



Natural Resource Management Programme FAQs

What is Natural Resource Management?

Natural resource management is about managing our natural environment in a joined up way that delivers real outcomes for the environment, people, the economy and our communities.

Why is it important?

Wales' natural resources – our landscapes, habitats, air and water – provide the foundation for how we live. So that everyone in Wales can have a decent quality of life, we need to make sure that our natural resources are put to best use and can be maintained long term.

Our aim is to make sure that we make the most of Wales' natural resources, while looking after natural systems and building their resilience. We want to continue to provide the benefits to people, communities and the economy in Wales in the long term.

How is the work being taken forward?

We consulted on our plans for better natural resource management in 2010 and 2012. We established the Natural Resource Management Programme in response to what you told us and to take forward our policy commitments and ambitions. [You can read the report from the 2012 consultation on our website.](#)

How are stakeholders being involved in this work?

We have an external Reference Group which includes members drawn from a wide range of sectors. The Reference Group is the main stakeholder forum for the Department for Natural Resources and Food.

[The Natural Resources conference in Cardiff on 25 November](#) 2013 brought together over 160 people to discuss the Environment Bill White Paper and wider work of the Department of Natural Resources & Food.

In December 2013 we held 4 workshops across Wales to discuss ideas for the new Nature Fund. We've also held 4 regional consultation events on the Environment Bill White Paper in December 2013 to January 2014.

We also have meetings and workshops with stakeholders, send out regular e-bulletins to stakeholders and update our webpages with the latest developments.

If you would like to know more about the Programme and ways you can get involved, please email naturalresourcemanagement@wales.gsi.gov.uk

What is the Ecosystem Approach?

It's a common approach to support and inform decision making about our natural resources and how they are managed in a given area. It will ensure that society can maintain a healthy and resilient natural environment now and for future generations.

Environment Bill

What is the purpose of the Environment Bill?

The Environment Bill will ensure that we have the right legislative framework in place to manage our natural resources in a joined-up way, to which we committed in the Programme for Government.

The White Paper proposals have been designed to strip away unnecessary complexity and simplify processes and plans through a new area-based planning approach for natural resource management.

This landscape-based approach will help us, in the long-term, to rationalise the wide range of plans that Natural Resources Wales currently produce.

Most significantly, the Environment Bill will set out a framework to prioritise natural resource opportunities and to ensure we have the evidence needed to better inform the shape and direction of sustainable economic growth and development.

The proposals in this Bill are closely linked to the wider programme of reform and simplification being taken forward in the Future Generations and Planning Bills. Together these Bills aim to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits for Wales.

Other proposals in the White Paper will enable improvements in resource efficiency, for example on waste regulation, and provisions to promote simplification and to clarify the law in a number of areas. These proposals further support our drive for efficiency and to ensure we use our resources to best effect.

In summary, these proposals will mean that:

- Processes are simplified and work is not duplicated
- Priorities focus on the needs and opportunities for different areas with the needs of communities at the heart of decisions we take
- We have a clear process to set outcomes at the national and local level

- We have better quality evidence on the capacity, opportunities and resilience of our natural resources for future generations

Why is the Environment Bill needed?

In order to secure Wales' future prosperity we need to recognise the value of our natural resources and the services they provide.

To do this we need to put in place a modern legislative framework that recognises our water, land and air are all interlinked and our economy, society and environment are all interdependent.

The principles of the ecosystem approach are at the heart of the Bill, ensuring that the value of our ecosystems can be properly considered.

There are clear connections between tackling poverty, economic prosperity and the use of natural resources for current and future generations.

How will the proposals in the White Paper add value?

A National Natural Resources Policy will set out high-level direction of travel in Wales, including where joined-up natural resource management can help to optimise economic, social and environmental benefits for now and the long term.

Meeting environmental objectives for diffuse pollution, water level management or species recovery all require collaboration at the landscape scale. The introduction of an area-based approach to natural resource management will mean that there's a clearer process for the relevant delivery partners.

The legislative framework will support Natural Resources Wales in delivering its core purpose: that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used.

The Bill will also enable the development of mechanisms to build the resilience of ecosystems as an essential component of long term well-being, and not as an afterthought. The restoration of a particular habitat and its supporting ecosystem may be a fundamental part of an area's plan for future economic, social and environmental resilience.

What are the implications for sustainable economic growth of the White Paper proposals?

The Bill will mean that Natural Resources Wales can develop new ways of working to help maximise long term benefit from our natural resources, including through payment for ecosystem services such as carbon storage and water management. This is a real opportunity to help drive sustainable growth and exploit new markets in environmental sectors and new jobs.

Introducing a joined-up area-based approach to manage our natural resources will help to simplify processes, benefiting businesses and making resource efficiency savings.

The Bill will also help to ensure that we have the right information earlier in order to identify the right development opportunities in the right places that support our ambitions for long-term growth.

What are the cost implications of the proposals?

The emphasis in developing the proposals has been on reducing burdens, improving cost-effectiveness and streamlining regulatory processes. The proposals have been designed to secure positive impacts for public sector delivery, businesses while helping to deliver lasting economic, social and environmental benefit.

The White Paper included an initial assessment on the impact of the proposals. A full RIA will be published alongside the draft Bill.

What are the implications for the tackling poverty agenda of the White Paper proposals?

There are clear connections between tackling poverty and the use of natural resources. The proposals for an area-based approach will ensure that we have the right information on the challenges and opportunities in different areas. This evidence will help inform decisions on how we can improve our environment for our communities – particularly in deprived areas.

We want this new approach to help better target investment in local improvements or to support decision making on development opportunities. Everyone in Wales should be able to enjoy a clean, safe environment and benefit from green spaces. This Bill will help us to achieve this.

The resilience of our natural resources is the bedrock on which our society relies. The proposed area-based approach to natural resource planning will help build resilience for Wales' natural environment and our economy and communities.

By building resilience, for example to the causes and consequences of climate change, we are improving the resilience of vulnerable groups and communities and helping to stop more from falling into poverty.

How will environmental limits be reflected in the Environment Bill?

It is clear that we cannot deliver wellbeing and sustainable development in Wales without taking into account wider global impacts, and we cannot look at Wales in isolation from the rest of the world.

The proposals are designed to get the most effective long-term benefit from our natural resources that will meet the needs of future generations. The Future Generations Bill will set the overarching direction on environmental limits as part of its overall responsibility for sustainable development.

What do the Waste proposals cover?

We have set ambitious targets for the recycling of waste in Wales. We need to put in place firm but proportionate policies to achieve high levels of high quality recycling

The proposals aim to provide a boost to the waste management sector by sending a clear signal about the importance of recycling and moving activities up the waste hierarchy. Businesses in turn may save money, for instance by avoiding the costs associated with landfilling and from resource efficiency savings.

Ultimately, increased recycling is good for the Welsh economy and the environment.

What do the Carrier Bag proposals cover?

The existing carrier bag charge has been very successful in dealing with single use carrier bags. However, we cannot currently intervene with any other types of carrier bag that could potentially harm the environment through their improper disposal, such as 'bags for life'.

The proposals seek an extension to our enabling powers, which will only be exercised should future evidence indicate that this is necessary.

Regulations would then only be made after extensive further consultation with stakeholders, including retailers and manufacturers.

What do the Marine Licensing proposals cover?

The new powers would provide for a more flexible and fit for purpose approach to charging fees for marine licensing.

Powers to charge will enable Natural Resource Wales to recoup their costs, where appropriate and reasonable, and will provide a more effective and efficient system of marine licensing for Wales.

What do the proposals on Shellfisheries Management cover?

There is a need in Wales to improve our fisheries legislation, to ensure that it is fit for purpose, easy to understand and leads to increasingly resilient and diverse Shellfishery ecosystems.

The proposals are for a simplified and more integrated approach without unnecessary bureaucracy.

What do the proposals on Agricultural Land Tribunals cover?

The proposal will resolve an issue caused by a gap in the legislation in relation to the enforcement of orders made by the Agricultural Land Tribunal for Wales. Welsh Ministers will have the power to enter land to inspect whether an order has been complied with.

What are the timescales for delivering the Bill?

The White Paper was issued on 23 October and the consultation period ran until 15 January 2014. A consultation summary report was published on 26 March 2014. It is currently anticipated that the Bill will be introduced to the National Assembly in 2015.

How will you seek views from stakeholders?

The consultation on the Environment Bill White Paper provided an opportunity to inform and shape the Bill and to find out more about our approach to natural resource management.

We also held a round of engagement events on the White Paper.

How else can I get involved?

You can keep up to date with developments on Facebook and Twitter by following @WG_NatResMin and liking the Welsh Government's Facebook page.

We can also add you to our mailing list.

For more information on how you can get involved, or to join the mailing list, email naturalresourcemanagement@wales.gsi.gov.uk

How does the Environment Bill relate to the Programme for Government and the legislative programme?

The Welsh Government's Programme for Government included a commitment to introduce an Environment Bill. The Bill was also included in the Welsh Government's five year Legislative Programme, announced by the First Minister on 12 July 2011.

How does the Environment Bill interrelate to other Bills (Future Generations, Heritage, and Planning)?

The Welsh Government's Programme for Government sets a clear direction ensuring that we consider the longer term impacts with every decision we make now. All Bills will focus on the core principle of sustainable development, to provide economic, social and environmental benefits to the people of Wales. They also seek to improve the quality of life for people in Wales, through driving economic growth, creating jobs and tackling poverty.

Nature Fund

What is the £6m Nature Fund?

Last year Alun Davies, the Minister for Natural Resources & Food announced a £6m Nature Fund to drive more joined-up and collaborative area based action that will improve the resilience of nature and continue to support our society's needs.

The focus of the Fund will be to tackle the decline in biodiversity and move to an approach that recognises the interdependency with social and economic factors.

The fund supports our wider work, including establishment of a modern statutory framework through the Environment Bill, to deliver our commitment to the joined-up management of Wales' natural resources in a way that improves our resilience and drives green growth.

To inform the development of the fund, he asked for ideas to ensure that we were listening to those who manage our natural resources and who manage our land. Over 460 ideas submitted from a wide range of individuals and organisations. The ideas have carefully been studied and

analysed and have directly influenced the structure of the fund that the Minister announced on [14 May](#).

What is NRW's role?

The Welsh Government and NRW will work closely with partners to deliver the Fund, which will complement work already underway in NRW's three trial areas.

What is being funded?

The Fund will be used to support activity in seven Nature Action Zones across Wales chosen from the focus provided by the ideas submitted and the challenges and opportunities they present for biodiversity and our natural resources. The Nature Action Zones are:

- Brecon Beacons
- Cambrian Mountains
- Conwy Valley
- Pembrokeshire coast
- South Wales Valleys
- Berwyn and Migneint
- Llyn Peninsula

The Nature Fund will focus on funding projects that take forward practical action in each of the seven Nature Action Zones. The key activities are

- Action to improve river catchments
- Action on marine ecosystems
- Action for local environment
- Action to realise the potential in our upland areas
- Action to stimulate innovation

Will projects from outside the Nature Action Zones be considered?

A small number of proposals outside of the Nature Action Zones will also be considered if they demonstrate innovation and collaboration and can deliver key outcomes.

What is the Welsh Government Leadership?

The Nature Fund will also be used to directly invest to improve land with low ecological value, for example, by establishing deciduous woodlands and working to increase biological diversity in a way which improves the opportunities available to our communities.

This will allow us to exemplify how we are directly investing in a way that will deliver biodiversity and community benefits across our estate. For example the enhancement of roadside verges for pollinators.

In addition there will be opportunities for area based action in the three NRW Trial catchments; in the Dyfi, Tawe and Rhondda which will be facilitated by NRW.

How do I get involved in this work?

Over the coming weeks the Welsh Government will be working with people who submitted ideas to identify how many have the potential to develop into innovative collaborative projects that will deliver the priority activities and can therefore benefit from the funding. We expect to commence funding projects in the summer.

As well as funding these more developed proposals we also aim to fund further collaborative proposals in the Nature Action Zones which will require further planning and collaboration. To help with this, invitations will be sent out to stakeholders to attend a partnership event in each of the seven Nature Action Zones in the coming months.

Why hasn't my idea received funding?

The invitation for ideas made clear that the call for ideas was not a bidding exercise for individual projects. The ideas have shaped the types of actions funded and their geographical spread.

Have the ideas been published?

Yes, the ideas are available on the Welsh Government's website (where the relevant stakeholders have agreed to them being published). The aim of publishing the ideas is for stakeholders to see the emerging themes, identify links between ideas and see where collaboration could be established going forward.

Will there be funding opportunities in different areas in future?

We are currently looking at options to sustain funding for future years.

How can farmers and landowners get involved?

Farmers and/or landowners will be able to submit a project to be considered for funding under the grant programme.

Also part of the Nature Fund will be used to build capacity focusing on existing and developing mechanisms and partnerships to develop farmer led co-operative action to work with and improve nature to benefit the profitability of farm businesses.

How have the Nature Fund workshops helped to inform this work?

A series of Nature Fund workshops were held in Aberystwyth, Llandudno Junction, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff in December 2013 to discuss the ideas for the fund. The output of these workshops were analysed alongside the ideas themselves.