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Environment Bill White Paper Consultation Summary Report

Glossary

Area Based Approach (ABA): The Environment Bill will place a requirement on NRW to develop and implement an area-based approach for natural resource management. This will be a planning and priority setting process that coordinates resource use so that the long term sustainable benefits are optimised for the people, environment and economy of Wales in the present and in the future.

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is made up of living organisms (plants, animals and microorganisms) in conjunction with their non-living environment (air, water, minerals and soil) and all the diverse and complex interactions that take place between them

Ecosystem Approach: An ecosystem approach focuses on the collective management of all resources - maintaining ecological integrity whilst allowing resource extraction/use - rather than managing multiple resources independently. This approach seeks to ensure the co-existence and development of healthy, fully functioning ecosystems and human communities.

The term ecosystem approach originally comes from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), where it is described as “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”.

Ecosystem Services: The services we get from nature such as clean drinking water, the regulation of air quality, climate and flood risk; opportunities for recreation, tourism and cultural development; and underlying functions such as soil formation and nutrient cycling. Some are essential to life and more readily valued in economic terms, while others such as attractive landscapes are less tangible but non the less life-enhancing. Maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services – and restoring them where they have been lost or degraded – is increasingly recognised as essential for the economy and human wellbeing.

Green Infrastructure (GI): is the network of natural and semi-natural areas, features and green spaces in rural and urban, terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine areas. It is a broad concept and includes natural features, such as parks, forest reserves, hedgerows, restored and intact wetlands and marine areas, as well as man-made features, such as ecoducts and cycle paths. The aims of GI are to promote ecosystem health and resilience, contribute to biodiversity conservation and enhance ecosystem services (Naumann *et al*).

Integrated Natural Resource Management: This is the process that will need to be followed to enable the sustainable management of natural resources, to deliver even greater long-term benefits to the economy, society *and* environment. It is the principles that area-based natural resource planning will need to follow.

In the White Paper we propose the following legal definitions of Integrated natural

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resource management:

“Integrated natural resource management means a planning and priority setting process that coordinates the maintenance, enhancement and use of natural resources – taking into account all ecosystem services - so that the long term benefits are optimised for the people, environment and economy of Wales in the present and in the future.”

This definition will be further explored following responses to the consultation.

Natural Resources: The White Paper proposes a legal definition of Natural Resources:

In relation to Wales, *Natural resources* extends to the following matters relating to the sustainable management of natural resources:

- a) air, water resources and soil;
- b) geologic and landscapes;
- c) biomass and biological resources;
- d) ecosystems

Explanation of components of definition

(a) represents the general environmental media (as included in the European Commission definition);

(b) represents primarily abiotic elements. Minerals would be captured under geologic which is pertaining to, or based on geology. Both geologic and landscapes have been used as they represent different elements and whilst landscapes are physiographical not all physiographical features are landscapes;

(c) represents essentially all organic life forms, plants, animals and other living organisms. By including biomass, this then includes biological material derived from living, or recently living organisms.

(d) ecosystems have been included to reflect the interconnections and interdependencies of individual natural resources. It also can act as a catch-all definition.

This definition will be further explored following responses to the consultation.

National Natural Resource Policy (NNRP): A national Natural Resource Policy setting out the high-level direction of travel for all policy in Wales, including where integrated natural resource management can help to optimise social, economic and environmental benefits for now and the long term. The policy will include identification of opportunities, trends and priorities for the management of natural resources that complement any outcomes by Government agreed at the national level and in the implementation of responsibilities set out by EU legislation.

Payment for ecosystem services (PES): PES schemes involve payments to the managers of land or other natural resources in exchange for the provision of specified ecosystem services (or actions anticipated to deliver these services) over-and-above what would otherwise be provided in the absence of payment. Payments are made by the beneficiaries of the services in question, for example, individuals, communities, businesses or governments acting on behalf of various parties.

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Beneficiaries and land or resource managers enter into PES agreements on a voluntary basis and are in no way obligated to do so.

Planning: In the White Paper whenever the term ‘planning’ is written it is used to mean its common English definition: "designing or making a detailed proposal for doing or achieving something"

Planning for natural resources: In this paper, planning for natural resources refer to the elements of plan-making processes that NRW or other are responsible for that fall outside of the Land-Use Planning system. Often these operational plans, or the evidence supporting them, are key material considerations in the Land-use planning process.

Resilience: When applied to ecosystems - the ability of an ecosystem to withstand, or recover from disturbance and its capacity to survive and adapt so that its biological diversity, natural processes and provision of ecosystem services are maintained. Resilience may exhibit thresholds, which are levels of disturbance beyond which the system cannot recover, or is transformed to an alternative state (which is often undesirable, though not inevitably). Ecosystems are subject to disturbance in the form of many pressures and drivers, which notably include climate change and its knock-on effects. When managing our resources it is important that we think about the ability of ecosystems to resist, absorb, or recover from disturbance.

Resource Management (Integrated Natural Resource Management): Resource Management is about enabling a more effective and sustainable use of natural resources to deliver even greater long-term benefits to the economy, society *and* environment. It's thinking proactively about the opportunities Wales' natural resource provide while deepening our understanding how our choices impact the environment. It is a way of looking at our natural resources such as water quality, water storage, flood control, carbon storage, biodiversity and forest management and deciding how benefits for people in terms of jobs, their livelihood and health can be maximised over the long term. The essence of the approach is not to look at one or two aspects in isolation but to look at the big picture and the whole range of its potential benefits – including opportunities to tackle inequalities.

Single integrated plans: Local service boards consist of the leaders of local authorities, health boards, police, third sector and others. They prepare, implement and oversee the preparation of a single integrated plan (SIP) for each local authority area. The SIP integrates the community strategy, children and young people's plans, community safety strategies and health social care and well-being plans. It is supported by a strategic needs assessment which provides evidence for setting priorities and determining how services should be designed. The intention is to put LSBs and SIPs on a single statutory footing within the Future Generations Bill.

State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR): NRW will be required to report, at least every 5 years, on the state of natural resources in Wales. As well as reporting generally on trends, it should report on the on-going successes and challenges of implementing an integrated natural resource management process, including the

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legislative barriers to this that, in the opinion of NRW, still exist.

Sustainable Development: Sustainable development means enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations in ways which: promote social justice and equality of opportunity; and enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits – using only our fair share of the earth’s resources and sustaining our cultural legacy.

Sustainable Management (of natural resources): For the purposes of the Environment Bill White Paper, *Sustainable management* means the collective actions required for managing the maintenance, enhancement and use of natural resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and environmental well-being, while maintaining the life-support systems of nature and ensuring that the benefit of the use to the present generation does not diminish the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.

This definition will be further explored following responses to the consultation.
