

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-703
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05846/16

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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August 2016

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 4 August, regarding petition P-05-703, a proposal to postpone the restrictions on fishing in Welsh rivers.

Firstly, I must emphasise salmon stocks have been in decline for a number of years throughout all North Atlantic countries. The 2015 salmon stock assessment report undertaken by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) shows most Welsh rivers are now "at risk" and under international conventions, there is an obligation on statutory environmental bodies, including NRW, to address the decline of this iconic species.

The most likely cause of the decline in salmon stocks is climate-moderated changes to habitat, including ocean temperature, salinity and acidity and the availability of prey.

Within Wales, NRW faces the challenge of managing stocks to ensure sufficient survival of fish to spawn, whilst seeking to maintain the socio-economic benefits of fishing opportunities.

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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.

NRW is in the process of moving towards a formal consultation on salmon stock control measures around late 2016 or early 2017. This follows extensive informal consultation where NRW has sought stakeholders' views on potential options to tackle declining stock of salmon. One of the options being considered is mandatory measures to prevent the killing of any salmon in Welsh rivers. NRW's formal consultation document will outline all socio-economic and environmental issues associated with any potential course of action.

Following the closing date of this proposed formal consultation, NRW will proceed to collate and analyse objections received. NRW will then present me with all the information, enabling me to arrive at a fully informed decision on this matter.

Regards
Lesley

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