

7. Fair to farmers

The government should ensure farmers receive a fair share of the profit generated in the supply chain, creating more resilient farm businesses. We must all contribute toward greater public understanding of where food comes from, and how it is produced.

8. Built on strong evidence and past success

Future policies should build on successful agri-environment schemes, drawing on evidence and experience of how to reverse declines in nature, and secure ecosystem services vital to farming and wider society. A well-resourced programme of research and monitoring will facilitate continuous improvement.

9. Coherent with other policy areas

There must be clear and coherent objectives, targets and milestones that are much better aligned with other areas of policy such as trade, food procurement, public health, heritage, tourism and climate change.

10. The right action at the right scale

By using data to understand the environmental, social and cultural value of different places, we can ensure action is targeted in the right way. Coherent action at landscape scale, for instance a catchment-based approach, would make sure policy was relevant to local needs and contributed towards regional and national environmental objectives.

Wales Environment Link's Land Use and Biodiversity Working Group were pleased to input to the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee's Inquiry into the Future of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies in Wales. Whilst we feel the Committee's report, *The Future of Land Management in Wales* (March 2017), could have gone further, we would like to take this opportunity to comment on certain recommendations that were made.

Recommendation 15. *The Welsh and UK Governments should ensure a transition period for future funding arrangements equivalent to the duration of the remainder of the current and the next CAP funding cycles.*

WEL supports the need for a transition period that is sufficient to foster active adaptation amongst land managers to new arrangements.

Recommendation 16. *The Welsh Government should develop a system of basic support that is more aligned to sustainable outcomes whilst producing high quality food. The introduction of such a system should be subject to a transitional period through to the end of the next CAP cycle.*

WEL believes that support should be on the basis of public benefit, as per our principle 4. Therefore, we endorse the part of this recommendation that emphasises alignment with sustainable outcomes.

Recommendation 17. *The Welsh Government should prepare a plan for the dairy industry, in consultation with producers, distributors and retailers. This plan should identify how the sector can make the transition from the current funding model to a system of support based on sustainable outcomes.*

We endorse this recommendation, which we believe should have a beneficial impact in making the dairy industry's impact on water quality in Wales more sustainable. This recommendation should be widened to other sectors to ensure removal of externalised costs is embedded in a sustainable future and the cumulative effects of agricultural intensification on our natural resources are recognised and mitigated or prevented.

Recommendation 18. *The Welsh Government must ensure that future funding for land managers is based on the delivery of outcomes which contribute to the ambitious targets for climate change adaptation and mitigation set out in Welsh legislation such as the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.*

We fully endorse this recommendation.

Recommendation 19. *The Welsh Government must progress as a matter of urgency its proposals on natural flood mitigation and prevention.*

We endorse this recommendation, which should provide impetus for important natural mitigation and prevention measures, such as the restoration of peatland and an increase in native woodland cover.

Recommendation 23. *Future funding for land managers should support the delivery of outcomes which maintain and enhance biodiversity in Wales and also promote a spatial approach to land management, any such approach should support the delivery of the objectives of the Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Plan.*

We fully endorse this recommendation.

Recommendation 24. *We recommend that future support for land managers in Wales rewards land managers for improving access to the countryside. Funding should also reflect the extent to which access routes are maintained and promoted.*

We fully endorse this recommendation.

WEL hopes that the aspects of the recommendations endorsed above can be taken forward. We see the new Natural Resources Policy and forthcoming Area Statements as mechanisms for doing this, which should enable Wales to fully integrate its land management aspirations and environmental responsibilities for the benefit of present and future generations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RH', followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that tapers to a point on the right.

Russel Hobson
Chair of WEL's Land Use and Biodiversity Working Group



Key headline asks for future land management support in Wales

24th November 2016

Set out below are six key asks calling for a future land management system in Wales that applies the principles enshrined in Welsh law to all forms of land management. As we transition out of the EU, we must move towards new policies and payment systems that enable Wales to fully implement these principles in order to support a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems.

1. The Welsh Government must be able to set land management support in context of its own legislation – the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Environment (Wales) Act - and provide a place-based approach through the National Natural Resource Policy and Area statements.
2. We want to see environmental standards that are stronger than they are now, and the Welsh Government calling on the UK Government to provide strong leadership on environmental standards at an international level.
3. There should be a financial settlement for Wales to enable the full delivery of environmental objectives. A settlement based on the Barnett formula would result in less funding than currently comes to Wales and consequently would be an insufficient allocation of funds to enable the transition to a sustainable future for the Welsh environment.
4. Pillar 1 payments are unsustainable and should not be taken forward into future support mechanisms. In the context of Welsh legislation, public money should only be made available for delivery of public benefits. There should be an end of support to farming and forestry that externalises costs as this compromises Wales' ability to deliver sustainable management of natural resources and invest in restoration of ecological resilience to deliver the greatest public benefit.
5. Build a robust and well-resourced enforcement system based on high minimum standards.
6. Alongside delivery of public benefit, there should be a move to developing new and innovative supply chains for existing and new quality sustainable products. This will require upskilling of land managers to encourage innovation.

Wales Environment Link (WEL) is a network of environmental, countryside and heritage Non-Governmental Organisations in Wales, most of whom have an all-Wales remit. WEL is officially designated the intermediary body between the government and the environmental NGO sector in

Wales. Our vision is a healthy, sustainably managed environment and countryside with safeguarded heritage in which the people of Wales and future generations can prosper.

This paper represents the consensus view of a group of WEL members working in this specialist area. Members may also produce information individually in order to raise more detailed issues that are important to their particular organisation.

