

Senedd Cymru
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a
Materion Gwledig
Rheoliadau Llygredd Amaethyddol

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Ymateb gan: Ymateb unigol

Welsh Parliament
Economy, Trade, and Rural
Affairs Committee
Agricultural Pollution
Regulations

Evidence from: Individual
response

I am writing regarding the upcoming consultation into the use of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones across Wales.

The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 came into force in April and designated the whole of Wales as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), meaning farmers across Wales must comply with rules on the application of nitrates (slurry and fertiliser) on their land.

Pollution, particularly in the last six years, has caused a disastrous effect on our rivers and land.

The run-off from agriculture is now a complete disaster for the Wye.

You need to be absolutely aware that the river ecosystem below Hereford is dying. The base of the system is an indigenous plant, known as Water Crowfoot but 95 % of this plant has died. This water plant is vital to the ecosystem- it provides cover and sheltered habitat for all the invertebrates, small fish, et cetera and that habitat is vital to the food chain.

The same goes for Elvers that again have all gone. The swans have not reared cygnets or nested. This has never happened in history, and is now happening simply because there's not enough food. Minnows and small fish will not survive without this plant, and soon the kingfishers will also die of starvation.

Although food security (i.e. guaranteed food supply to the whole of the UK) is essential for our nations, it must not have an impact on the environment. In fact there is no need for it to have any impact. Destroying natural biodiversity will have a greater damaging effect on our wildlife who are key in sustaining the complex web of life on earth and so our own future.

I am worried for my children's future - they are lucky enough to grow up in the beautiful Welsh Marches, but what kind of a natural legacy will they have if the habitats around them are already struggling and dying? We all know that these issues will get worse without positive and timely intervention. The time for that is now.

I look forward to your positive action of retaining the NVZ covering all Wales.