

# **Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Bill**

## **Biodiversity Impact Assessment**

### **Embedding biodiversity**

#### **1. How will your proposal integrate biodiversity into decision making?**

The Commission will be subject to the section 6 duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and will therefore be obliged to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions. This will include embedding and raising awareness of biodiversity through the authority's day to day activities, policies, plans, programmes and projects. . In addition the Commission will have a duty to promote the pursuit of a civic mission by institutions in Wales within the further and higher education sector. Within this legislation civic mission is defined as "action for the purpose of promoting or improving the economic, social, *environmental* or cultural well-being of Wales".

#### **2. Has your proposal ensured biodiversity is accounted for in business decisions?**

The Commission will need to reflect on progress against the civic mission duty within their annual reports alongside their other priorities. An implementation project has been set up and the establishment of the new Commission is being considered as part of that project. Although the Bill itself will not affect species and habitats, until more information is known regarding the location of the premises for the new body, the impact on local environments cannot be fully assessed. However, these factors will be taken into account when deciding upon the location of the Commission.

#### **3. How does your proposal improve understanding and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity, encouraging others to act?**

Consideration as to whether there is an opportunity to have a positive impact on biodiversity has been explored, however, due to the nature of the Bill proposals any impacts on biodiversity will be neutral; however, ensuring the new Commission is defined as a public body (instead of HEFCW) will mean that they are subject to similar requirements. These requirements include embedding and raising awareness of biodiversity through the authority's day to day activities, policies, plans, programmes and projects.

### **Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring**

#### **4. Have you used the best available evidence of biodiversity to inform your proposal and this assessment?**

The lists of species and habitats of principal importance published under Section 7 of the 2016 act and the State of Natural Resources report have been considered and there are no direct issues arising. There are no area Statements available yet.

#### **5. Have you used up to date knowledge of the key impacts on biodiversity to make evidence-based decisions?**

There are no specific drivers of change and/or factors which would have a negative impact on biodiversity arising from this proposal.

**6. Can your proposal contribute to our body of knowledge for biodiversity?**

This will be for the Commission to take forward appropriately.

**Governance and support for delivery of biodiversity action**

**7. Can your proposal support biodiversity action in any way?**

This will be for the Commission to take forward appropriately in the context of their status as a public body section 6 duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. In so far as its functions allow it to influence the tertiary education and research sector through policy and guidance, it will be required to encourage biodiversity considerations to be taken into account in the sector.

**8. Can your proposal help to build capacity for biodiversity action?**

This will be for the Commission to take forward appropriately in the context of their status as a public body in section 6 of the 2016 Act.

**9. Have you recorded decisions and actions to maintain and enhance biodiversity?**

No impacts have been identified and therefore none have been recorded. However, once established, the Commission will be under a duty to publish a plan and a triannual report on how they are complying with the duty.