



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Newsletter of the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor (IEPAW) for Wales: June 2023

The IEPAW has committed to publishing newsletters on their work.

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Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Update on submissions received by the IEPAW](#)

[Report into the Retained EU Law Bill](#)

[Future work programme - reports](#)

[IEPAW review of resources](#)

[Recent updates](#)

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Introduction

The Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW) oversees the functioning of environmental law in Wales and provides advice to Welsh Ministers to improve environmental outcomes.

The IEPAW intends to publish regular updates on the progress of their work. This is the second of these updates.

Update on submissions received by the IEPAW

Since the last newsletter in October 2022, four submissions have been received relating to the following concerns:

- Dumping of toxic waste
- Lack of protection for trees and woodland and a lack of enforcement under the existing legislation
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Role of planning law in the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

While the IEPAW has no active plans to initiate a report on land contamination at this time, further information has been sought from NRW and the Welsh Government.

Report into the Retained EU Law Bill

On 16 February 2023, the IEPAW submitted a short report to the Welsh

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Ministers on the UK Government's proposed Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. The [Welsh Government responded to this report](#) on 12 May 2023.

Future work programme - reports

The IEPAW is continuing work on her report on forestry. This report is taking longer than expected, but the aim is to publish it within the next few months. The report will focus on tree preservation orders, the Forestry Act, and related issues.

The IEPAW held a call for evidence on hedgerow protection and management which closed at the end of September 2022. This followed a panel discussion on this issue during the Royal Welsh Show. The IEPAW is using this evidence to inform a report on whether the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 meet their stated aim of protecting hedgerows effectively. This report is nearing completion and will be issued shortly.

The IEPAW is also working on a report into the legal framework in relation to protected sites. The IEPAW hosted a roundtable on this issue in November 2022 followed by a call for evidence. The IEPAW is aiming to complete this report towards the end of the year. This issue is also under consideration by the other UK environmental governance bodies, and the IEPAW is meeting with them regularly to discuss the progress of their work.

The IEPAW is looking to start work on a report on the use of civil sanctions in environmental law. The aim of this report will be to consider whether regulators in Wales have the tools they need to ensure compliance with environmental law, and whether expanding the use of civil sanctions in environmental law would improve environmental outcomes.

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The IEPAW is continuing to follow developments relating to water quality in Wales, particularly on sewage discharges into Welsh watercourses. This includes actions arising from the Senedd CCEI Committee report on storm overflows published in March 2022.

IEPAW review of resources

In line with the Senedd Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure's report on the Operation of the Interim Environmental Protection Measures, the Welsh Government has undertaken a review into the resourcing of the IEPAW.

Following completion of the review the Minister for Climate Change has made the following commitments:

- The appointment of a Deputy IEPAW,
- The recruitment of designated staff to provide secretariat support to the IEPAW, and
- Further money to be made available to the IEPAW to secure additional drafting support and expertise.

The Welsh Government's commitment to providing this much-needed additional resource is greatly appreciated by the IEPAW.

Recent updates

The IEPAW has recently [refreshed its webpages](#).

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