

HRLN 18 - Permaculture Association

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith | Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Atal a gwrthdroi colli natur erbyn 2030 | Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030

1. Your views on the effectiveness of current policies / funds / statutory duties in halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

Subsidies are unsustainable.

There is not enough money in the world to pay farmers not to farm.

Wes Streeting called for 'tangible ideas' to improve NHS performance; As I see it the casualties of our food system will keep overwhelming conservation efforts and the NHS, until we do something about the root cause of the escalation in ill-health;

The more people I speak to, the more I hear that people don't feel empowered to request the basic changes to the food system that are needed in order for them to do the jobs that they have been entrusted with.

In order for conservationists and the NHS to do their jobs, the damage has to stop, the Government needs to put measures in place to stop chemicals from intensive farming, including artificial fertilizers from polluting our food, our rivers and our biosphere, because we will never have food security or be able to reverse declines in health or biodiversity until we do.

Henry Dimbleby says farming is the single biggest cause of biodiversity loss - and second biggest cause of climate change - if the biggest cause of climate change is fossil fuels, then Big Ag is basically a subsidiary of Big Oil. Climate change and pollutants are causing extinctions on an unprecedented scale.

Highly fossil fuel intensive artificial fertilisers blight the health of plants and everything that eats them incurring planet altering quantities of biocides and subsequently pharmaceuticals to keep them and us alive;

Nitrates pollute the air and the water causing eutrophication that extends far into the natural world, undermining the health of ALL things, such that disease can wipe out whole species of trees. Healthy organisms do not suffer from pests and disease; consult John Kemp.

A carbon tax would make artificial fertilizers prohibitively expensive levelling the playing field for all farmers so that they can concentrate on what they do best; growing food that nurtures us and restoring balance to the environment. This would be much more achievable than to try and bribe farmers to provide a public 'good' that would be difficult to measure, difficult to implement and would disproportionately benefit farmers who are good at manipulating the system, thereby disadvantaging others.

The time left to achieve zero carbon is so alarmingly short, we simply cannot afford to continue extractive farming methods that are so dazzlingly destructive for one minute longer, when the regenerative alternative is honestly our last best hope to return carbon to the soils AT SCALE, reducing the stresses upon the environment that produce dread diseases and restoring the innate health we need to protect us from them.

Get 'Common Ground' viewed by the entire Senedd;
The trailer says the important bits;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-M4Hq0MKFA&t=34s>

Their previous film 'Kiss the Ground' was shown to the entire USFDA.
Please share this important interview with the directors and Gabe Brown widely,
the first two thirds is essential listening;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87fGS6KSGQw>

The salient points are that 75% of the carbon in our soils has been lost through our damaging farming methods.

Changing to regenerative farming methods can return this to the soil sequestering carbon AT SCALE, reversing climate change, desertification and restoring hydrology.

This will return nutrition to our food with immense wins for health, biodiversity and the environment, saving farmers money on inputs making farming more profitable.

This will improve food security making farming more resilient to weather extremes.

They talk about how industry money has funded the science and led us towards high input toxic farming systems that are causing obesity and making the entire planet sick in multitudes of ways.

Industry led science has led policy to incentivise damaging farming methods, making it harder for the risk averse farmer to change (Gabe Brown explains this better).

There are VERY many positives and VERY few negatives.

What are we waiting for??

2. Your views on the progress towards implementing the Biodiversity Deep Dive recommendations.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

You can't protect biodiversity while you allow the damage to continue.

The NHS is overwhelmed by sick people; Why do we act like this is something we have no control over?

First; 'Define Healthy' (food); most people, scientists and politicians alike, do not differentiate between how foods are grown or appreciate that healthy food can only be grown in healthy soil. Most people don't have access to healthy food at all, because our prevalent food system is incapable of growing it; without healthy soil, plants lack health, and like we do, lack resilience to pests and disease, so are smothered with an average of 27 applications of biocides. So most of the food consumed not only seriously lacks nutrient density, but is contaminated with chemicals designed to interfere with life systems, the consequences of which are felt throughout our biosphere; the sixth mass extinction event is well underway. Media and Government focus remains on avoiding UPF's and meat and misses this crucial point;

It's not WHAT we eat but HOW it is grown that is most important.

Highly fossil fuel intensive artificial fertilizers blight the health of plants and those that eat them incurring planet altering quantities of biocides and subsequently pharmaceuticals to keep them and us alive. Most people will not have a clue how detrimental to their health eating food grown this way is. Some may suspect, but once you experience the benefits of nutrient dense food and totally exclude foods contaminated with either agrichemicals or additives, the health benefits become

clear. My own lived experience is that my daughter with eczema would go red whenever I got it wrong. It's that simple.

You wouldn't have thought that excluding most of the food available would be necessary for health, it's clearly not an option for most, and begs these questions;

Shouldn't ALL the food we grow be 'healthy'?

Grown in ways that support instead of threaten biodiversity?

Grown in ways that sequester carbon instead of stripping it from the soil??

Answer these questions and we will not only save people the misery of ill-health, but we could also save the planet.

The only sensible way forward is to stop routinely releasing hundreds of millions of tonnes of these harmful chemicals into our biosphere.

As long as we continue to farm in this way

Efforts to improve health;

Efforts to tackle obesity;

Efforts to restore biodiversity;

Efforts to restore rivers;

Efforts to maintain fresh water supplies;

Efforts to reverse or mitigate climate change;

Efforts to maintain food security;

Are ALL hamstrung and constantly playing catch-up.

FIRST DO NO HARM the Hippocratic Oath.

How can we get corporations, agriculture, industry and Governments to take this oath too?

3. Your views on current arrangements for monitoring biodiversity.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

"FIRST DO NO HARM" the Hippocratic Oath.

How can we get corporations, agriculture, industry and Governments to take this oath too?"

I first floated this notion to Lord Deben at ORFC 2023, when he asked us to go out and prove the need for agroecological farming methods, and I keep getting drawn into debates about whether or not growing sustainably sequesters carbon... whereas there is plenty of evidence to show the damage being done by fossil fuel intensive methods so I said 'First Do No Harm' and then Satish Kumar repeated it at ORFC 2024.

The current system thrives upon producing evidence to prove there is a problem, is this to show that something is being done? To be seen to be doing something? That money is being well spent??

You can't expect struggling farmers to then be scientists - but who pays for the information we use really matters - conflicts of interest keep emerging.

Biodiversity is becoming one enormous shit show - no bees, no wasps, no moths, no insects for birds to eat, no fruit pollinated for them to eat either, rivers are more polluted than ever...

We have firmly established the existential risks that we face, produced plenty of evidence but have we done anything yet??

We have to be careful that being accountable is not just another way to kick the can further down the road... waiting for the results... again.

WHATEVER we do to protect diversity is still only playing catch-up and will NEVER keep up with the harm we continue to do... until we stop doing it.

4. Your views on new approaches needed to halt and reverse the loss of nature by 2030.

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

INTRODUCING SUSTAINABLE CONCEPTS AND CAMPAIGNS

Accessible, affordable loans based on need, not affordability (with repayment terms similar to student loans) so that businesses, homes & communities can become more self-sufficient and locally independent; to encourage & help finance local water storage, Community Supported Agriculture, micro energy projects.

Replace VAT with AddedCarbonTax - ACT now or

InternationalMitigationPolicytoAddCarbonTax - IMPACT to tax all the worst things we do and give tax breaks to all the best.

Like JustStopOil; '#JustEatSustainably'

As 'plant based' looks poised to get everyone to adopt a half measure, (filling supermarkets with highly packaged & processed unsustainable vegan foods) replacing #BigAg with Agroecological methods would restore health to ALL the systems we depend upon for Life on Earth, with our best hope to sequester carbon AT SCALE reversing climate change.

'Making Compost Toilets Mainstream'

A return to Night Porters collecting our Night Soil like they did in the past;

A precedent already exists with collections for river boats.

Ordinary toilet seats fit easily onto 35l buckets which can be used in bathrooms/anywhere, left out for collection when full, & replaced with clean buckets, lids and sawdust to remove smells.

Stop wasting drinkable water to flush toilets (combatting shortages during droughts)

Stop sewage from being released untreated into rivers (reducing pollution during floods)

Collect for use locally on farms (to replace highly energy intensive artificial fertilizers that blight the health of plants & those that eat them causing release of millions of tonnes of biocides to keep plants 'healthy' and perpetuate the currently unregulated release of pharmaceuticals that go onto cause problems in rivers and the wider environment).

Use human waste to make Biomethane, which could easily replace fossil fuels to run cars & boilers, it burns more cleanly, so that we can re-use essential things, instead of scrapping everything with the carbon cost of creating everything new to run on electricity without the means or infrastructure available to supply sufficient renewable energy.

Consider ways to convert intermittent renewable energy into hydrogen, methane and ammonia as an alternative to batteries, to effectively store energy, without making the infrastructure already set up to deal with gas redundant.

Chemical Pollution has been described as the 'third great planetary crisis' enlist Client Earth.

The release of millions of tonnes of biocides & polluting chemicals constitutes Geo-engineering which is illegal under international law; take the whole chemical industry (Vandana Shiva's Poison Cartel) to court, hold them responsible. STOP the production and release of all hazardous chemicals that cannot be prevented from contaminating the wider environment.

#NatureHasARescuePackage

Only #RegenAg can restore health to the planet & everyone on it and it's the easiest, cheapest, quickest way to sequester carbon AT SCALE. Agroecology is the ONLY sector that can do this.

To sequester carbon and salvage a liveable Earth;
ALL food should be healthy.
ALL water should be drinkable.
ALL food could be grown in ways that sequester carbon.

5. Do you have any other points you wish to raise within the scope of this inquiry?

(We would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 500 words).

The waste we produce has an enormous impact upon wildlife; whether from fly-tipping, carelessness, leachate from land-fill or industrial effluent.

All manufacturers need to be held accountable for end of use, waste or by-products; that means all chemical manufacturers, plastics producers, all personal hygiene and cleaning products, industrial, motoring, e-waste, DIY, food and packaging... everything.

All manufacturers held responsible for originating Persistent Organic Pollutants that end up in the wider environment.

The originators of harmful or persistent products need to be able to assure that their products and waste will not end up in the wider environment, and if they cannot guarantee that they will not go onto cause harm in the environment, they should no longer be allowed to produce them.

E.g. Methane from fracking. Acid rain from combustion of fossil fuels. PFA's in fast food packaging. Glyphosates that end up in 85% of rain samples & 99% urine in some places. Motor oil in drains.

Lets not try to prevent accidents from happening, humans are fallible, but if you are manufacturing something that has lasting potential to do harm, alternatives must be found.

Manufacturers should not be allowed to produce cleaning products labelled "dangerous to aquatic life with long lasting effects" let alone sell them. Flea products on dogs and suntan lotion that kills reefs are two more. This is a no-brainer if you want to protect biodiversity. Especially as alternatives are already on the market!!

I'd like to finish with Biochar; it rarely gets a mention but has the capacity to jump start biology and resilience on a field/global scale. They are doing it in China.

Carbon negative stove; we cook and heat our home and hot water with the wood gasses, quenching the carbon/Biochar (simply at the beginning of the process instead of trying to recoup it expensively and inefficiently at the end of the process) for use on the land where it benefits the soil biology and water holding capacity permanently sequestering the carbon. If I can do this at home - surely it can be scaled up?