

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure
Committee

Mike Hedges MS
Chair of the Legislation, Justice & Constitution Committee

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Chair of the Finance Committee

3 February 2026

Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill – Stage 2 Explanatory Memorandum update

Ahead of the Stage 3 debate on the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill on 10 February and in accordance with Standing Order 26.28, I have today laid before the Senedd a revised Explanatory Memorandum (EM) and Explanatory Notes following conclusion of Stage 2 CCEI Committee meeting held on 11 December. Revisions have been made throughout the EM reflecting the commitments I gave in response to a number of Stage 1 Committee recommendations and to reflect the Bill as amended at Stage 2.

Please note my specific response below to Recommendation 6 from the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee Recommendation 6: *The Committee recommends that the Deputy First Minister, in consultation with the Auditor General for Wales, estimates the cost to the Wales Audit Office for engaging with, and auditing, the proposed Office of Environmental Governance Wales, and includes this information in a revised Regulatory Impact Assessment, after Stage 2*

Following further investigation and engagement, the estimated annual cost of the Wales Audit Office for engaging with and auditing the proposed Office of Environmental Governance Wales is not expected to exceed £0.5m. However, further engagement with the Wales Audit Office is planned over the next month to try and refine this estimate following Stage 2 amendments that settle the functions and scope of the OEGW. I therefore commit

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

to updating the Regulatory Impact Assessment with a more accurate estimate of the cost of the Wales Audit Office for engaging and auditing the OEGW as soon as practicable.

The EM will be further updated to reflect any changes made to the Bill as amended at Stage 3.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and strokes, characteristic of a cursive or semi-cursive style.

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