November 2013 [accessed 17 February 2014]

<sup>21</sup> European Commission **Proposal for a regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory** 13 July 2010, COM(2010) 375 final [accessed 19 February 2014]

### The current status of the proposed Regulation

The initial proposals were met with opposition with France and Germany concerned that it could result in the fragmentation of the EU's internal market and cause problems with the World Trade Organisation. The European Economic and Social Committee stated that the draft proposal:

...creates more vagueness than certainty and could in practice result in a proliferation of (legally unstable) measures being adopted by the States and regions, which could affect the operation of the EU's internal market, the legal security of operators and the credibility of the system as a whole. <sup>22</sup>

### The Council

In March 2011 EU environment Ministers met in Brussels to discuss a list of possible reasons why individual Member States could opt to ban GMO cultivation. '**Public morals**' including religious, philosophical and ethical concerns, '**social policy objectives**' including the preservation of certain farming types to maintain jobs, and '**cultural policy**' were amongst the options listed by the Commission.

<sup>23</sup>

In March 2012 in a debate on the proposed revisions at the Environment Council no agreement could be reached due to blocking of the proposal by a minority of Member States. This minority included the UK, France and Denmark who cited various legal concerns. <sup>24</sup>

Due to the issues raised by the authorisation of maize 1507 the current Greek Presidency of the Council began exploring support for a revival of the discussions on the proposals. On 11 February 2014 a number of countries including the UK, Denmark and

<sup>22</sup> European Economic and Social Committee **OPINION on the Proposal for a Regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for the Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory** COM(2010) 375 final [accessed 19 February 2014]

<sup>23</sup> Euobserver **EU states to discuss 'reasons' for national GMO bans** 10 March 2010 [accessed 18 February 2014]

<sup>24</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 11/14 12 February 2014



Luxembourg backed the re-opening of talks on the proposed revision, the first time since negotiations broke down in March 2012. In a Council meeting of Environment Ministers on the proposals on 3 March 2014 the UK broke from the previous blocking minority and a number of Member States expressed support for the compromise text. This led to a vote and formal adoption of the compromise text at the Environment Council on 12 June 2014.

The compromise text agreed by the Council included a number of proposed amendments to the Commission's original proposal.<sup>25</sup> Under the compromise text Member States would be able to request that the Commission notify bio-tech companies either during the authorisation process or once authorisation had been granted of a Member State's demand for the geographical scope of the authorisation be amended. That is that rather than an authorisation applying to the whole of the EU it would exclude certain Member State's territories as requested or agreed.

If the bio-tech company refuses to amend its authorisation the Member State would be able to notify the Commission of its intention to ban the cultivation of that GMO on the whole or part of its territory on a number of grounds outside those currently part of the EFSA assessment process. These include socio-economic reasons, agricultural policy reasons, town or country planning reasons, land-use reasons or on environmental grounds not already considered as part of the EFSA process. .

Member States would need to provide the Commission with a draft of the measures 75 days prior to their adoption for consideration. The Commission would consider whether or not the Member State's proposal made proper use of the powers provided within the Directive. At the end of

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<sup>25</sup> Council of the European Union, *Proposal for Regulation amending Directive 2001/18/EC as regards the possibility for Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory: Revised Compromise proposal in view of Council Political Agreement (first reading)*, 23 May 2014 [accessed 1 July 2014]

the 75 day 'standstill period', Member States could decide to amend the measures taking into account any comments made by the Commission or adopt them as originally proposed.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, Member States may revoke any measures in place on their territory and request that the authorisation be amended to include any previously excluded territories.

### The European Parliament

The European Parliament adopted a negotiation position on the Commission's original proposals in July 2011. It wanted to amend the Commission's proposals in a number of ways. This included requiring Member States to take appropriate measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in other products on their territory and in border areas of neighbouring Member States. Amendments were also included that would allow bans to be introduced on the basis of local environment concerns. Additionally, the European Parliament wanted a guarantee that restrictions or bans on cultivation of GMOs by Member States should not prevent biotechnology research from being carried out provided that all necessary safety measures are observed.

Given the recent European Parliament elections and the length of time that has passed since the Parliament adopted its negotiation position it may decide to re-visit its initial response. Whether the Parliament intends to do so will become clear of the next few months as formal business sessions in the Parliament get under way following the elections.

### Timeline for negotiations

The Council has indicated that it expects to enter into trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament on the text of the final proposal in autumn 2014. This timetable will be dependent upon whether the European Parliament decides to re-visit its original negotiation position. The Parliament will hold its first plenary session following

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<sup>26</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 15/14 26 February 2014

the May elections between 1-3 of July and will begin fully considering formal business in September.

## Responses

Opposition remains towards the proposed changes from both biotech companies and environmental NGOs.<sup>27</sup> Biotech firms argue that the opt-outs could undermine ESFA's credibility, the integrity of the internal market and science based decision making.

<sup>28</sup> Greenpeace raise concerns that Member States that want to ban GM crops will be exposed to legal challenges and forced to 'do deals' with biotech lobbyists.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, in recent weeks comments have been made about the potential impacts on the proposal of the on-going EU-US trade negotiations known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TIPP). Agriculture is one of the more contentious issues in the negotiations. The US Agriculture Secretary has called for a harmonisation of US and EU authorisation process for GMOs expressing concern at the length of time GMO authorisations take within the EU.<sup>30</sup> Environment NGO's such as Greenpeace<sup>31</sup> and Friends of the Earth Europe<sup>32</sup> have expressed concerns about the implications and influence of the TIPP on the EU's GMO approvals process.

<sup>27</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 17/14 5 March 2014

<sup>28</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 17/14 5 March 2014

<sup>29</sup> AGRAFACTS No. 17/14 5 March 2014

<sup>30</sup> Euractiv, *US wants Science to settle GMO debate in trade deal with EU*, 18 June 2014 [accessed 26 June 2014]

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> Friends of the Earth Europe, *EU-US Trade deal A bumper crop for big food?*, October 2013 [accessed 26 June 2014]:

## Further information

For further information on the/about **Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs): The authorisation process for cultivation**, please contact **Nia Seaton** ([Nia.Seaton@Wales.gov.uk](mailto:Nia.Seaton@Wales.gov.uk)), Research Service.

### See also:

- European Commission **Questions and Answers on EU's policies on cultivation and imports of GMOs** 6 November 2013

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The Research Service has produced this Research Note for the benefit of Assembly Members and their support staff. Authors are available to discuss the contents of these papers with Members and their staff but cannot advise members of the general public.

**Enquiry no: 14/0518**



### **CALOR GAS LTD RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES' ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE CONSULTATION: INQUIRY INTO ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND FUEL POVERTY IN WALES**

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

- To examine progress towards meeting the Welsh Government's statutory targets for eradicating fuel poverty in Wales by 2018.
- To review the implementation to date by the major energy suppliers of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and other measures to alleviate fuel poverty in Wales.
- To consider the impact of the Welsh Government's existing energy efficiency programmes (Nest and Arbed) and UK Government initiatives such as the Green Deal.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

- Calor agrees that the most effective way to tackle fuel poverty is to invest in improving the energy efficiency of the homes of low-income households. Calor welcomes the fuel poverty eradication target of 2018 and commends the National Government funding for fuel poverty and energy efficiency schemes.
- Calor has serious concerns regarding access to, and the delivery of, existing fuel poverty and energy efficiency schemes into rural off-gas grid areas of Wales. The incidence of fuel poverty in rural Wales is almost double the level of urban fuel poverty and the rural fuel poor experience a greater fuel poverty gap than their urban counterparts.
- It is encouraging that both Nest and Arbed identify rural areas, off gas properties and hard-to-treat homes as priorities for action. However to date activity has largely been focused in urban areas.
- Rural does not always equal off-gas, neither does off-gas equal rural; a significant number of off-gas and hard-to-treat properties exist within urban areas.
- It is encouraging that Wales has been able to secure higher levels of ECO funding than England, as a result of aligning ECO funding Nest and Arbed. However ECO is largely failing rural areas - Calor has serious concerns regarding access to, and the delivery of ECO in rural off-gas grid areas, and in particular the delivery of the Affordable Warmth and Carbon Saving Communities elements of ECO.
- The Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) has specifically excluded heating oil and LPG boilers from the scheme thereby further disadvantaging rural householders.

#### **CALOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Calor argues that special assistance should be given to householders living in rural off-gas grid areas.
- Calor asks that the Welsh Assembly Government investigates how many energy efficiency improvements under Nest and Arbed have taken place in properties both rural and located off the mains gas network.
- The Welsh Assembly Government should utilise existing funding under Nest and Arbed to encourage ECO suppliers to deliver measures into rural communities under both the AW and CScO elements of the scheme.
- Calor would urge the Welsh Assembly Government to consider a similar scheme to the Scottish Green Homes Cashback scheme which provides funding to deliver replacement LPG and heating oil boilers.
- Calor wants to work proactively with the Welsh Assembly Government to integrate the learning's from Calor's own rural off-gas grid fuel poverty initiative within the existing Welsh national energy efficiency programmes.

## **SUBMISSION:**

### **1. Rural Fuel Poverty in Wales:**

- 1.1 Calor agrees with the Welsh Assembly Government's view expressed in their fuel poverty strategy that the most effective way to tackle fuel poverty is to invest in improving the energy efficiency of the homes of low-income households. The statutory target for the eradication of fuel poverty in Wales by 2018 is laudable, and Calor commends the Welsh Assembly Government for, unlike England, having not only retained but increased National Government funding for fuel poverty and energy efficiency schemes since the publication of the fuel poverty strategy.
- 1.2 However, Calor has serious concerns regarding access to, and the delivery of, existing fuel poverty and energy efficiency schemes into rural off-gas grid areas of Wales<sup>1</sup>, and in particular the delivery of the Affordable Warmth and Carbon Saving Communities elements of the Energy Company Obligation.
- 1.3 The 2008 Living in Wales Survey found that the proportion of households in rural Wales in fuel poverty was 42% - almost double that of fuel poverty in urban areas of Wales at 22%. Fuel poverty statistics for England, published by DECC in August 2013, showed that under the Low Income High Cost indicator, rural fuel poor households experience a far higher fuel poverty gap than their urban counterparts; £588 for rural households against an average gap of £404 for all households and £361 for urban households. It follows that a similar fuel poverty gap discrepancy between urban and rural is likely to exist in Wales.
- 1.4 Income levels, the energy efficiency of properties, and energy prices, are key factors affecting fuel poverty levels. Research has indicated that 25% of households located in rural areas live below 60% of the UK median income. Rural Welsh residents are also more likely to live in older, larger dwellings, which are often both harder to heat and harder to insulate. They are also reliant on energy sources which are typically more expensive than natural gas, such as heating oil, LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas), electricity and solid fuel.
- 1.5 However, in spite of the higher incidence of rural fuel poverty and the deeper rural fuel poverty gap, previous energy efficiency schemes such as CERT and CESP have demonstrated that national programmes can often be focused largely on urban areas where assistance can be delivered at a lower cost and in greater volumes - to the detriment of delivery in rural areas. As rural off-gas grid Wales contains some of the worst performing housing stock and almost double the level of fuel poverty as urban Wales, Calor argues that special assistance should be given to householders living in rural off-gas grid areas. However the Welsh Assembly Government's previous programme for tackling fuel poverty – the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme – offered only standard insulation measures (cavity wall and loft), although it did give very limited provision for harder to treat and off-gas grid properties.

### **2. Nest:**

- 2.1 It is therefore extremely encouraging that the successor to HEES – the Welsh Assembly Government's Nest scheme, which came into force in April 2011 – identifies rural households as a particular target group and includes suitable measures, such as solid wall insulation. Nest has used mapping tools and worked with Wales & West Utilities to identify properties to target, including communities located beyond the mains gas network.
- 2.2 However, it appears as though Nest is subject to similar failings as its predecessors. There is evidence to suggest that in spite of its rural acknowledgement, activity remains primarily within urban areas, with rural householders not benefitting from the scheme to the same degree as their urban counterparts. The Nest annual report which details the breakdown by urban and rural classification of customers receiving a home energy improvement

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that rural does not always equal off-gas, and off-gas does not always equal rural. Around 206,000 homes (16%) in Wales are located off the mains gas network. However, around half of the off-gas households in GB (49%) are located in urban areas; these are primarily where health and safety regulations prohibit mains gas installations (i.e. high rise flats). Similarly whilst 35% of the Welsh population live in what is classified as a 'rural' area, many of these homes have access to the mains gas grid. Calor, therefore, believes that a particular fuel poverty focus should be given to those who are both located in a rural area and without access to the mains gas grid.

package, shows that in the first year of the scheme (April 2011-March 2012) the vast majority of customers (79%) receiving installations via Nest were located in urban areas. Only 21% of installations under Nest were completed within rural areas. The second year of Nest (April 2012 – March 2013) demonstrated some improvement; whilst the majority of householders (62%) were located in urban areas, those located in rural areas accounted for (38%) – an increase of 17% on the previous year.

- 2.3 With fuel poverty twice as prevalent in rural areas as urban, Calor argues that this imbalance needs to be urgently addressed and as such welcomes the recent announcement by Alun Davies, Minister for Natural Resources and Food, that the Nest scheme manager has been asked to investigate the potential for developing Nest pilot projects to tackle off-gas and hard-to-treat homes. However, as previously highlighted, rural does not always equal off-gas, neither does off-gas equal rural; a significant number of off-gas and hard-to-treat properties exist within urban areas. As such, Calor would ask that rural off-gas properties are not overlooked within this process, and that the Welsh Assembly Government investigates how many of the rural installations have taken place in properties both rural and located off the mains gas network.

### **3. Energy Company Obligation:**

- 3.1 The Ofgem roundtable on fuel poor off-gas grid customers in October 2012 identified a need for funding schemes to be better aligned to meet overall objectives. The Welsh Government subsequently committed to adapting its funding programmes to dovetail with UK wide programmes such as ECO and Green Deal. This commitment was welcomed as it was anticipated that Wales would be able to secure higher levels of ECO funding than England, as obligated suppliers could align their work with existing schemes and funding streams from Nest and Arbed. Indeed as a result of the £16 million invested in Nest 2013, over £3.5 million of additional ECO funding was secured.
- 3.2 However there is evidence that ECO is also failing rural areas. Based on the statistics from the first 17 months of the ECO, Calor has serious concerns regarding access to, and the delivery of ECO in rural off-gas grid areas, and in particular the delivery of the Affordable Warmth and Carbon Saving Communities elements of ECO. ECO-obligated suppliers have full discretion regarding the extent of support and the measures delivered, and evidence suggests that suppliers are providing a limited number of energy efficiency measures to eligible rural households, if at all.
- 3.3 The need to intervene to provide distributional equity to rural households was partially recognised by DECC when they included heating oil and LPG boiler replacements in the eligible technologies under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO, and mandated that 15% of the Carbon Saving Communities obligation should be targeted to install insulation measures on behalf of low-income or vulnerable households in rural communities with a population of less than 10,000. This delivery is estimated to cost £25 million per year across GB. However, from the outset Calor, and other organisations, raised concerns about the validity of the 10,000 inhabitant threshold. This number of inhabitants suggests a large 'rural' settlement, and potentially may include urban fringe. The support, therefore, is unlikely to be delivered to communities located in rural off-gas grid areas, particularly in rural Wales, where even large village populations are more likely to number in the hundreds of inhabitants, rather than the thousands.
- 3.4 Furthermore, the current rural safeguard under the Carbon Saving Communities Obligation (CSCo) is failing to deliver assistance into rural off-gas grid areas. DECC statistics<sup>2</sup> released on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014 indicate that out of the 776,369 total measures installed under ECO, including 122,163 under the CSCo, only 789 of these measures were installed within the rural sub-obligation. These 789 measures account for 0.1% of total ECO measures installed to end March (776,369) and only 0.6% of total CSCo measures installed (122,163). Note that 15% of CSCo is supposed to be 'ring-fenced' for rural communities.

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<sup>2</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/312499/Monthly\\_Statistical\\_Release\\_-\\_Green\\_Deal\\_and\\_ECO\\_in\\_GB\\_20th\\_May\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/312499/Monthly_Statistical_Release_-_Green_Deal_and_ECO_in_GB_20th_May_Final.pdf)

- 3.5 Finally, whilst all fuel types are eligible under Affordable Warmth (AW) criteria, ECO obligated suppliers are not funding heating oil or LPG boiler repairs or replacement due to the higher costs and additional complexities of them delivering these boilers.
- 3.6 As ECO is funded via a levy on consumer bills, the cost burden of ECO is being disproportionately carried by poor and vulnerable Welsh off-gas grid consumers who are failing to benefit from the scheme. The Welsh Assembly Government must do everything within its devolved powers to encourage ECO suppliers to deliver measures into rural communities under both the AW and CScO elements of the scheme. Utilising existing funding under Nest and Arbed would be a practical way to facilitate this.

#### **4. Green Deal Home Improvement Fund:**

- 4.1 There is evidence that the Green Deal is also failing to benefit rural consumers. The Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) launched in May 2014 provides householders with additional financial support to carry out energy efficiency improvements within their home. Boiler replacement is included within this funding, however only natural gas boilers qualify, with heating oil and LPG boilers specifically excluded from the scheme. It is interesting to note that the Scottish Government has included LPG and heating oil boilers in their version of GDHIF – the Green Homes Cashback. Calor would urge the Welsh Government to consider a similar scheme.

#### **5. Arbed:**

- 5.1 Arbed has been more successful in targeting rural areas of Wales. In phase one 6,700 measures were installed in over 6,000 homes, including 2,896 internal or external wall insulation measures for walls which were unsuitable for cavity wall insulation, 1,066 solar thermal systems, 121 heat pumps (mostly air source), 765 fuel switches to mains gas and 1,797 solar PV arrays. Phase two is targeting 5,000 properties meeting a variety of criteria, including levels of deprivation and welfare benefit take up; number of off-gas grid properties and solid wall properties; whether the area is a strategic regeneration area, renewal area or Communities First area; and the number of private rental properties.
- 5.2 There is a clear drive to include rural areas which do not have access to the mains gas network in the scheme which is to be welcomed. However, as previously stated, it should be noted that not all off-gas grid properties are necessarily rural, and as the area based nature of the programme favours areas with higher densities of properties, this may in turn disadvantage rural off-gas grid properties where population concentration tends to be more sparse. In addition, fuel switching to mains gas would not be appropriate in areas with no access to the mains gas network, unless accompanied by a gas mains extension project, which for much of rural Wales is neither practicable nor affordable due to the distance from the mains gas network.

#### **6. About Calor Gas:**

- 6.1 Calor Gas Ltd is an experienced, specialist provider of energy to off-gas grid rural communities. Calor began operating in 1935 with the aim of bringing clean, efficient and modern energy solutions to homes and businesses across Great Britain. Today Calor continues to play a vital role in meeting rural Wales' energy requirements, supplying bulk and bottled LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) to Welsh homes and businesses located off the mains gas grid 365 days a year. As Britain's leading supplier of domestic LPG, Calor has developed an excellent understanding of the unique energy challenges that rural householders face. Calor supports Westminster and the Welsh Assembly Government efforts to tackle rural fuel poverty. As an energy provider Calor takes its responsibilities very seriously and wants rural property owners to have a strong voice in the fuel poverty and energy efficiency debate - and the same opportunity to reduce their fuel costs, and carbon emissions, as exists in urban on-grid areas. Since 2010, Calor has been working with National Energy Action Cymru to raise awareness of, and find practical solutions to, rural fuel poverty through the Future of Rural Energy (FREE) initiative. The project was the first national dedicated fuel poverty scheme designed to solely support fuel poor households in rural, off-gas grid communities in Wales. The initiative has raised awareness of rural fuel poverty issues within the National Assembly for Wales, and with charities and NGO's including Consumer Focus Wales. It has mapped

the level of fuel poverty in off-gas grid areas of Wales, providing an indication of the extent and location of fuel poverty within off-gas grid Wales. It has also delivered practical activity in the Llŷn Peninsula and West Ceredigion – two areas with the highest levels of off-gas grid fuel poverty in Wales - where NEA Cymru trained rural advice workers in fuel poverty and energy efficiency awareness. These advice workers are now acting as local energy champions within off-gas grid communities, raising awareness of rural fuel poverty and helping to facilitate practical energy efficiency solutions. Evidence gathered from the Calor project was used to inform a policy report outlining the experiences and lessons learned by stakeholders, advisors and communities who took part and benefited from the project. The report was launched at an event attended by Alun Davies, Minister for Natural Resources and Food, at the Assembly in June 2013. Calor is continuing to work with NEA Cymru, and in 2014 the FREE initiative is helping Town and Community Councils, through One Voice Wales, to tackle fuel poverty in off-gas grid communities. Calor is committed to ensuring a fair deal for rural householders by keeping energy costs as low as possible whilst also working with organisations such as NEA Cymru, with the overall aim of eradicating rural fuel poverty.

# Agenda Item 7

## Environment and Sustainability Committee

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Meeting Venue: **Committee Room 3 – Senedd**

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Meeting date: **Wednesday, 25 June 2014**

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Meeting time: **09.30 – 11.48**

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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\\_25\\_06\\_2014&t=0&l=en](http://www.senedd.tv/archiveplayer.jsf?v=en_400000_25_06_2014&t=0&l=en)

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### Concise Minutes:

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#### Assembly Members:

**Alun Ffred Jones AM (Chair)**  
**Russell George AM**  
**Llyr Gruffydd AM**  
**Julie James AM**  
**Julie Morgan AM**  
**William Powell AM**  
**Joyce Watson AM**

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#### Witnesses:

**Jane Holownia, Wales Audit Office**  
**Andy Phillips, Performance Specialist, Wales Audit Office**  
**Mark S. Williams, Caerphilly County Borough Council**  
**Andrew Wilkinson, Conwy County Borough Council**  
**Alan L. Roberts, Denbighshire County Council**  
**Richard Brown, Pembrokeshire County Council**  
**Isobel Moore, Natural Resources Wales**  
**Nadia De Longhi, Natural Resources Wales**

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#### Committee Staff:

**Alun Davidson (Clerk)**  
**Adam Vaughan (Deputy Clerk)**  
**Nia Seaton (Researcher)**  
**Chloe Corbyn (Researcher)**

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## **TRANSCRIPT**

View the [meeting transcript](#).

### **1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions**

1.1 Apologies were received from Mick Antoniwi, Gwyn Price, and Antoinette Sandbach. There were no substitutions.

### **2 Inquiry into recycling in Wales: Evidence from Wales Audit Office**

2.1 Witnesses responded to questions from Members of the Committee.

### **3 Inquiry into recycling in Wales: Evidence from Local Authorities**

3.1 Witnesses responded to questions from Members of the Committee.

### **4 Inquiry into recycling in Wales: Evidence from Natural Resources Wales**

4.1 Witnesses responded to questions from Members of the Committee.

### **5 Papers to note**

5.1 Biodiversity – Further information from Natural Resources Wales following 21 May meeting

The Committee noted the paper

5.2 Correspondence between the Chair and Natural Resources Wales following 7 May meeting

The Committee noted the letter

5.3 Inquiry into the Welsh Government's proposals for the M4 around Newport :

Response from the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport to the letter from the Chair on 5 June

The Committee agreed to write a follow up letter to the Minister

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

### **7 Forward Work Programme – Update**