

Agenda – Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig

Lleoliad: I gael rhagor o wybodaeth cysylltwch a:
Ystafell Bwyllgora 5 – Tŷ Hywel **Robert Donovan**
a fideogynadledda drwy Zoom Clerc y Pwyllgor
Dyddiad: Dydd Iau, 15 Mai 2025 0300 200 6565
Amser: 09.30 SeneddEconomi@senedd.cymru

Hybrid

Rhag-gyfarfod preifat

09.10 – 09.30

Sesiwn gyhoeddus

09.30 – 13.50

1 Cyflwyniadau, ymddiheuriadau, dirprwyon a datgan buddiannau

09.30

2 Iechyd Pridd mewn Amaethyddiaeth: Panel 2

09.30 – 10.45

(Tudalennau 1 – 38)

Andrew Tuddenham, Pennaeth Polisi Cymru, Cymdeithas y Pridd

Rhys Evans, Rheolwr Cymru, y Rhwydwaith Ffermio er Lles Natur

Ellen Fay, Cyfarwyddwr Cyd-weithredol, y Gynghrair Priddoedd Cynaliadwy

Dogfennau atodol:

Briff Ymchwil

Papur tystiolaeth – Cymdeithas y Pridd Cymru (Saesneg yn unig)

Papur tystiolaeth – Y Rhwydwaith Ffermio er Lles Natur (Saesneg yn unig)



Egwyl

10.45 – 10.55

3 Iechyd Pridd mewn Amaethyddiaeth: Panel 3

10.55 – 12.10

(Tudalennau 39 – 63)

Abi Reader, Dirprwy Lywydd, NFU Cymru

Teleri Fielden, Swyddog Polisi, Undeb Amaethwyr Cymru (UAC)

Fraser McAuley, Uwch Gynghorydd Polisi, y Gymdeithas Tir a Busnesau Gwledig (CLA)

Dogfennau atodol:

Papur tystiolaeth – Undeb Amaethwyr Cymru (Saesneg yn unig)

Papur tystiolaeth – Undeb Cenedlaethol yr Amaethwyr (NFU) Cymru (Saesneg yn unig)

Egwyl

12.10 – 12.50

4 Iechyd Pridd mewn Amaethyddiaeth: Panel 4

12.50 – 13.50

(Tudalennau 64 – 81)

Huw Irranca-Davies AS, y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig, Llywodraeth Cymru

James Cooke – Pennaeth Polisi Defnydd Tir Amaethyddol, Llywodraeth Cymru

Andrew Chambers – Pennaeth Cangen Fframwaith Deddfwriaethol Amaethyddiaeth, Llywodraeth Cymru

Naomi Matthiessen – Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr – Tirweddau, Natur a Choedwigaeth, Llywodraeth Cymru

Dogfennau atodol:

Papur tystiolaeth – Llywodraeth Cymru

5 Papurau i'w nodi

13.50

**5.1 Rheoliadau Rheolaethau Swyddogol (Estyn Cyfnodau Trosiannol) (Diwygio)
2025**

(Tudalen 82)

Dogfennau atodol:

Llythyr gan y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid
Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig – 1 Mai 2025

**5.2 Cais am asesiad o effaith ar yr economi y cau arfaethedig ym maes ieithoedd
a diwylliannau ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd**

(Tudalennau 83 – 84)

Dogfennau atodol:

Llythyr oddi wrth Gadeirydd y Grŵp Seneddol Hollbleidiol ar Ieithoedd
Modern, Senedd y DU – 1 Mai 2025

5.3 Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol y DU a'r UE

(Tudalennau 85 – 96)

Dogfennau atodol:

Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol y DU a'r UE: Adroddiad cryno'r pumed
cyfarfod – 29 Ebrill 2025

5.4 Cyfarfod o'r Grŵp Rhyngweinidogol ar gysylltiadau rhwng y DU a'r UE

(Tudalen 97)

Dogfennau atodol:

Llythyr gan Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio – 8
Mai 2025

5.5 Memorandwm Cyd-ddealltwriaeth rhwng yr Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau a Llywodraeth Cymru – Cyflawni'r Arloeswr Anweithgarwch Economaidd yng Nghymru ("Trailblazer")

(Tudalen 98)

Dogfennau atodol:

Llythyr gan Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio at Gadeirydd y Pwyllgor Deddfwriaeth, Cyfiawnder a'r Cyfansoddiad – 8 Mai 2025

6 Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 17.42(ix) i benderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod

13.50

Sesiwn breifat

13.50 – 14.10

7 Trafod tystiolaeth yn dilyn y cyfarfod

13.50 – 14.05

8 Llwybrau Prentisiaeth: Trafod materion allweddol

14.05–14.10

(Tudalennau 99 – 113)

Dogfennau atodol:

Papur materion allweddol (Saesneg yn unig)

Eitem 2

Mae cyfyngiadau ar y ddogfen hon



Soil Association Cymru

Written Evidence Submission to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee inquiry: “Soil Health in Agriculture”

Andrew Tuddenham, Head of Policy Cymru
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April 2025

About the Soil Association

The Soil Association is a membership charity founded in 1946 by farmers, scientists, doctors, and nutritionists with a vision for good food produced with care for the natural world. Today, it develops and scales solutions for sustainable food and farming. Its Food for Life programme supports schools, hospitals, and caterers in shifting to healthy, sustainable diets. About 30% of primary schools in England are accredited. In Scotland, funded by the government, the programme now works with 18 of 32 local authorities to increase local and organic ingredients in school meals. In Wales, the Sustainable Food Places partnership, delivered by Food Sense Wales, promotes healthy, sustainable food in seven local authority areas. Soil Association Certification, our trading arm, works with over 6,000 businesses—farmers, growers, retailers, and manufacturers—in more than 50 countries, certifying over 14 million hectares of forest globally. A third of Wales’ organic farms are certified by Soil Association Certification.

Introduction

Soil Association Cymru welcomes this inquiry and we are grateful for the opportunity to submit evidence. Soil health is central to resilient, productive farming and to tackling the climate, nature and health emergencies, but for far too long soil has been in the shadows of environmental policy when compared to air, water, and biodiversity. As such this crucial natural resource has been left relatively unprotected and undermeasured.

Welsh Government has made progress in building the knowledge base on Welsh soils, and there may be opportunities for soil protection, restoration and research through the Sustainable Farming Scheme. However, Wales lacks a legally binding soil health target and national soil strategy and action plan.

1. The role of soils in agricultural systems

- 1.1** Healthy soils are essential to our ability to produce food, to control flooding and droughts and to limit the impacts of climate change.

- 1.2** The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN defines soil health as “the capacity of soil to function as a living system, with ecosystem and land use boundaries, to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and promote plant and animal health...”¹ The FAO also suggests that “a healthy soil does not pollute its environment and does contribute to mitigating climate change by maintaining or increasing its carbon content”.
- 1.3** Knowledge about soils and soil health remains incomplete, notably about the variety of soil life and its role in sustaining soils.
- 1.4** Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and soil bacteria support plant growth by improving soil structure and recycling nutrients. The fungi act as root extensions, boosting nutrient uptake and helping to bind soil.

2. The state of soils in agricultural systems

- 2.1** In the last century, conversion of natural to agricultural ecosystems combined with detrimental practices such as deep and repetitive tillage, lack of organic amendments, overgrazing, monoculture and long bare-fallowing periods have caused the depletion of the Soil Organic Matter pool by 25%–75% across the globe^{2 3}. This is the biggest issue for soils because organic matter is critical to soil health, biodiversity, productivity and carbon storage.
- 2.2** Particular risks to soil organisms and organic matter arising from farming practices that prevailed since the latter half of the 20th century include:
- 2.3** Over-application of synthetic fertilisers, which can reduce soil organic matter levels and increase soil acidity, reducing the habitat quality for soil organisms and the diversity of soil microorganisms. Reduced soil life and function affects crop growth, development and disease incidence. By reducing soil life synthetic fertilisers can create dependency as the soil loses its natural ability to supply nitrogen and other elements and nutrients to plants, whilst the excessive application of chemicals leach from soils, polluting environments near and far. The latest Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme (ERAMMP) National Trends and Glastir Scheme evaluation Report (2025)⁴ notes that the majority of improved grassland sites surveyed (72%) have “soil acidity levels which remain below the production threshold which is most likely linked to the continued use of synthetic fertiliser without the accompanying use of lime”.

¹ [Plant Production and Protection Division: What is a healthy soil?](#)

² Lal, R., 2011. "Sequestering carbon in soils of agro-ecosystems," Food Policy, Elsevier, vol. 36 (Supplement), pages 33-39, January.

³ Sanderman et al., (2017) [Soil carbon debt of 12,000 years of human land use](#), Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 114 (2017), pp. 9575-9580

⁴ [Report 105. Wales National Trends and Glastir Evaluation.pdf](#)

2.4 Repeated cultivations, physically disrupting the habitat for soil organisms and, by aerating the topsoil, accelerating the microbial breakdown of soil organic matter. One major cause for concern is the reduction in arbuscular mycorrhizal fungal diversity and biomass in UK soils. These are fungal networks associated with most crops that provide key benefits and are keystones within healthy soil communities.

2.5 The prevalence of monoculture crops, which fail to provide the variety of conditions necessary for a diverse range of soil organisms to thrive.

2.6 Pesticides that can kill not only the intended target, but also other beneficial organisms. Some pesticides are known to persist in soils, long after their intended use. This chemical contamination leads to a decrease in soil biodiversity.

2.7 The latest ERAMMP National Trends and Glastir Scheme evaluation Report (2025)² data for soils indicates:

- stability in the national topsoil carbon concentration albeit an 8% loss in topsoil carbon concentration in arable and horticulture habitats
- 6-32% increase in soil compaction
- 4% of soils in Wales eroded or disturbed
- a 15% increase in phosphorus levels in improved grassland soils and three-fold increase in the number of improved grassland sites exceeding the leaching threshold for water quality
- a two-fold increase in the number of sites exceeding the leaching threshold for phosphorus in arable soils and a 7.7% loss of topsoil carbon
- 72% of improved grassland sites retain soil acidity levels below production thresholds

2.8 The underlying driver of soil degradation in the UK has arguably been the specialisation and separation of arable and livestock production, in pursuit of ever cheaper commodity crops, but at great cost to the environment, health and animal welfare.

2.9 Around 3.9 million hectares of farmland in England and Wales are at risk of compaction, largely due to late harvesting of crops (eg maize) and over-cultivation, which have disrupted traditional soil-regenerating practices.

2.10 In eastern England, arable soils degrade as synthetic inputs replace organic matter and diverse crop rotations. Heavy machinery worsens compaction, affecting productivity, carbon storage, and flood resilience.

2.11 In Wales and the west of England, intensive livestock farming produces more manure and slurry than soils can absorb. The Wye catchment sees over 6,000 tonnes of phosphorus annually, mainly from the rapidly growing poultry sector⁵.

⁵ [Re-focusing Phosphorus use in the Wye Catchment](#)

- 2.12** Manure phosphorus in the Wye catchment exceeds land needs by 45%, with the surplus polluting rivers and causing serious ecological harm.
- 2.13** In contrast to the risks to soil health associated with these farm types, organic farms have healthier soils. When compared to non-organic farms, organic farm soils perform significantly better against a range of soil health indicator. Long term studies have shown higher levels of soil microorganisms on organic farms compared with non-organic farmland⁶ and organic farms have higher levels of soil organic matter⁷. They are also found to show better resilience against drought⁸.

3. Monitoring of soil health

- 3.1** Despite an increasing interest in recent years, the existing data on soil health remains limited. Without data it is difficult to know where to start in order to protect and restore soils.
- 3.2** The data that does exist is fragmented and disjointed, as it is recorded by a variety of businesses and institutions, with different methods of soil sampling and analysis. Gaps in the publicly available data sets on Wales' varying soil types, functions and condition makes it difficult to measure progress or to establish a baseline for farmers to work with.
- 3.3** Much of the UK has been stuck for far too long in a circular bind, in which there are no agreed legally binding soil health improvement targets, due to insufficient data to establish a national baseline, and national soil monitoring schemes lack investment because soil health isn't prioritised relative to other focus areas like water, air and biodiversity with legally binding targets.
- 3.4** The European Union Soil Strategy for 2030 identified the lack of legislation as a key cause of soil decline in the EU. A 2023 directive will introduce mandatory soil health monitoring across all land types, covering chemical, physical, and biological properties. We discuss the need for legally binding soil targets to drive action in Wales in Section 6.
- 3.5** The Soil Association believes farmers have a key role to play in gathering data to help monitor soil health. Many are already doing so – as explored by various field labs within

⁶ Henneron, L et al. (2015) '[Fourteen years of evidence for positive effects of conservation agriculture and organic farming on soil life](#)', Agronomy for Sustainable Development, 2015, 35:1 169 – 181 doi:10.1007/s13593-014-0215-8.

⁷ Tuomisto et al. (2012) Does organic farming reduce environmental impacts? A meta analysis of European research. Journal of Environmental Management, 112, December 2012, 309-320

⁸ Muller et al. (2016) Organic farming, climate change and beyond. IFOAM EU and Fibl, p12: "organic farming systems are more resilient to changing weather conditions, such as extreme droughts and extreme rainfall."

the Innovative Farmers Programme (eg “Collective approach to improving soil health in the Orton Fells”⁹), which supports farmer-led research and innovation.

- 3.6** We believe that all farmers should know their soil health and how it compares to similar farms. With proper support, farmers can monitor and improve soil health, helping to fill gaps in our understanding of soils and uncover opportunities for funding and innovation. We provide views on the Sustainable Farming Scheme in section 5.
- 3.7** The Sustainable Soils Alliance recently identified¹⁰ 26 soil metrics in use within 34 schemes or initiatives in widespread use by organisations and governments looking to influence or prescribe how farmers measure and assess their soil. For on-farm soil health monitoring to be most effective we urgently need a cohesive, standardised approach that will help join the dots between the various sectors involved – from farmers, to businesses, researchers, and policymakers.
- 3.8** The Global Farm Metric¹¹ developed by the Sustainable Food Trust provides a common framework for farm sustainability. The Soil Association partnered with the Global Farm Metric as official delivery partner in the UK, launching Soil Association Exchange¹² in 2022. The service helps farmers collect data on sustainability metrics like biodiversity, water, and soil health, to improve farm sustainability and access to new finance opportunities.
- 3.9** For soil health, Soil Association Exchange gathers data across nine metrics (soil organic matter, soil organic carbon stocks, bulk density, Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure, total Nitrogen and C:N balance, earthworms, soil cover %, pH, and contextual soil information)¹³
- 3.10** Remote sensing technology is emerging to help target areas for in-field assessment, and for in-field assessment to help refine remote sensing data¹⁴. Soil Association is a delivery partner in a Horizon Europe Framework Programme project to validate and develop soil health indicators. The project is creating an open access European-wide digital infrastructure, termed “AI4SoilHealth” . This infrastructure will be used for assessing and continuously monitoring soil health metrics by land use and/or management. A soil health measurement app is due to launch in 2026, and the UK pilot site is the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology’s (UKCEH) Plynlimon research catchment.

⁹ [Soil health in Westmorland Dales](#)

¹⁰ [UK Soil Health Measurement Research.pdf](#)

¹¹ <https://www.globalfarmmetric.org/>

¹² [Profitable and sustainable farming | Soil Association Exchange](#)

¹³ [21f3ea_5acb58c9b5724003bcb16c563fa808c6.pdf](#)

¹⁴ [Soil mapping for precise land management | Farming Connect](#)

4. Classification of soils for land use

- 4.1** To date, 747 soil types have been identified in England and Wales, each with distinct properties shaped over geological time. These soils determine land productivity, influencing suitability for crops, livestock, and forestry, and play a key role in erosion, flood risk, and carbon storage.
- 4.2** We need a strategic approach to delivering the types of nature and climate friendly farming and the habitats that we need to avert the nature and climate crises and ensure food resilience.
- 4.3** We believe a land use framework informed by soil classification mapping is a key tool for shaping the policy needed to deliver this new approach to land. Soil Association has been calling for land use frameworks for years to give the clarity and confidence that nature-friendly farmers, land-users and progressive businesses need to invest in the future of the countryside.
- 4.4** It is therefore encouraging that Welsh Government Soils and Land Use Policy Team are considering the development of a soil functions and services map of Wales¹⁵.
- 4.5** Welsh Government’s “Soil function maps resource review” report of July 2024 states that “the aim of the map will be to provide best available information to support and balance land use decisions where trade-offs between soil functions and land use demands compete....The map will allow specialists and non-specialists to understand and quantify the impact of land use and policy decisions on a range of soil functions and services.”
- 4.6** Given that not all land is equally productive for food and that the way that land is farmed will determine whether Welsh Government can avoid unnecessary trade-offs between food, nature and climate we would also add that a soil function and services map must do more than merely guide land use change decisions, as a refinement of planning policy regarding the ‘best and most versatile land’ of ALC Grades 1-3a. A strategic approach to land use is needed to help target government support and regulation to encourage the farming *practices* or farm *types* that best match the carrying capacity or environmental vulnerabilities of the land.
- 4.7** On high yielding land, for example, regenerative practices and the use of ‘eco-infrastructure’ such as wildflower habitats, shelter belts and hedges can boost pollinators and pest control services to help sustainably optimise yields. Less productive land suits more extensive farming practices, including those which create and maintain semi-natural habitats, including meadows, heath, and wood pasture, which are critical for carbon sequestration and nature recovery. To tackle the nature and

¹⁵ [Soil function maps resource review](#), Welsh Government Soil Policy Evidence Programme 2023-24 report (July 2024)

climate crises, it is also critical to protect, restore and create woodlands, wetlands, and peatlands.

5. The policy and legislative mechanisms to protect soils and productive land (including the Sustainable Farming Scheme, National Minimum Standards and planning policy (amongst others))

5.1 To achieve healthy soils we need to focus on restoring multiple soil functions. This requires changes across the whole agricultural system. The Soil Association report, “Saving our Soils: healthy soils for climate, nature and health”¹⁶ (2021) offers a suite of policy actions to support this:

5.6 Provide clear incentives for farmers to monitor their soil health and improve it above their soil type baseline. Commit to a legally binding soil health target underpinned by properly funded national soil monitoring scheme.

5.7 Support farmers to increase plant and animal matter being returned to soil through an increase in cover crops/green manures and a reintegration of grass-fed livestock. This then needs to connect with policies around nutrient pollution reduction.

5.8 Increase incentives for farmers to increase use of minimum or no-till systems, along with support for drastically reduced pesticide use and conversion and maintenance of organic farming.

5.9 Covering up bare soil – farmers should be supported to increase use of fertility-building green manures/cover crops, or the of the area under permanent grassland and longer leys, particularly on vulnerable soils. A strict regulatory baseline needs to be developed to keep vulnerable soils better covered. Monitoring should include a minimum percentage of bare soils at any time of year.

5.10 Bring more trees into the farmed landscape – agroforestry systems protect soils from erosion by wind and water

5.11 Reducing compaction - awareness of this issue should be raised amongst farmers via advisory services and written guidance, and baseline regulations should have compaction prevention as a clear standard.

5.12 Designing crop rotations to improve soil health – longer and better rotations and intercropping should be incentivised alongside better support for farmers to move to niche and protein crops. New baseline regulations should help the transition away from basic rotations.

¹⁶ <https://www.soilassociation.org/media/24941/saving-our-soils-report-dec21.pdf>

Sustainable Farming Scheme

- 5.13** Elements of many of the Soil Association's 'Saving our Soils' policy actions are contained in the Sustainable Farming Scheme: proposed scheme outline (2024).
- 5.14** With proper guidance and data safeguards, UA3: Soil Health Planning could create a valuable national soil dataset, benefiting the SFS and enhancing soil regulation. Farmers' concerns about data privacy must be addressed to encourage uptake of the SFS.
- 5.15** Soil test results will also require interpretation to ensure that appropriate management responses and potential SFS actions are identified. The SFS should provide guidance to help all farmers in the scheme understand soil structure and soil biology if these are assessed, and to signpost to further sources of advice and SFS Optional and Collaborative actions.
- 5.16** There is a clear need and opportunity to turn Universal layer plans and reports into actions, such as through the Optional and Collaborative layer. Without this, the level of ambition of a number of Universal actions will remain similar to regulatory baselines in Wales or elsewhere in the UK.
- 5.17** As such, alongside the need to 'ratchet up' their requirements over time, such as to include requirements to assess other indicators of soil health (eg earthworm numbers and a Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure), the overall effectiveness of the soil standards will rely on the ambition of other SFS requirements, and how the scheme is delivered as a whole. Payment rates and advisory support for practices like nutrient and pest management and support for organic farming will be crucial for promoting soil-focused farm practice.
- 5.18** Similarly, opportunities to reduce risks to vulnerable soils could be delivered by Universal Action 13: Tree Planting and Hedgerow Creation Opportunity Plan if guidance and mapping involves soil types and vulnerabilities, plus topography and potential nutrient and soil runoff pathways, to suggest parts of the farm where tree planting or hedgerow expansion could deliver benefits for soil health.
- 5.19** SFS support for organic farmers (and conversion to organic) will be crucial, particularly to provide support for farmers to transition to sustainable farming practices in catchments where soils and water are at risk from the cumulative impacts of agricultural intensification. We welcome the rollover of Organic Support Payment in 2025, but the sector needs clarity around what support will be available in the SFS in 2026.
- 5.20** Current soil health regulations mainly target individual issues in a fragmented manner. A 2020 study by the University of Sheffield and ADAS found that while farmers recognised the importance of sustainable soil management, few applied a wide range of practices

holistically. Since farms are complex systems, future soil regulations and SFS support will be more effective if delivered using a whole farm system approach.

5.21 We suggest that further protection of soils in Wales could be achieved through SFS requirements towards maize growing, a high risk crop for soil erosion. The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) notes that much of Wales is regarded as marginal for maize growing, being wetter and more exposed than much of England.

National Minimum Standards

5.22 We believe the current regulatory framework across Wales is too fragmented and we supported the Agriculture White Paper (2020) proposals to consolidate existing legislation under a set of National Minimum Standards (NMS), applicable to all farmers and land managers in Wales regardless of whether they choose to enter the SFS. This will provide a level playing field across Wales and will ensure that the SFS is not undermined by farming businesses that are not participating.

5.23 We wish to see a commitment to develop an NMS framework. There are potential risks to soils, water, and biodiversity arising from further intensification of agriculture if farmers choose not to participate in the SFS. Furthermore, value for public money is reduced if SLM gains secured through scheme payments are offset by regulatory failure to control damaging practices or pollution on the same farm or elsewhere.

5.24 Within the Basic Payment Scheme's Cross Compliance framework a regulatory baseline for soil is provided by Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC). GAECs 4 (minimum soil cover), GAEC 5 (managing land to limit soil erosion) and GAEC 6 (maintenance of soil organic matter) represent the minimum standards of protection against soil loss and damage to soil health. We support recommendation 6 of the recently published statutory review of the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations: 2025 to bring GAEC 5 (managing land to limit soil erosion) into regulation within 18 months. However, GAEC 4 (minimum soil cover) is a non-statutory standard and gains function from Cross Compliance. GAEC 4 should be brought into the SFS and subsequently into NMS (alongside other soil-related regulation) to maintain protection against soil loss across Wales.

6. The potential for legal frameworks and targets for soils

6.1 Welsh Government's support for the Global Biodiversity Framework requires cutting nutrient losses to the environment by half and pesticide losses by two-thirds by 2030. While the SFS may help, Wales lacks a binding soil health target and national soil strategy to drive lasting progress.

6.2 It is welcome that Welsh Government have invested in soil monitoring in the last 10 years through the Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme

and have established a Soil policy evidence programme to review evidence of the condition of Welsh soil and how agricultural practice is affecting it.

- 6.3 Wales does not yet have a dedicated soil strategy and soil action plan. The publication timeline for Welsh Government’s Soil Policy Statement is currently unclear. The statement will set out Welsh Government’s “vision for the sustainable management of agricultural soils for future generations”¹⁷.
- 6.4 We suggest an overarching vision should refer to all soil, acknowledging the importance of soil in urban and non-agricultural locations. These soils are often overlooked by policy, and due to lack of knowledge and understanding by managers are at risk of degradation.
- 6.5 The Well-being of Future Generations Act national indicator for 'Concentration of carbon and organic matter in soil,' is a key metric, as it reflects soil health, fertility, and its ability to sequester carbon, thus contributing to climate change mitigation.
- 6.6 However, Well-being indicators and a Soil Policy Statement alone are not enough. A comprehensive soil strategy and action plan that includes the policy, monitoring and investment is required to ensure that all soils in Wales are managed in a way that improves their health and productivity, supports biodiversity, and contributes to climate change mitigation.
- 6.7 Section 4 of the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 requires the Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish indicators and targets to measure progress towards achieving the SLM objectives. We would like to see a soil health target and indicators included in this suite.

¹⁷ [Soil management | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/soil-management)

Soil Health in Agriculture

NFFN Cymru's response to the Senedd's [Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee](#) inquiry into [soil health and agriculture](#).

Key Points

- Healthy soils provide **multiple benefits** for food production, the environment and wider economy, whilst poor soil health has a **negative impact**.
- Welsh soils face **numerous threats** and have witnessed recent **negative trends**.
- Soil health **monitoring** should include physical and biological properties alongside chemical analysis to ensure the long-term resilience of agricultural systems.
- The **Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS)** must support and reward farmers to implement regenerative farming techniques and nature-based interventions to improve soil health.
- The importance of **advice and guidance** for farmers to improve soil health is paramount for the successful transition towards more sustainable and resilient agricultural systems.
- While standalone **soil health legislation** is a future possibility, strengthening existing environmental **regulations** and embedding soil health more firmly within agricultural **support** mechanisms are likely near-term pathways.
- There are strong arguments for **establishing targets** for agricultural soil health in Wales, however there are considerations and challenges that need addressing.

1. The role and state of soils in agricultural systems

Agricultural soils are of vital importance and provide a host of services and benefits.¹

- **Foundation for Food Production:** Soils provide the essential medium for plant growth, supplying water, nutrients, and physical support for crops and grasslands which underpin livestock farming.
- **Nutrient Cycling:** Healthy soils are vital for the natural cycling of nutrients, making them available to plants and reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers.
- **Water Regulation:** Soils play a key role in storing and filtering water, influencing water availability for plants and helping to regulate water flow, reducing the risk of flooding and drought.
- **Carbon Storage:** Agricultural soils, particularly grasslands and peat-rich areas, are significant carbon sinks, playing a crucial role in climate change mitigation by storing atmospheric carbon.
- **Biodiversity Support:** Soils are a habitat for a vast array of organisms, from microbes to invertebrates, which contribute to soil health and ecosystem functioning.
- **Supporting Ecosystem Services:** Healthy agricultural soils contribute to broader ecosystem services such as clean water and air.

Whilst there are positive aspects to agricultural soil health in Wales, our soils face numerous threats and have witnessed recent negative trends.

Positive aspects:²

- **High Soil Organic Carbon (SOC):** Welsh agricultural soils, particularly under permanent grassland and peat, tend to have higher levels of SOC compared to the European average. This is beneficial for carbon storage and overall soil health.
- **Grassland Dominance:** Most of Wales' agricultural land is permanent grassland, which is generally considered to be at a lower risk of soil degradation compared to arable land.
- **Stable Soil Carbon in Improved Land:** Data suggests that soil carbon levels in improved grassland have remained stable over the past 30 years.

Negative aspects:

- **Soil quality:** Has deteriorated across all habitats apart from woodlands where there has been some improvement.³
- **Peatlands:** While important for carbon storage, drained or degraded peatlands can be a source of greenhouse gas emissions. 75% of peatlands have in some way been impacted, turning them from carbon sinks to carbon sources.²
- The latest ERAMMP National Trends and Glastir Scheme Evaluation Report highlights soil health concerns in Wales;⁴
 - A 2 to 4 fold increase in the number of improved soils with nutrient levels above recommended levels risking leaching to water courses. 8% in arable and 17% of improved soils now exceed the recommended levels.
 - 8% decrease in topsoil carbon concentration in arable soils
 - A 6-32% increase in soil compaction reducing resilience to drought, increasing risk of both rapid runoff and nitrous oxide emissions – the latter a potent greenhouse gas.
 - 72% of Improved Grassland sites fall below the minimum soil acidity levels when productivity may be reduced
 - The Glastir agri-environment had few positive benefits for soil with a couple of exceptions including an increase in topsoil carbon concentrations in 3 of the 19 habitats
- **Economic impacts:** The annual cost of soil degradation in England and Wales is an estimated £1.2 billion. This is mainly linked to loss of organic content of soils (47% of the total cost), compaction (39%) and erosion (12%).⁵

Identified threats and areas of concern:⁶

- **Compaction:** Around 40% of Welsh soils are considered potentially vulnerable to compaction. Damage from heavy machinery and livestock, on intensively managed grasslands or even in set-stocked extensive systems, and during wet conditions, is a significant threat. This can reduce water infiltration (contributing towards flooding), aeration, root growth and thus yield.
- **Erosion:** About 7% of Wales' land is susceptible to high erosion rates, and this risk is greatest during high intensity rainfall events. This leads to loss of topsoil and nutrients, and can negatively impact water quality. There is overall a low risk of soil erosion, however erosion is highly localised and intense resulting in hotspots where significant soil loss can occur.

- **Loss of Soil Organic Matter (SOM):** Levels are a key indicator of soil health. While generally stable in Wales according to recent data, maintaining and enhancing SOC is crucial for long-term soil health and carbon sequestration.
- **Land Use Change:** Conversion of permanent grassland to other uses can negatively affect soil properties.
- **Agricultural Intensification:** The main pressures and threats to soil biodiversity are the intensification or higher productivity systems using higher inputs (such as synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, sewage sludge and herbicides),⁷ whilst carbon losses may be caused by intensification of the management of grassland.⁸
- **Climate Change:** Predicted to impact soil wetness, carbon, biology, compaction, erosion, and overall agricultural capability.

To conclude, while a significant portion of agricultural soils in Wales are currently in good condition, there are specific threats and areas where improvement is needed. Maintaining and enhancing soil health is crucial for the sustainability of Welsh agriculture, its contribution to environmental goals, and its resilience to climate change.

2. Monitoring of soil health

Traditional soil analysis packages measure;

- pH: measures the acidity or alkalinity of the soil
- Available Phosphorus (P)
- Available Potassium (K)
- Available Magnesium (Mg)

These elements are essential to optimize crop and pasture growth. This information is important for farmers to make informed decisions about fertilizer application, ensuring that crops receive the nutrients they need without over-fertilizing, which can be detrimental to the environment.

However, standard soil testing provides an incomplete picture of soil health as these tests measure the *plant-available* or *extractable* portion of nutrients, which is a small fraction of the total amount present in the soil. As such farmers are often advised to achieve optimum soil nutrient levels by applying synthetic inputs (N, P, K). This feeds the *plant*, rather than feeding the *soil*. However farmers can significantly improve their soil health without relying on external inputs by focusing on regenerative agriculture principles and nature-based solutions (this is explored further in section 4). Healthy soils, characterized by a diverse community of microorganisms, well-developed soil structure, and adequate organic matter content, create an environment where insoluble macronutrients like phosphorus and potassium can be effectively mobilized and taken up by plants.^{10, 11, 12, 13} This highlights the importance of maintaining and improving soil health for sustainable plant nutrition and reducing the reliance on external inputs.

As our understanding of soil health evolves, there's a growing recognition that focusing solely on these soluble nutrient forms is insufficient. A more holistic assessment requires incorporating physical and biological assessments.

- ***Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure (V ESS)*:** This relatively simple, on-farm assessment provides a rapid indication of soil structural quality, identifying issues like compaction, poor aggregation, and anaerobic conditions. Training and resources are needed to enable widespread farmer adoption.

- [Water Infiltration Test](#): Simple field tests to measure how quickly water soaks into the soil can indicate structural issues and water-holding capacity.
- [Earthworm Counts and Diversity](#): Earthworms are key indicators of soil biological health. Simple field counts can be conducted by farmers, and more detailed diversity assessments can be done in the lab.
- [Bulk Density and Porosity](#): Measuring the weight of a known volume of soil (bulk density) and calculating the pore space provides insights into compaction and aeration. This could be incorporated into standard soil testing packages.
- [Soil Respiration](#): Measuring the rate of carbon dioxide release from the soil indicates microbial activity and overall biological function. Lab-based methods exist, and simpler field kits are becoming available
- [Aggregate Stability](#): This assesses how well soil aggregates hold together when subjected to water or physical stress, which is crucial for understanding erosion risk and water movement.

In conclusion, while traditional soil testing and monitoring in Wales is useful, it doesn't provide a complete picture. By integrating physical and biological assessments alongside traditional chemical analyses, leveraging technology, empowering farmers with knowledge and tools, and creating supportive policy frameworks, we can gain a much richer understanding of our soil resources and work towards more sustainable and resilient farming systems.

3. Classification of soils for land use

The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system, which Wales shares with England, is the main framework for classifying agricultural land quality. Its primary function is to assess the long-term limitations of land for agricultural use based on physical and chemical characteristics.¹⁴ Land is classified into five grades, with Grade 1 being the best quality and Grade 5 the poorest:

Grade 1: Excellent quality agricultural land with very few limitations.

Grade 2: Good quality agricultural land with slight limitations.

Grade 3a: Good to moderate quality agricultural land.

Grade 3b: Moderate quality agricultural land.

Grade 4: Poor quality agricultural land with moderate limitations.

Grade 5: Very poor quality agricultural land with severe limitations, often suitable only for permanent pasture or rough grazing.

There are many positives to this approach, particularly for its role in strategic land use planning and protecting higher quality agricultural land from development. It is also a well-established and understood system within the planning and agricultural sectors.

However, there are limitations to this approach.¹⁵

- **Outdated Climate Data:** A significant criticism is that the climate data used in the ALC dates back to 1941-1980 and doesn't account for recent climate change impacts, potentially overestimating the quality of some land.

- **Limited Scope:** The ALC primarily focuses on the inherent physical limitations for agricultural production and doesn't fully integrate aspects like soil health (biological and physical properties beyond structure and texture), carbon sequestration potential, or other ecosystem services beyond food production.
- **Generalised Maps:** Predictive ALC maps provide a strategic overview but aren't accurate enough for site-specific assessments, requiring detailed surveys for planning applications.

For modern agricultural needs with increasing focus on sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, and soil health, the ALC's limitations in these areas become more apparent. There's a growing need for a more integrated approach to soil assessment that considers a wider range of soil functions. To be more fit for purpose in the context of modern agricultural and environmental challenges, there's a need to complement the ALC with enhanced monitoring and assessment of physical and biological soil health indicators. Integrating these aspects into future policy and potentially refining the ALC system itself would provide a more holistic understanding of Wales' soil resources and support more sustainable land management decisions.

4. The policy and legislative mechanisms to protect soils and productive land

While Wales currently lacks specific, standalone legislation solely dedicated to soil health, soil is protected through a combination of environmental regulations and the framework of agricultural support schemes.

1. **The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023** is a significant piece of legislation that lays the groundwork for protecting soils in Wales, although it doesn't contain specific, direct regulations solely focused on soil health in the same way as air or water. The effectiveness of this protection will depend on the detailed implementation of the SFS and the ambition of the indicators and targets set by the Welsh Government
2. **The Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS):** While not strictly a regulatory framework, it aims to incentivize farmers to adopt practices that deliver environmental benefits, including soil health.
3. **The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021:** This piece of legislation is aimed at preventing water pollution from agricultural sources. While the primary focus is water quality, it has implications for soil health.
4. **Environment (Wales) Act 2016:** This Act promotes the sustainable management of natural resources, which includes soil. It places a duty on public bodies to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems, which are intrinsically linked to healthy soils.
5. **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:** This Act sets out seven well-being goals for Wales, including a "Resilient Wales" which emphasizes maintaining and enhancing a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems. Soil health is a fundamental component of this goal. The Act also includes a national indicator on the "*concentration of carbon and organic matter in soil*," highlighting its importance.

The Welsh Government has undertaken evidence reviews on soil and is developing a draft soil policy statement,^{16,17} which could pave the way for more targeted legislation or regulations in the future. However, while standalone soil health legislation is a future possibility, strengthening existing environmental regulations and embedding soil health more firmly within agricultural support mechanisms are likely near-term pathways. The ongoing development and implementation of the SFS in Wales will play a key role in shaping the future management and state of agricultural soils in the country. Ensuring that the SFS provides sufficient incentives and support for farmers to adopt comprehensive soil health management practices will be crucial.

Nature Based Solutions for Soil Health

The SFS must support and appropriately fund farmers to implement nature-based interventions and management techniques to improve soil health.¹⁸

- **Planting cover crops:** Cover crops enhance soil health by increasing organic matter, improving soil structure, promoting nutrient cycling, and reducing erosion.^{19, 20}
- **Pasture species diversity:** Higher plant diversity in grasslands is associated with improved soil measures, including soil moisture, carbon, nutrient recycling and uptake, and biodiversity.^{21, 22, 23, 24}
- **Regenerative grazing:** Strategically managing grazing and rest periods, often referred to as rotational or mob grazing means that plant roots grow deeper, increasing soil organic matter, improving soil structure, and enhancing water infiltration.^{25, 26, 27}
- **Agroforestry:** By integrating trees into agricultural systems, farmers can enhance soil structure, fertility, and water infiltration, while also reducing soil erosion.^{28, 29, 30}
- **Organic fertilizers and Composting:** This significantly benefits soil health by increasing soil organic matter, improving structure, and enhancing biological activity. This leads to better nutrient availability, water retention, and overall soil resilience.^{31, 32, 33}

Importantly, these nature-based solutions can help farmers reduce reliance on bought in inputs such as feed and synthetic fertilizers, reducing costs and reducing environmental impacts.

Soil Health Planning and Monitoring

While soil testing requirements under the SFS Universal Layer proposes to focus on potassium (K), Phosphorous (P), Magnesium (Mg), pH and soil organic matter; higher-tier actions could incentivize farmers to undertake more comprehensive soil health assessments that include physical and biological indicators, as discussed in the previous answer. As the SFS evolves, specific Optional or Collaborative actions that demonstrate significant soil health benefits could, over time, become prerequisites to entering the SFS Universal Layer, particularly if their uptake is insufficient to meet national goals.

Farmers will need training and accessible resources (field guides, online tools, workshops) to confidently conduct visual assessments and simple biological tests, as well as interpreting the results. The data collected from careful observation of soil structure, water infiltration, and plant health through enhanced monitoring are essential for making informed management decisions and tracking the impact of different practices on overall soil health.

Advice and Guidance

Many of the sustainable farming practices promoted by the SFS (e.g., soil health management, agroforestry, precision nutrient management, biodiversity enhancement) require specific knowledge and skills. Access to expert advice will be vital for farmers to implement these practices correctly and achieve the desired outcomes for soil health. Furthermore, it often takes time for soil health to improve significantly, and farmers may need support and patience during the transition. Soil health is a multifaceted concept encompassing biological, chemical, and physical properties, and many farmers may not have a comprehensive understanding of these interactions and how their management practices impact them. Advice can demystify these complexities and highlight the importance of a holistic approach.

- **Best Practice Guidance:** Advice services can provide up-to-date information on the most effective and efficient ways to implement sustainable soil health practices, drawing on research and practical experience.
- **Tailored Advice:** Farms in Wales are diverse in terms of size, type, and environmental context. Generic advice may not always be sufficient. What works on a lowland dairy farm may not be suitable for an upland sheep farm. Tailored guidance, considering individual farm circumstances, will be crucial for successful implementation
- **Learning from Experience:** Guidance can facilitate knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer learning, allowing farmers to benefit from the experiences of others who have successfully improved their soil health
- **Problem Solving:** As farmers adopt new practices, they may encounter challenges. Access to advice can provide solutions and support to overcome these hurdles.
- **Regenerative and nature-based interventions:** As mentioned previously, soil health advice often recommends applying synthetic fertilizers to reach target nutrient levels for specific crops or grassland. Advice should shift towards a more integrated approach that considers soil health more broadly, incorporating aforementioned regenerative farming techniques and nature-based interventions.

The importance of advice and guidance for farmers to improve soil health in Wales is paramount for the successful transition towards more sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. Without this crucial support, the widespread adoption of soil health-enhancing practices and the achievement of national environmental goals will be significantly hindered.

5. The potential for legal frameworks and targets for soils.

While explicit, legally binding targets for agricultural soils across Wales are not yet fully defined, the framework is in place for their potential development in the future. The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 provides a strong legal foundation for prioritizing sustainable land management, including soil health. The five-yearly Sustainable Land Management reports mandated by the Act could set out broader targets for soil health across Wales based on collected data and progress towards the SLM objectives.

There are strong arguments for establishing targets for agricultural soil health in Wales:

- **Measures Progress:** Quantifiable targets allow for the monitoring of soil health improvements or declines over time, enabling the assessment of policy effectiveness and the identification of areas needing more attention.
- **Informs Policy and Funding:** Targets can help justify and direct funding for soil health initiatives within the SFS and other relevant policies.
- **Drives Farmer Engagement:** Well-defined and achievable targets, coupled with appropriate advice and support, can motivate farmers to adopt soil-friendly practices. The proposed SFS with its universal soil testing requirement could provide a baseline for future target setting.

However there are considerations and challenges in setting soil health targets.

- **Complexity of Soil Health:** Soil health is influenced by numerous interacting factors (physical, chemical, and biological), making it challenging to define and measure with single, simple targets. A suite of indicators may be necessary.
- **Spatial Variability:** Soil types, climate, and land management practices vary significantly across Wales, meaning that uniform national targets may not be appropriate. Regional or soil-type specific targets might be needed.
- **Data Availability and Monitoring:** Robust and consistent data on soil health across Wales is crucial for setting meaningful targets and tracking progress. While ERAMMP provides valuable data, more comprehensive and farm-level data collection may be required. The SFS's soil testing could contribute to this.
- **Farmer Acceptance and Practicality:** Targets need to be realistic, achievable, and developed in consultation with farmers to ensure buy-in and practical implementation.

If targets were to be implemented, they could focus on various aspects of soil health, such as:

- **Soil Organic Matter (SOM):** Increasing SOM levels across different agricultural land types. Indicator 13 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 already monitors the concentration of carbon and organic matter in soil, providing a foundation for more specific targets.
- **Soil Structure:** Improving indicators of soil structure, such as aggregate stability and visual evaluation scores (VESS).
- **Soil Biodiversity:** Monitoring earthworm populations or other indicators of soil biological activity.
- **Nutrient Management:** Reducing nutrient surpluses and improving nutrient use efficiency.
- **Soil Erosion:** Reducing the rate of soil loss from agricultural land.
- **Soil Compaction:** Decreasing the area of agricultural land affected by compaction.

The ongoing development of the SFS provides a key opportunity to integrate soil health considerations and potentially lay the groundwork for future target setting, building upon existing monitoring efforts and the knowledge gained through the scheme's implementation.

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Farmers' Union of Wales response to a Senedd Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee inquiry on soil health in agriculture

11th April 2025

About the FUW

The Farmers' Union of Wales (FUW) was established in 1955 to exclusively represent the interests of farmers in Wales. Since 1978 the union has been formally recognised by UK Governments, and subsequently by Welsh Governments, as independently representing those interests.

The FUW's Vision is *thriving, sustainable, family farms in Wales*, while the Mission of the Union is *To advance and protect Wales' family farms, both nationally and individually*, in order to fulfil the Union's vision.

In addition to its Head Office, which has thirty full-time members of staff, the FUW Group has around 80 members of staff based in twelve regional offices around Wales providing a broad range of services for members.

The FUW is a democratic organisation, with policies being formulated following consultation with its twelve County Executive Committees and eleven Standing Committees.

General comments

The majority of the themes covered by this inquiry are addressed by the FUW's response to a Welsh Government consultation on its Draft Soil Policy Statement in 2022 (Appendix 1). Therefore, in addition to the further comments below, we would refer members of the Committee to Appendix 1 as well as the Soil Carbon and Baseline recommendations of the Sustainable Farming Scheme Carbon Sequestration Panel summary.¹ The full report is expected to be published on the Welsh Government website ahead of the committee's oral evidence sessions.

The role and state of soils in agricultural systems

Farmers in Wales manage a range of different soil types, even within their own farming systems. Soils themselves are influenced to varying degrees by previous and current management practices, underlying geology, soil structure, microbiota, weather, and increasingly, climate change. Furthermore, different soils can react differently to management practices, making

¹ [Sustainable Farming Scheme: Carbon Sequestration Evidence Review Panel: summary report | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/sustainable-farming-scheme-carbon-sequestration-evidence-review-panel-summary-report)

standardised policies, measuring and management techniques difficult (for example, the impact of tree planting on organo-mineral soils and sandy soils' soil carbon content).

Figure 1: An overview of Wales by a) land cover [1], b) agricultural land classification land quality (Predictive ALC Version 2) [2], c) elevation [1] and d) major soil groups [3].

MMH is 'mountain, moorland and heath'; BMV stands for 'Best and Most Versatile' land; SW is 'surface water' and GW is 'ground water'.



Figure 1 (taken from the Welsh Government's review of evidence on Welsh soils).²

There is an estimated 410 Megatonnes of carbon stored in Welsh soils³. Whilst farmers in Wales manage soils ranging from arable land to peatland, the vast majority of farmland use is permanent pasture or upland rough grazing. This often-undervalued habitat acts as a huge soil organic carbon store in Wales (SOC)⁴, subject to very little disturbance in comparison to land used for arable, horticulture, forestry or development purposes. Yet, current private carbon sales only value 'new and additional' sequestration^{5,6}, and payments are often higher for creating new

² [Welsh Soil Evidence Review](#)

³ Russell, S., Blackstock, T., Christie, M., Clarke, M., Davies, K., Duigan, C., Durance, I., Elliot, R., Evans, H., Falzon, C., Frost, R., Ginley, S., Hockley, N., Hourahane, S., Jones, B., Jones, L., Korn, J., Ogden, P., Pagella, S., Pagella, T., Pawson, B., Reynolds, B., Robinson, D., Sanderson, B., Sherry, J., Skates, J., Small, E., Spence, B. and Thomas, C. (2011). Chapter 20: Status and Changes in the UK's Ecosystems and their Services to Society: Wales. UK National Ecosystem Assessment: Technical Report. [Assessment of Welsh Soil Issues in Context](#)

⁴ [Welsh Soil Evidence Review](#)

⁵ [Regenerate Outcomes](#)

⁶ [Getting paid for carbon](#)

habitat through Government schemes, as opposed to valuing existing carbon stocks, their protection and enhancement. This means farming practices which have protected and maintained their soil carbon stores (and habitat value) are often at a disadvantage for obtaining further funding.

This lack of disturbance and sustainable management through livestock is reflected in recent research compiled by the Welsh Government's Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme (ERAMMP), which demonstrated no changes in national topsoil carbon⁷, in contrast to England. However there was a loss within Arable soils (-7.7%). Arable farmland in England is now seeking the re-integration of livestock to restore their soil organic matter levels⁸.

The importance of soil health (particularly soil organic matter- SOM) for providing multiple benefits cannot be understated. It impacts our ability to produce food, recycle nutrients, filtrate water, store carbon, and support biodiversity. However, there is a shift underway within agricultural practices, as the science and understanding around the biological element of soils is developing, alongside how management techniques can directly and indirectly influence these factors. Historic policies and agricultural businesses have focused on dramatically increasing production via chemical means (artificial fertilisers). However, both the scientific and practical implications of the role of mycorrhizal fungi, SOM, root exudates, the sustainable use of inputs and the impact of grazing management and rest on soil health, soil carbon and achieving optimum productivity is now increasingly understood.

The high costs and market volatility of manufactured fertilisers, the direction of agricultural support policies, and an uplift in farmer to farmer knowledge exchange^{9,10,11}, alongside biological soil consultants is enabling this shift.

This means the adoption of both new and old management techniques such as no or minimum tillage, ensuring diversity of species and deep rooting plants, mob/cell/holistic planned grazing, consideration of anthelmintic use, and outwintering or bale grazing.

The vast majority of Welsh farmland inadvertently follow the five rules of 'regenerative agriculture'¹² - don't disturb the soil, keep the soil surface covered, keep living roots in the soil (depending on the grazing implemented), grow a diverse range of crops (unimproved or semi-natural grasslands have the highest diversity, unless abandoned¹³) and integrate livestock. However, the supply chain and Government-led schemes still lack recognition and reward for ensuring the long term viability and good health of soils. Soil health is a long term investment, however, short tenures, annual Government funding cycles and pressure on tight profit margins makes this long term vision, and implementation, challenging to balance against annual

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<https://erammp.wales/sites/default/files/2025-03/Report%20105.%20Wales%20National%20Trends%20and%20Glastir%20Evaluation.pdf>

⁸ https://www.soilassociation.org/media/25271/sa_ex-livestock_3_web.pdf

⁹ [Pasture for Life](#)

¹⁰ [Regenerative agriculture training, webinars and course in the UK — Regenerate Outcomes](#)

¹¹ [Da Byw](#)

¹² [Principles of Regenerative Agriculture - Groundswell](#)

¹³ [Species-rich grasslands management - Farming for Nature](#)

profitability, in addition to understanding the complexities of soil carbon.

Monitoring of soil health

There is a huge array of soil modelling, research and papers written on Welsh soils via the ERAMMP and Soil Policy Evidence Programme.^{14,15,16}

Yet, the vast majority of this data and detail is not communicated back to the farmers managing these soils, representing a missed opportunity for engagement, knowledge sharing and monitoring. However, accurate and cost-effective monitoring of soil carbon through comparable and repeatable measurements is challenging at the farm-level.

The engagement potential is illustrated well in Northern Ireland's Soil nutrient Health Scheme. The largest baseline soil sampling programme ever undertaken has had a 92% farmer uptake, in part due to the delivery of farm-level, and field-level soil data on fertility and carbon stocks, with accompanying LIDAR run-off risk maps and above-ground biomass maps.¹⁷

The Carbon Panel recommended that Welsh Government makes improvements to its soils monitoring programme to ensure it meets United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) compliant standards to assess soil carbon to a minimum of 30cm, (as opposed to 15cm) recognising that good practice involves sampling to 1m or the bedrock.

Farming Connect currently have an ongoing Welsh Soil project, seeking to understand the carbon content of soils under different management intensity across Wales¹⁸, using a selection of the demonstration network farms. However, comparing averages can be challenging as was reflected in a First Milk and University of Leeds study. The study showed carbon stocks in permanent pastures varying from 35-350 tonnes of Carbon per hectare¹⁹.

Soil sampling has been supported via various Government-led schemes, including Farming Connect. Farmers also pay for their own soil sampling to ensure lime, slurry and fertiliser applications are optimal, or to identify mineral deficiencies which may impact on livestock health. However, the results collected through Government-funded schemes are not noted against fields or farms²⁰ (such as on RPW Online) due to data sharing technicalities, but rather compiled according to geographical area. They have historically included nutrient indices tests only (P, K & Mg, and also pH), but are now being expanded to incorporate biological factors such as soil organic matter and structure.

The soil testing of field parcels that receive inputs is proposed as a Universal Action within the upcoming Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

¹⁴ [Soil & Peat | ERAMMP](#)

¹⁵ [Soil function maps resource review](#)

¹⁶ [Soils | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

¹⁷ [Soil Nutrient Health Scheme | Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute](#)

¹⁸ [Farming Connect Demonstration Network - Welsh Soil Project](#)

¹⁹ [On farm carbon capture - Knowledge Transfer Partnerships](#)

²⁰ [Summary of Farming Connect Soil Results 2023/2024](#)

New markets and companies are taking advantage of this appetite from farmers to understand their soils, particularly carbon levels and the ability to increase (or decrease) their levels, via sales from soil carbon credits. Examples include Agreeena, Soil Capital, Trinity AgTech and Regenerate Outcomes - but many will take a significant cut of any credits generated, both in order to pay for the soil carbon baselining and monitoring, in addition to profit.

Applications (paid for) are also available to guide farmers through soil sampling and monitoring, such as Soil mentor²¹, which allow you to plot results, observations and photos against GPS field locations, and to benchmark them against other farms. However, at current prices, they are not widespread or widely used.

Soil structure can also be assessed by farmers via the 'Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure'²² steps, simply using a spade out in the field. Worm count tests can also be done in the field, which give a good indication of organic matter²³.

Classification of soils for land use

(Please see the Soils Policy Statement response)

The FUW endorses the need to protect agricultural soils classified as the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) for sustainable food production, given the challenge of conflicting profitability of different land uses, long term food security, and the increase in population predicted over the next decades, amid increasingly unstable geo-political trade.

However, other grades of land should not be disregarded or left unprotected for food production. Climate change is adding increasing stress to soil health on all types of land, particularly arable land which is generally classified as BMV. This is due to challenging growing conditions and extreme weather, which causes increased compaction or the loss of microbial activity due to drought, or increased levels of pests and pathogens from warmer, wetter weather. This will increase the need for other grades of land to 'fill the gap', whilst delivering on various other land use demands such as biodiversity, energy generation, carbon sequestration and development.

It should also be recognised that using land classifications can often be a blunt tool for determining the appropriateness of certain land areas for other uses such as tree planting or development. The FUW has previously questioned the Welsh Government's intentions to plant 'less productive areas' of Wales with trees given that the areas of Wales categorised as Less Favoured Areas (LFA) and Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDA) are 79% and 56% respectively, and therefore for many farming business the entire farming system will consist of land classified as Grade 3 or lower. When determining the appropriateness of different land

²¹ [Soilmentor](#)

²² <https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/how-to-assess-soil-structure>

²³ <https://soils.vidacycle.com/soil-tests/1-1-earthworms/>

areas for other agricultural or non-agricultural purposes, the FUW maintains that socio-economic and wider environmental factors must also be considered on an equal basis.

The policy and legislative mechanisms to protect soils and productive land (including the Sustainable Farming Scheme, National Minimum Standards and planning policy (amongst others))

The potential for legal frameworks and targets for soils

(Please see the Soils Policy Statement response for an outline of existing policy and legislative mechanisms farmers work within)

A singular Soil Carbon Code²⁴ is desperately needed, to standardise measuring, modelling, permanence requirements and provide governance around selling Carbon credits from soils. The soil carbon credit market is still considered somewhat of a 'Wild West', whereas there are established codes for Woodlands and Peatlands. Yet, it offers a unique opportunity for farmers to increase carbon sequestration, implement soil and grazing management practices which benefit biodiversity, water quality and soil health, alongside earning a potential new income and helping to reduce GHG emissions.

The challenge with setting targets for soils is their variability and establishing current (and varying) baselines. However, in general, increasing Soil Organic Matter is a good ambition due to the multiple benefits it provides, although some areas will have high existing levels already (such as permanent pastures or habitats in good condition). A farm scale study at 'North Wyke' showed how interrelated Soil Organic Carbon stocks were with various other environmental and productivity indicators, correlating positively with water discharge quality, botanical diversity, liveweight gain and stocking densities.^{25,26}

As outlined in our response to the Welsh Government consultation on its Draft Soil Policy Statement, any additions to the current legal framework around soils must consider all types of land management and impacts on soil.

Whilst previous Cross Compliance requirements regarding the management and protection of agricultural soils were in 'return' for the Basic Payment Scheme payment, it is possible that these requirements are introduced as part of a regulatory baseline for all farmers..

The Control of Agricultural Pollution review has also recommended that these (Cross Compliance) requirements are replicated within the regulations. Any steps to bring such measures into regulation would benefit from industry consultation, to ensure they are practical and implementable. The Environmental (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) Bill will also seek to further strengthen environmental governance, compliance and targets. Soil

²⁴ <https://sustainablesoils.org/soil-carbon-code/about-the-code>

²⁵ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1751731118000502?via%3Dihub>

²⁶ [Key Research Findings](#)

health also crosses over into the Sustainable Land Management objectives and the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 objectives, therefore any targets or legal frameworks for soils should be incorporated into these existing pieces of work.

It is important to emphasise the challenge for farmers having to comply with these regulations and expectations, whilst competing against other agri-food imports produced to far lower environmental standards.



Farmers Union of Wales' feedback on the draft soil policy statement

4th October 2022

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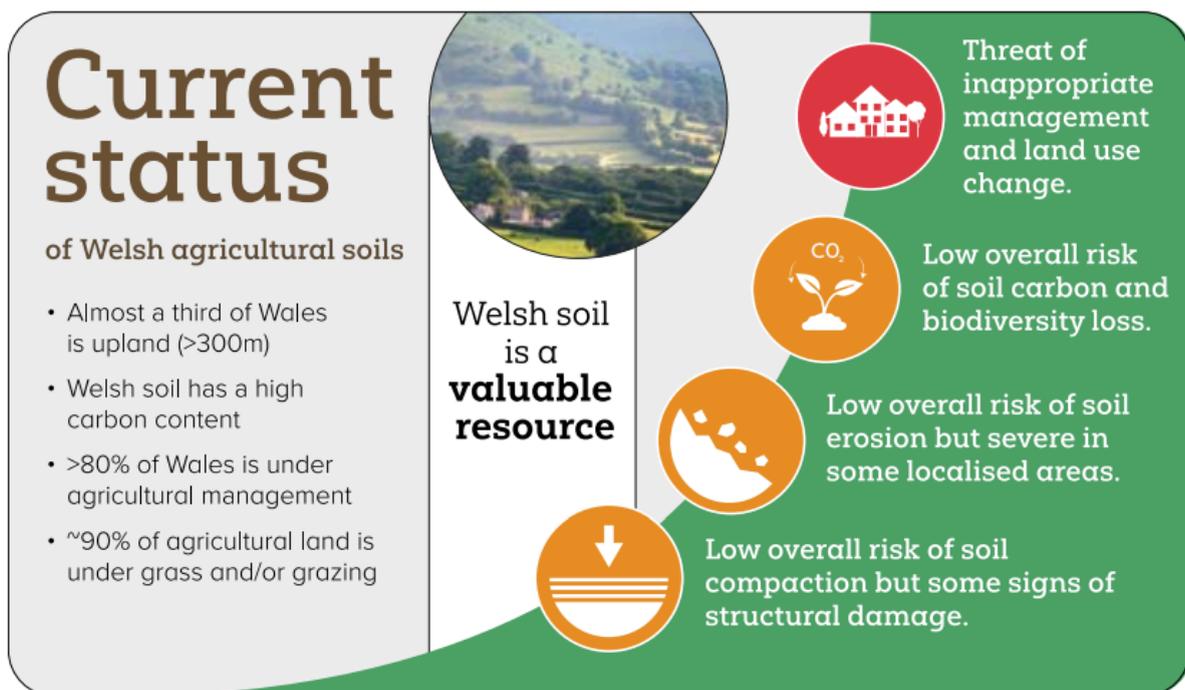
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Farming the Welsh Way

The Welsh Soil Evidence Review¹ is a welcome, useful review and a generally positive document which highlights the soil health benefits arising from the “Welsh Way”² of farming. Farming permanent grasslands (>80% of agricultural land in Wales), with mixed (cattle and sheep grazing together) and rotational/seasonal grazing (graze and rest systems, or summer/winter only hill grazing systems) on soils with a ‘higher greater carbon content than most soils in England and Europe’ all contribute towards;

- keeping soils covered
- a consequently low risk of soil erosion
- high soil organic matter content which contributes towards better water infiltration rates, higher carbon sequestration, and healthier soil microbiology and soil fertility

However, the review recognises the risks to soil health associated with land use change (such as afforestation, development or conversion to arable), inappropriate management (such as compaction) and climate change.



Insufficient consultation period to create a shared vision

The Welsh Government has aimed to gather feedback from farmers on the draft soil policy statement in order to ‘ensure it is fit for purpose and represents a shared vision for soil policy

¹ [Welsh Soil Evidence Review & https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-08/review-welsh-soil-evidence-executive-summary_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-08/review-welsh-soil-evidence-executive-summary_0.pdf)

² [The Welsh Way](#)

in Wales'. However, the FUW would argue that despite the importance of this work, the consultation period has not been transparent enough to ensure this is a genuinely shared vision.

For example, the draft statement was shared only three weeks before the deadline for comment, which has not given the FUW sufficient time to consult fully with its members in respect of its democratic structure. In addition, the small workshops held in September consisted of farmers who had noticed the sign up call during the week prior to the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show makes it difficult to ensure that a wide cross section of farmers were consulted, especially given the soil policy needs to be fit for all farmers.

The key objectives were therefore arguably not shaped by those farmers or land managers who are managing soils every day, and who are most directly influenced by either support or regulations relevant to soils.

However, the FUW appreciates that the Sustainable Farming Scheme co-design has taken priority during this period. The FUW would therefore appreciate the opportunity to share the Welsh Government's response to this feedback with its county branches. Nevertheless, the comments provided below have been compiled from longstanding policies of the FUW.

A soil policy should be holistic

In addition, it is appreciated that the focus of the soil policy statement is on agricultural soils due to 80% of the land in Wales being managed for agriculture. However, that does not necessarily mean that agricultural soils are those with the highest risk of soil degradation. On the contrary, the review recognises the low risks that most of this management poses to soil degradation, therefore, a holistic soil policy should incorporate all land uses, especially those which result in more soil disturbance than permanent pastures - such as forestry (*“Activities associated with afforestation such as planting, management and harvesting disturb soil and can cause soil carbon loss during first rotation forestry”*³ [108]), housing, road building, and renewable energy plants.

Existing soil protection, regulation and the impact of competition on farming standards

The FUW welcomes the development of a soil policy and an increased focus on soil health, however, the statement claims 'there is no soil protection policy in Wales'. Conversely, farmers have to comply with a number of rules relating to soils in order to access financial support via the Basic Payment Scheme. For example,

³ D. Berdeni, J. Williams, and J. Dowers, "Assessment of the impact of tree planting on Welsh organo-mineral soils," Soil Policy Evid. Program. Rep., 2020.

- Cross compliance: rough surface soil guidance⁴
- GAEC 4: Minimum soil cover⁵
- GAEC 5: Managing land to limit soil erosion⁶
- GAEC 6: Maintenance of soil and organic matter⁷

Currently, managing soils in this way in addition to producing food is supported via the Basic Payment Scheme (which makes up around 80% of Welsh farmers' income). However, the Agriculture (Wales) White Paper⁸ proposed to make these rules 'National Minimum Standards'. Therefore, all farmers, regardless of whether they are in receipt of any subsidies, will have to comply with these regulations or risk civil sanctions against them.

Whilst Welsh farmers are proud of the high environmental and animal welfare standards Welsh food is produced to, there is a risk, particularly with liberalised trade deals being struck with large agri-exporters⁹ that UK agriculture will be undercut, or undermined by the produce being imported. The costs incurred with complying to these higher standards, or the production reduction means that raising the regulatory baseline for Welsh farmers may simply serve to make them uncompetitive at their current level of production, and consequently offshore the UK's environmental footprint to other countries, whilst becoming more dependent on imported food.

Therefore, if the liberalisation of free trade agreements and unfair competition continues, the Welsh Government will need to provide additional support for farmers to ensure environmental standards are upheld and farmers are able to stay competitive. Therefore, the FUW proposes the following changes to the objectives.

Rewarding farmer-led soil health enhancement - alternative objectives

The current objectives proposed are:

Maintain and enhance the soil resource, soil functions and services by:

1. Reducing soil degradation

- Maintain and enhance soil organic matter
- Minimise soil erosion
- Minimise soil compaction
- Foster soil biodiversity

2. Exchange knowledge on the value and vulnerability of soil

- Enhance effective enhance of knowledge between farmers, decision makers and

⁴ [Cross compliance: rough surface soil guidance](#)

⁵ [Cross compliance: minimum soil cover \(GAEC 4\) \(2020\)](#)

⁶ [Cross compliance: managing land to limit soil erosion \(GAEC 5\) \(2015\)](#)

⁷ [Cross compliance: maintenance of soil and organic matter \(GAEC 6\) \(2022\)](#)

⁸ [Agriculture \(Wales\) White Paper](#)

⁹ [Farmers' Union of Wales \(FUW\) submission to a Senedd Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs inquiry into the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement](#)

scientists

3. Maintain and develop soil monitoring and modelling

Additional monitoring of soil at local scales

Feedback outcomes to land managers to support farming decisions

The FUW proposes amending these objectives to enable more direct support to farmers for management actions they can take, or are currently undertaking, to enhance soil health.

For instance, the title of the first objective '*reduce soil degradation*' is at odds with the current low evidence of soil degradation on agricultural soils across Wales as a whole. 'No direct evidence for measured erosion rates'... 'grassland is generally considered to be at a low risk to soil degradation'. This gives an unjustified negative impression of agricultural soil management in Wales.

Furthermore, whilst administering and coordinating knowledge exchange, and undertaking additional monitoring are important and valuable objectives, they do not provide direct financial support for on-farm actions to enhance soil health enhancement or cover soil protection measures (as outlined is needed in Section 4.)

Therefore, the FUW would argue for the key objectives to be amended to:

Protect soil organic matter levels

- a) It is important to place an emphasis on protecting and maintaining soil organic matter (SOM) content in Wales, particularly due to its value as a large carbon store. Whilst in some instances, soil organic carbon (SOC) is at an equilibrium of emissions/sequestration in soils with existing high SOM levels (and therefore does not represent an active carbon sink) it is still a highly valuable and large carbon store in Wales (the total soil carbon stock in Wales is 410 Mt, with grasslands storing a large proportion of this). As the review emphasises, '*it is of national and global importance that this carbon is retained*'.
- b) Therefore, maintenance and protection measures supported by the Government are essential, particularly as any carbon market payments in the future will only value and pay for **new and additional** carbon sequestration.
- c) Placing an emphasis on the protection and maintenance of permanent pastures would also value the current agricultural management outlined in Section 1, whilst putting in place measures to avoid compaction (such as track infrastructure and water trough placement as practised on many dairy farms) or erosion, protection of peatlands, and preventing the soil carbon loss from afforestation onto organo-mineral soils.

Enhance soil organic matter levels

- a) SOM is the best indicator of carbon storage and sequestration, water retention and ease of infiltration, population and diversity of soil biota and accessibility of plant micro and macronutrients. Whilst SOM levels are typically high in Wales, there are multiple (and public) advantages to increasing these levels¹⁰, many of which would reflect the Sustainable Land Management outcomes the new Sustainable Farming Scheme is aiming to achieve¹¹ (see graphic below).

2.2 Sustainable Land Management Outcomes

The Scheme sets out a range of actions farmers can undertake. However, it is important we make a clear connection between these actions and the outcomes they are seeking to deliver. These are:



Clean air

Air which has limited pollution (human made particles and harmful gases) including fine particulate matter, ammonia and non-methane volatile organic compounds.



Mitigate flood and drought risk

Farms prepare for periods of low or high rainfall, reducing the risks to the farm and communities from flooding, drought and coastal erosion.



Clean water

The water environment (including inland water) is sustainably managed to support healthy communities, flourishing businesses and biodiversity.



Protected natural landscapes and historic environment

Conserve and enhance natural beauty, cultural heritage and the historic environment.



Enhanced access and engagement

People are more easily able to enjoy the countryside for health and wellbeing benefits.



Reduced greenhouse gas emissions

Farms reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, through making efficient use of fuel and energy, minimising external inputs and having productive livestock and crops.



High animal health and welfare

Animals are healthy, productive and have a good quality of life.



Resilient ecosystems

Maintaining and enhancing the resilience of ecosystems delivering benefits for biodiversity, species and habitats.



Maximise carbon storage

Creating new and enhancing existing carbon stocks on farms.



Resource efficient

Taking a circular approach by keeping resources and materials in use for as long as possible and avoiding waste.

- b) This could include supporting the management actions outlined in the Welsh Soil Evidence review which increases SOM such as; rotational grazing/seasonal grazing/graze and trample and rest management, deeper

¹⁰ [Rotational grazing shown to increase soil organic matter on Welsh farm](#)

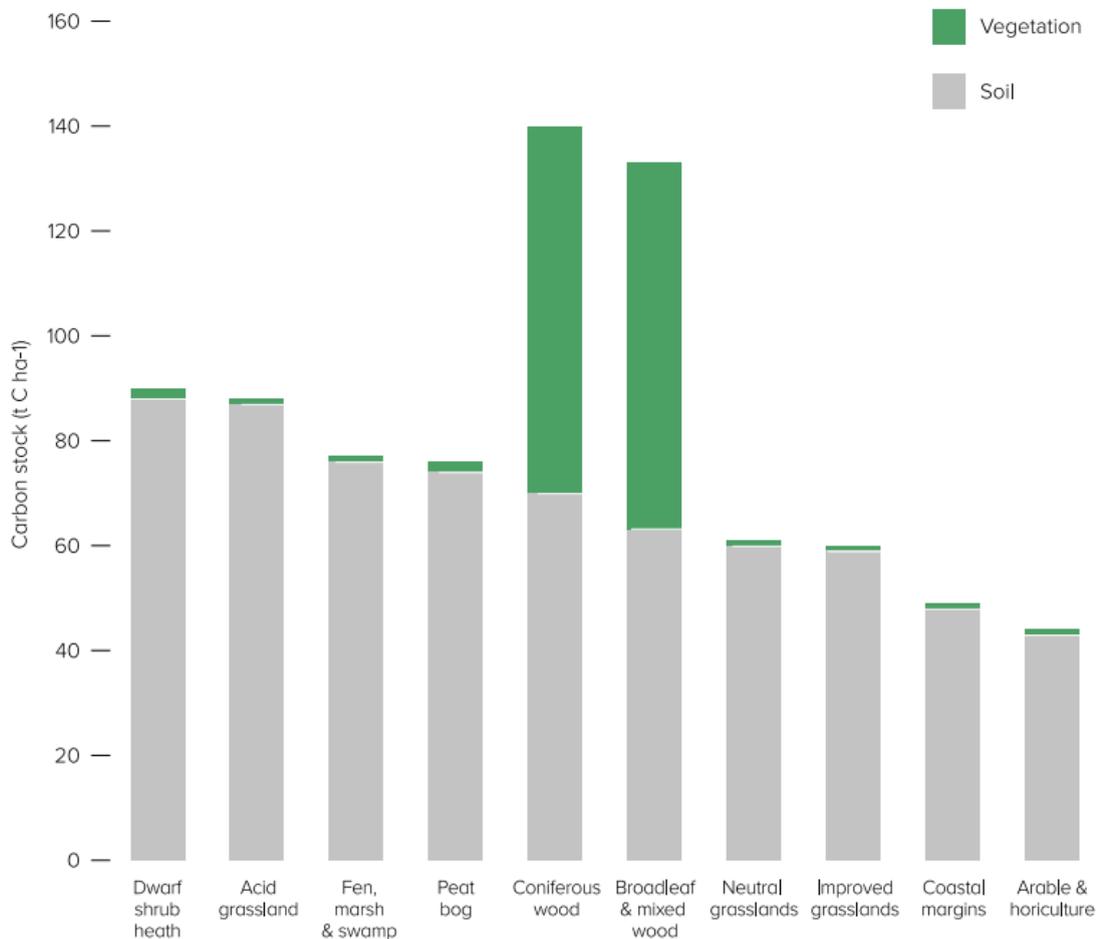
¹¹ [Sustainable Farming Scheme Outline Proposals for 2025](#)

rooting and more diverse grass species (whether through allowing native species to grow taller and set seed, or reseeded deeper rooting and mixed species leys into improved grasslands), increasing nitrogen fixing species, ensuring an efficient use of nutrients/inputs, minimum tillage etc.

- c) Increasing tree/woody cover has also been identified as a way to increase SOM when including trees on arable land due to the extensive litter, rooting and carbon inputs, however there is a risk of carbon **loss** when planting on high carbon soils, such as peat and organo-mineral soils. Therefore care must be taken not to apply this as a blanket policy to increase SOM/SOC. For example, whilst net carbon sequestration may increase due to the additional biomass within the tree/hedgerow cover (Figure 11), the Welsh Soil Evidence Review states that it can **decrease** the SOC levels (*Other studies have shown a decrease in topsoil carbon 14 years after planting trees in pasture in England [119] or no change in SOC or soil N 26 years after converting permanent grassland to silvopasture or woodland in Northern Ireland [120].) & 'adjacent grassland had a total SOC stock comparable to ancient woodland, which indicated that, for these sites, woodland creation on pasture had little benefit for soil carbon sequestration compared to woodland creation on former arable land [116].)* However, it is recognised that different benefits will arise such as increased crop yields due to reduced wind stress, livestock shelter, improved soil structure from rooting depth, and moderation of temperature extremes.

Figure 11: The soil and vegetation carbon stock in different habitats

Data ^[57] is from 15 cm deep soil samples in England. Woodland vegetation data is from 50-year-old average rotations.



d) Furthermore, the FUW believes there should be more of an emphasis within the soils policy statement on the **management of grasses and livestock to improve soil health and soil biodiversity**. The agricultural industry in Wales is already a leader in developing grass species¹², grassland management and in sustainable livestock management¹³, and therefore there is great potential in harnessing the existing experience and knowledge to further improve SOM and its associated benefits. Yet, the Welsh Soil Evidence review makes limited, or purely negative references to this potential - they state '*a major threat to soil biodiversity is the intensification and extensification of agricultural management*' (which seems contradictory as extensive livestock systems are generally seen as the opposite of intensive management), whilst then admitting that '*Limited evidence currently exists on trends in soil biodiversity in Wales*'.

e) For example, **plant/grassland diversity is a key driver of SOC formation and storage**. '*High plant diversity enhances SOC storage by elevating*

¹² [Aberystwyth celebrates 100 years of grass breeding at IBERS](#)

¹³ [Perfecting the Welsh Way](#)

*belowground carbon (i.e., root biomass and root exudates) inputs (13, 14) and promoting microbial growth, turnover, and entombment of necromass (15). Maintaining consistently high levels of biodiversity and root carbon inputs is essential for enhancing SOC storage and persistence in grasslands (Fig. 1)*¹⁴ The actions outlined in 2b could help encourage greater diversity into our grasslands, and value those which are already diverse.

- f) Furthermore, **‘grazing management and biodiversity restoration can provide low-cost and/or high-carbon-gain options for natural climate solutions in global grasslands. The achievable SOC sequestration potential in global grasslands is 2.3 to 7.3 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per year (CO₂e year⁻¹) for biodiversity restoration, 148 to 699 megatons of CO₂e year⁻¹ for improved grazing management, and 147 megatons of CO₂e year⁻¹ for sown legumes in pasturelands.**¹⁵¹⁶ The FUW would argue these potential gains for Wales should not be dismissed, particularly due to their potential to create multiple benefits, nor impact negatively on food production.
- g) There is inconsistency and a lack of clarity in the review about the impact of stocking densities on soil health. Whilst it is understood that, like machinery, livestock can create compaction issues under certain conditions, however, grazing management can also be used to improve soil health and biodiversity. ‘Light grazing’ is referred to within the review in one section (6.3) as a reduction of stocking rates, and stated to be the most beneficial for soil carbon in grasslands. However, within the global analysis referenced, light grazing is used in the context of seasonal or rotational grazing, with other studies recommending high stocking densities in some instances to trample organic matter into the soil, and encourage growth to increase photosynthesis¹⁷. This implies that the rest period was more crucial than the stocking rate.
- h) Reductions in grazing, and the resultant loss of vegetation structure – for example through the dominance of species such as purple moor grass (molinia) - has had adverse impacts for species such as golden plover and other waders, including curlew¹⁸ - now considered the most pressing bird conservation priority in the UK. Moreover, a more recent study found that trebling sheep numbers led to the largest increase in species diversity on mountain land compared with either the removal of sheep or the introduction of cattle.¹⁹ Similarly, analysis by Plantlife has shown that more than half of all wild plants need regular management or disturbance to thrive, and that 39.6%

¹⁴ [Grassland soil carbon sequestration: Current understanding, challenges, and solutions | Science](#)

¹⁵ [Grassland soil carbon sequestration: Current understanding, challenges, and solutions | Science](#)

¹⁶ [Pasture for Life: A solution to global warming](#)

¹⁷ [Managing Grazing to Restore Soil Health, Ecosystem Function, and Ecosystem Services](#)

¹⁸ Changing livestock numbers in the UK Less Favoured Areas – an analysis of likely biodiversity implications, RSPB, December 2012

¹⁹ Long-term impacts of changed grazing regimes on the vegetation of heterogeneous upland grasslands, Pakeman, R. J. et al., Journal of Applied Ecology (2019)

of species would decline within a decade if the land on which they grow is abandoned, while 16.4% would decline within 1-3 years under such circumstances.²⁰

- i) The review also reveals that in the past 30 years, whilst topsoil carbon was stable in improved land, it **decreased in habitat land** (and increased in woodland). Potentially the lack of livestock dynamics and disturbance has stalled this increase. Whilst the soils review is a comprehensive and detailed review, this area needs far more attention and research.

Increase farmer knowledge of soil management (including through gathering iterative data)

- a) As recognised in the draft soil policy statement, knowledge exchange between farmers, and knowledge transfer between experts and farmers is a powerful tool for improving the management of soils. Many farmers are already part of grazing groups, discussion groups and organisations which drive forward their performance.
- b) The FUW believes there is a great opportunity within the new Sustainable Farming Scheme and the proposed Sustainability Review to **pay farmers for the on-farm data they provide**, particularly as the Soils Review identifies many areas where more detailed and localised data is required. However, the data should then inform farmers as to what management support/capital costs/advice is needed from the Sustainable Farming Scheme payments based on the data, therefore, providing more **targeted support** and ensuring the data results in direct action/maintenance. Farmers already provide detailed data by completing the Single Application Form on an annual basis via RPW Online, and much more could be done to provide this data **back** to farmers, enabling benchmarking between farms in order to ensure there is an annual, iterative and useful process of data provision.
- c) Many farmers are undertaking carbon audits, however, the lack of consistency between calculators, particularly regarding carbon sequestration rates such as from soil, is a barrier to engagement. If the Welsh Government provided consistent, comparable and simple KPIs/proxies for carbon as part of the Sustainability Review, it would provide a large amount of useful data for both farmers and the Government, and begin the process of carbon auditing for many farmers.
- d) In addition, demonstrating the business value of soils is an important aspect of knowledge transfer, particularly as soils under agricultural management are not managed in isolation to the business (see objective 4). For instance nutrient management cost savings/optimisation, value of dung beetles/earthworms, the impact of soil compaction on productivity, value of

²⁰ [Rewilding, July 2019](#)

liming etc. Many soil health indicators (such as compaction, earth worm counts) could also be incentivised and tested by farmers themselves, as opposed to being presented in a report, which would also increase knowledge and engagement in soils.

Sustainable Farming Scheme proposals relevant to soils:

(U) Carry out professional and farmer soil testing at Scheme entry and in time for contract renewal to include a combination of:

- Nitrogen (N), Potassium (P), Phosphorous (K), Carbon and pH
- a biological measure e.g. eDNA, respiration counting 'proxy' species (earthworms)
- a physical assessment e.g. infiltration rate, bulk density or Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure (VESS).

(U) Submit nutrient accounts and evidence covering N, P, K, C and pH.

(O) Optional Actions which impact a farm's nutrient use and soil condition can be found throughout this document, including actions to:

- supplement applied nitrogen with nitrogen fixing plants (establishing mixed swards, planning rotations, cover cropping)
- establish leys and crops with varied rooting profiles (establishing mixed swards, crop rotations, cover cropping)
- improve soil biology (diverse planting, graze and rest practices, minimum or no till, use of anthelmintic plants to reduce wormer usage, habitat management)

(C) Support for farmers to work together in a catchment to improve water quality.

(FC) Farming Connect will provide support for:

- soil sampling
- technical advice to interpret results and use it to benefit their farm and the environment
- farmer-led learning on soil health.

Ensure soil policy, regulation and support enhances, and does not damage, the economic sustainability of family farms

- a. 80% of the land in Wales is managed by farmers. Therefore, the management of soils is inextricably linked with the farming businesses and their economic viability and business decisions. They are dependent on each other. The potential negative impacts of market competition, pressure on standards and a higher regulatory baseline to both farming businesses and the health of soil are outlined above, therefore, including this objective would ensure that policies are not designed in isolation to these important considerations.
- b. Any policies which influence farming businesses must also consider the significant contributions such families make to Wales' economy, culture,

language and jobs - factors which are all underpinned by ensuring that farming enterprises remain financially sustainable.

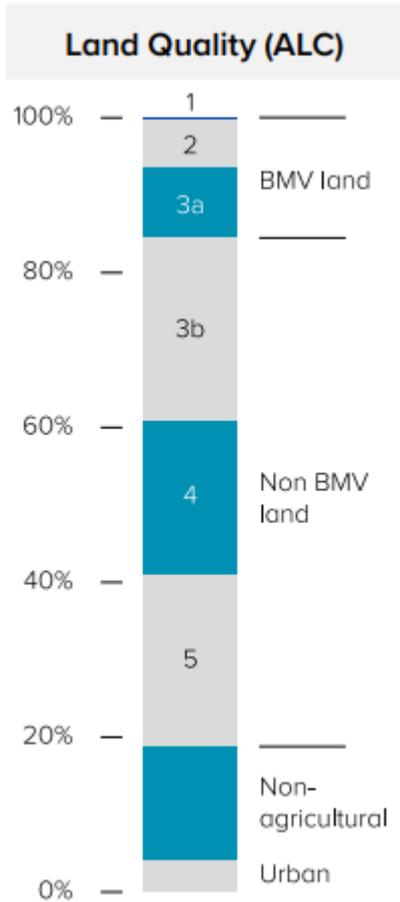
Additional considerations

The impacts of the Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 on soils in Wales must be taken into consideration.

The FUW has, on a number of occasions, raised concerns regarding the impact these regulations will have on grazing management and stocking densities. It is evident that the loss of upland and hill reared suckler herds would result in the decline in species diversity and therefore the regulations in their current form go against a longstanding policy of the Welsh government to support farmers through environmental schemes such as Glastir to graze cattle in recognition of the benefit it provides for biodiversity.

Furthermore, these regulations in particular will place significant pressure on cattle farmers to empty their stores before the closed period and spread as much as possible within the limits after the closed period to ensure that storage capacity limits are not exceeded, rather than spreading at the optimal time in regard to weather conditions, soil and crop requirements.

Consideration should also be given to protecting the Best and Most Versatile land for agriculture (10-15% of land in Wales), particularly as there will be more challenging growing conditions in the future. There will undoubtedly be pressure on BMV land from urban, mineral and land-based renewables, development and afforestation, however, the FUW would argue that food security in the future must be safeguarded.



To: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Date: April 2025

Cc: Ref:
Contact:
Tel:
Fax:
Email:

NFU Cymru Submission to Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee Inquiry into soil health in agriculture

- 1 NFU Cymru is pleased to provide written evidence to the Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee inquiry into soil health in agriculture.
- 2 NFU Cymru champions Welsh agriculture and represents farmers throughout Wales and across all sectors. NFU Cymru's vision is for a productive, profitable and progressive farming sector producing world renowned climate-friendly food in an environment and landscape that provides habitats for our nature to thrive with Welsh food and farming delivering economic, environmental, cultural, and social benefits for all the people of Wales whilst meeting our ambition for net zero agriculture by 2040.
- 3 The importance of the farming industry in rural Wales cannot be over-stated. Welsh farming businesses are the backbone of the Welsh rural economy, the axis around which rural communities turn. The raw ingredients that we produce are the cornerstone of the Welsh food foundation sector, a sector which has now grown to reach a turnover of £9.3 billion whilst employing 228,500 people, the equivalent to 17% of Wales' total workforce.¹
- 4 Welsh farmers also play a key role in maintaining and enhancing our natural environment – Wales' key asset. Farming activity supports a diverse range of species, habitats, and ecosystems, provides a range of ecosystem services including flood alleviation, carbon sequestration, climate change mitigation; and delivers the significant backdrop for Wales' tourism and recreation sector worth an estimated £2.5 billion annually.
- 5 Our rural and agricultural communities are also strongholds for the Welsh language and culture, with census figures showing that 43% of those involved in agriculture (farmers and farm workers)² speak Welsh as opposed to around 19% of Wales' wider population. By safeguarding the future of Welsh agriculture and our rural communities we, therefore, help safeguard the future of our language and culture.
 - **The role and state of soils in agricultural systems**
- 6 Good soil health is crucial to the future of Welsh food production, meeting ambitious net zero commitments and delivering for the environment. Healthy soils reduce flood risk, support habitats and biodiversity and the sequestration and storage of carbon.

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/welsh-food-and-drink-industry-grows-10>

² <https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/sites/farmingconnect/files/documents/laith%20y%20Pridd%20report.pdf>

- 7 Farmers have long recognised the value of their soils to their farming businesses. The naturally variable characteristics have been one of the most significant factors in shaping local and regional land use.
- 8 Welsh Government's Soils Evidence Programme commissioned ADAS to undertake an assessment of Welsh soil issues in context³ in 2019. This identified that agricultural management is the major controllable factor influencing soil condition as 85% of the land area of Wales is utilised for agriculture. This assessment determined that many soils in Wales remain in good condition and are at a low risk of degradation under current agricultural management, which is dominated by permanent grassland (i.e. grassland not ploughed for >5 years). Welsh Government's Soil Evidence Review⁴ identified that '*the current land use, soil and climate combination in Wales is favourable to minimising widespread risks and threats to soil from degradation processes such as erosion, compaction, and loss of biodiversity*'.
 - 9 At farm level, a combination of knowledge, research and technology drives an increasingly sophisticated and diverse range of management strategies which are making soils more resilient and sustainable such as different grazing regimes, cultivation techniques and companion cropping.
 - 10 There is a need to recognise, however, that soil is an extremely complex system and there is still much to be researched and learned on a practical scale. This makes soil management inherently complex. Variables like weather conditions, cropping, point in the rotation, time of testing, soil type and topography mean that actions which drive a measurable improvement in soil health in one year, do not the next. Improving soil health is fundamentally a long-term process, and progress may be difficult to measure so trends over time are much more important than short-term absolute measures.
 - 11 Whilst progress is being made, farmers are increasingly aware of the link between good soil management and productivity and the need to protect and enhance this precious resource for all the beneficial services it provides, particularly in the context of a changing climate which, could, for example, lead to an increased risk of soil erosion due to extreme weather events.
- **Monitoring of soil health**
 - 12 Monitoring and measuring soil health is key to sustainable soil management. Many farmers already routinely test and assess soil fertility using professional soil testing services and use the data to maintain or improve crop and livestock productivity, as well as environmental benefits.
 - 13 Key indicators of soil health include chemical, physical and biological characteristics such as levels of organic matter / carbon, nutrient balance, pH level, earthworm count, soil structure and biodiversity. Interactions with water are also important so drainage, water retention and compaction are also indicators of healthy soils that farmers consider.
 - 14 There is still much to learn about how soil contributes to productivity, biodiversity and climate change. More work is needed to assess the impact of specific soil management practices on physical, chemical and biological soil health.
 - 15 NFU Cymru supports investment in soil management research and innovation from both the public and private sector. Soil management practices need to be evaluated for their impact on physical, chemical and biological soil health and any research developed should be easily accessible to farmers.

³ [Assessment of Welsh Soil Issues in Context](#)

⁴ [Synthesis of Welsh Soil Evidence](#)

- 16 Research also needs consider the role of soil amendments like the land-spreading of biochar and enhanced mineral weathering which have the potential to capture carbon, their long-term interaction with soil ecology needs to be evaluated before possible inclusion within soil management policy.
- 17 There are opportunities for the uptake of new technologies like drones, satellite imagery and DNA sequencing to aid soil monitoring. The industry is ready to take advantage of these technologies. Soil testing should be affordable and accessible to give a true picture of the high variance of soil types at farm and field parcel level.
- **Classification of soils for land use**
- 18 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) is a scientific system used to assess how good land is for growing crops. In Wales, around 10-15% of the land area is classified as BMV (Best and Most Versatile land) for agriculture defined by ALC grade classes 1, 2 and 3a and is '*conserved as a finite resource for the future*' within Planning Policy Wales⁵. The Welsh Soil Evidence Review identifies that 75% of land in Wales has an ALC grade of 3b, 4 and 5 (non-BMV) which is less capable of arable cropping.
- 19 However, there is a need to recognise that agricultural production in Wales is largely characterised by grass-based livestock systems, producing high-quality protein and in the context of predicted challenges to our global food production systems, where food production systems elsewhere are expected to face greater challenges due to climate change impacts, we believe Wales has a social responsibility to contribute to global food security.
- 20 On this basis, and in the context of the multiple and increasing pressures on land use in Wales, NFU Cymru believes greater protection should be afforded to safeguard all agricultural land and our agricultural productive capacity in the future. Land is a finite resource and NFU Cymru restates our ask for a decision-making framework to guide land use change decisions so that the long-term effects to food production and wider economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts can be properly assessed.
- **The policy and legislative mechanisms to protect soils and productive land (including the Sustainable Farming Scheme, National Minimum Standards and planning policy (amongst others))**
- 21 NFU Cymru believes that with the right support and incentives, there are opportunities to further enhance soil management on Welsh farms, but only if we avoid overly prescriptive, simplistic and restrictive approaches. We are clear that 'one size fits all' approach is challenging and could be detrimental to soil health.
- 22 For example, Part 2 of the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations 2021, places limits on the application of livestock manures which leads to an increasing reliance on inorganic manufactured fertilisers. The regulation is perverse, works against net zero and circular economy principles and prevents farmers from making the best use of organic fertilisers with impacts for soil organic matter. It is important to recognise that the Survey of Fertiliser Practice⁶ shows a long-term decline in overall application rates of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potash since 1983 and, in the context of the historically high costs of manufactured inorganic fertilisers and availability challenges, farmers are looking at alternative ways of providing nutrients to their soils to maintain soil fertility.

⁵ [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12](#)

⁶ [fertiliseruse-annualreport2223-18jul24.odt](#)

- 23 Protection for soils is also provided for through the current Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) which requires farmers to follow a set of requirements set out in Cross Compliance⁷. This includes GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition) and SMR (Statutory Management Requirements). There are a number of GAEC and SMR that deliver direct and indirect benefits for soil health, for example, SMR 1: Water Protection, SMR 10: Restrictions on Plant Protection Products, GAEC 4: Minimum Soil Cover, GAEC 5: Managing land to limit soil erosion and GAEC 6: Maintenance of Soil Organic Matter.
- 24 In the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): Proposed Scheme Outline⁸ published in November 2024, Welsh Government indicates that the Transition Period for the phase out of the BPS will be 2026-2029. Cross Compliance will, therefore, continue to be in place for BPS participants throughout this period.
- 25 Welsh Government has also confirmed they expect Cross Compliance to form part of the regulatory baseline for the Sustainable Farming Scheme commencing in 2026.
- 26 Through the Sustainable Farming Scheme farmers will receive a Universal Payment in return for undertaking Universal Actions (UAs). In addition, to the regulatory baseline and the proposed Universal Code, there are a number of Universal Actions that support further progress in the management of soils including UA3: Soil Health Planning, UA5: Integrated Pest Management and UA7: Habitat Maintenance.
- 27 Action will be dependent on widespread uptake of the scheme by farmers and NFU Cymru is clear that more work is needed to ensure the scheme is attractive to all farmers in Wales, irrespective of sector and location. It is also vital that the SFS provides the same level of certainty and stability to farm businesses as the BPS does currently.
- 28 Subject to budget, the Optional Action and Collaborative Action layers of the Scheme will provide additional opportunities for action on soil health, including on peatlands which cover 90,000 hectares (4.3% of the land area) and the largest terrestrial store of carbon in Wales. The scheme must include a focus on capital support to allow farmers to invest in soil management measures and the latest technologies and equipment recognising that practices such as liming and drainage repair deliver productivity and environmental benefits.
- 29 The requirement to share data on soils with Welsh Government through UA3: Soil Health Planning has emerged as a key concern from farmers. This could ultimately act as a barrier to scheme uptake. Farmers have expressed a lack of confidence that there are robust safeguards and governance in place providing protection for any soil data supplied. For example, in the face of Freedom of Information or Environmental Information Regulation provisions.
- 30 Whilst we recognise the potential to aggregate farm level data to gain valuable insights into macro trends in soils health, this potential will only be realised if farmers are provided with appropriate ownership and control over what data is shared and how their data is utilised. This is a key aspect of scheme design yet to be resolved.
- 31 In respect of wider regulation, there is a need for clear and enforceable regulations and assurance schemes to prevent contamination of soil by materials like composts, digestates and sewage sludges. These materials must be kept free of contaminants such as glass, metal, plastics and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other harmful substances. In particular, there must be efforts to prevent such materials from entering waste streams in the first place.

⁷ [Cross compliance 2024 | GOV.WALES](#)

⁸ [Sustainable Farming Scheme: proposed scheme outline \(2024\) | GOV.WALES](#)

- 32 Sensible regulation of voluntary carbon offset markets could also play a role in helping maintaining and improving soil health. The developing market in voluntary carbon offsets presents both opportunities and long-term implications for agriculture. Farmers need to have confidence that the rules and standards of the market are fair and accessible and that the Sustainable Farming Scheme can work alongside private finance to incentivise action to build further carbon stocks as well as reward the maintenance of existing stores. As custodians of organic matter and carbon already in the soil - Welsh soils are estimated to contain 410 million tonnes of carbon⁹ – farmers would like to see the conservation and maintenance of these stores properly rewarded.
- 33 Overall, NFU Cymru does not support further regulation for farming in relation to soils. NFU Cymru's survey¹⁰ of farmers for the four-yearly Statutory Review of the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations brought to life the 'on the ground' issues relating to the implementation of the regulations introduced in 2021. NFU Cymru is clear that an Independent Review is now urgently needed to consider the cumulative burden of regulation on farm businesses.
- **The potential for legal frameworks and targets for soils**
- 34 The key challenge for establishing legal frameworks and / or targets for soils lies in their inherent variability. There are 183 different soil series in Wales¹¹. We concur with Welsh Government's Soils Evidence Programme assessment of soil issues¹² that highlighted that there are a number of challenges associated with regulating soil, which mainly relate to: the establishment of baseline and / or target values for soil properties.
- 35 Regional and local variation would have to be accounted for in any metrics used to measure sustainability. This variation can extend down to the field scale, and the results of many of these must be considered in relative terms when used to assess trends in pH, structure, organic matter and mineral content. On this basis, NFU Cymru would seriously question the feasibility of establishing legal frameworks and / or targets for soils.
- 36 To conclude, NFU Cymru would place on record our thanks to the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to its inquiry into soil health. We look forward to giving oral evidence to the Committee in due course.

****End****

⁹ [SoNaRR2020 Aim 1 assessment](#)

¹⁰ [nfu-cymru-evidence-submission-review-of-coap-december-2024.pdf](#)

¹¹ [Synthesis of Welsh Soil Evidence](#)

¹² [Assessment of Welsh Soil Issues in Context](#)



Iechyd Pridd ym Maes Amaethyddiaeth

29/04/2025

Mae pridd yn adnodd gwerthfawr yn ecolegol ac yn economaidd sy'n cynnal bywyd ac yn darparu amrediad o wasanaethau ecosystem i Gymru.

Mae'r papur hwn yn rhoi rhagor o dystiolaeth ar gyfer sesiwn graffu Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig y Senedd ar Iechyd Pridd ym Maes Amaethyddiaeth.

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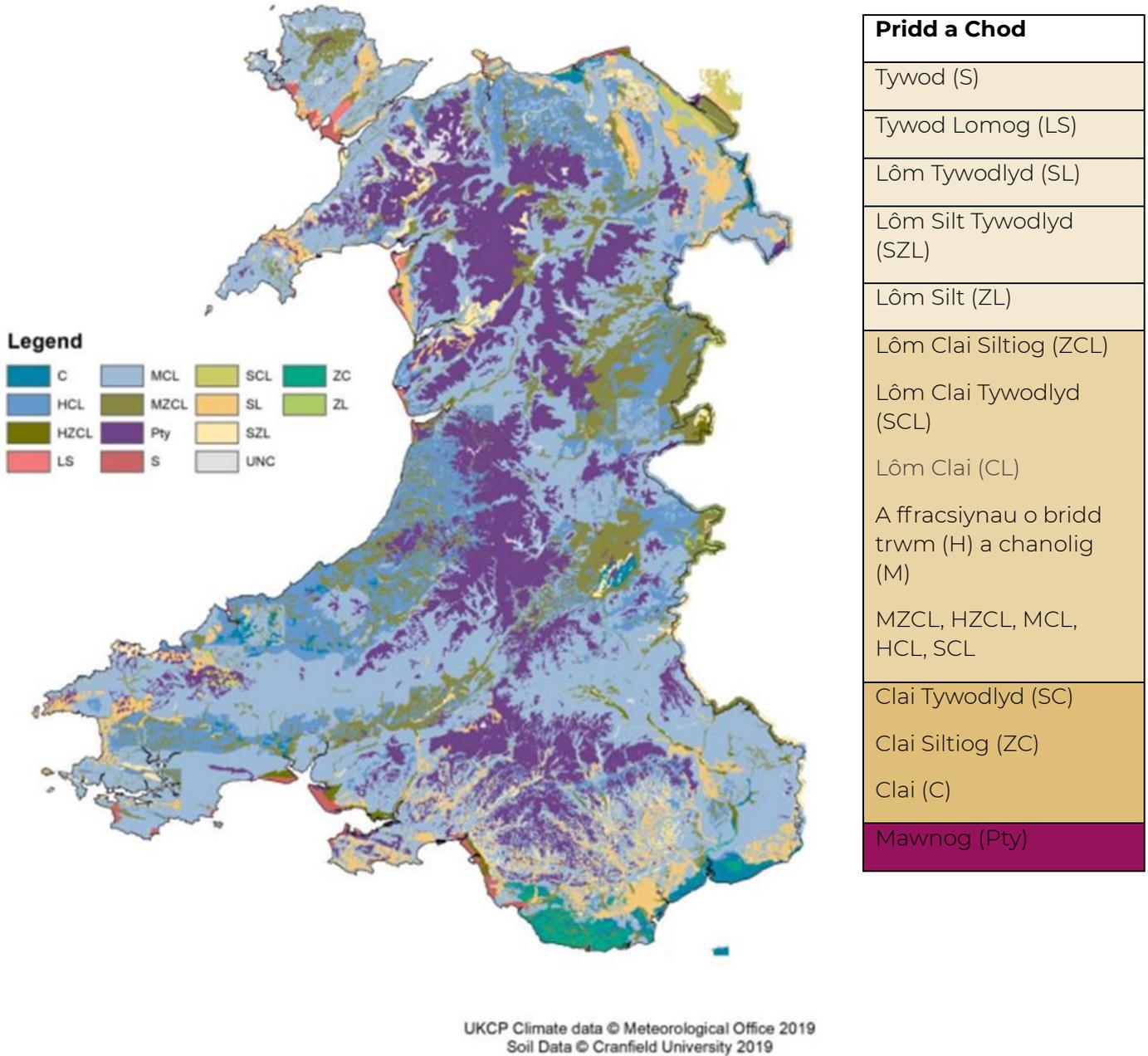
1. Cyflwyniad

Mae diwylliant ac amgylchedd Cymru yn unigryw, o ganlyniad i'r pridd a'r ffordd mae'r wlad yn cael ei ffermio, gyda systemau a phriddoedd sy'n aml yn wlyb ac yn gyfoethog mewn deunydd organig. Oherwydd prosesau ffurfio araf, ystyrir pridd yn adnodd anadnewyddadwy ac felly mae angen ei reoli mewn ffordd gynaliadwy. Am fod dros 80% o'r tir yng Nghymru yn cael ei ddefnyddio ar gyfer amaethyddiaeth, y ffordd mae tir yn cael ei ddefnyddio ac arferion ffermio, ynghyd ag effeithiau amgylcheddol, yw'r prif ffactorau sy'n effeithio ar gyflwr priddoedd yng Nghymru.

Mae 183 o wahanol gyfresi pridd yng Nghymru ac mae eu gwead (Ffig. 1) yn cynnwys silt, tywod, clai (mwynol) neu ddeunydd organig – neu gyfuniad o'r rhain. Mae rôl gwead pridd yn hanfodol i bob penderfyniad ffermio a rheoli pridd. Yn gyffredinol gellir rhoi'r rhain mewn pedwar grŵp bras: 1) Priddoedd brown mwynol sy'n draenio'n rhwydd; priddoedd clai glas â draenio rhwystredig sy'n mynd yn ddwrlawn yn dymhorol; priddoedd organo-fwynol mewn ardaloedd oer a gwlyb ag uwchbridd mawnog bas (<30cm); a priddoedd mawnog organig sydd â dyfnder >30cm o fawn o'r wyneb.

Mae'r amrywiad yn y math o bridd, yr ystod hinsoddol y mae ynddi (tymheredd, gwynt, glawiad) a nodweddion y safle (graddiant, llwybrau llif, creigwely, tirwedd) yn golygu y gall y risg a lefel o ddifrifoldeb yr effeithiau cysylltiedig o ganlyniad i wahanol arferion defnyddio tir fod yn gysylltiedig yn gryf â lleoliad penodol.

Ffigur 1: Lleoliad Dosbarthiadau Gwead Uwchbridd:

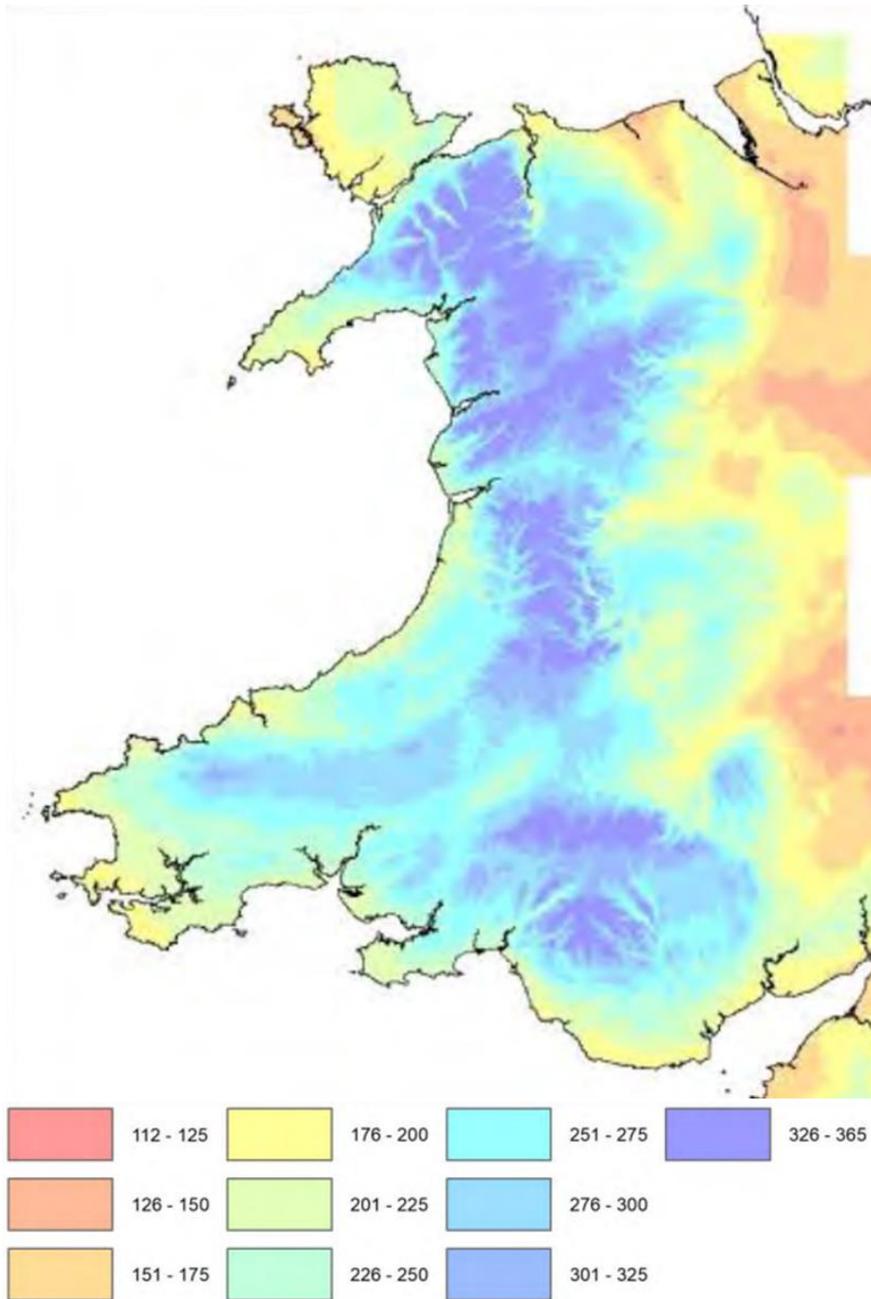


Mae'r hinsawdd yn cyfyngu'n sylweddol ar gyfleodd ar gyfer gwaith tir a chnydau yng Nghymru. Mae glawiad a thymheredd yn dylanwadu ar gynllunio gweithgareddau amaethyddol i sicrhau'r amodau pridd gorau posibl ar gyfer gweithio a gyrru cerbydau ar bridd. Mae hyn yn cael ei asesu drwy nifer Dyddiau Capasiti'r Cae (FCD) (Ffig. 2) ar gyfer unrhyw safle penodol (h.y. nifer y diwrnodau yn olynol y mae'r pridd yn gwbl ddirlawn).

Mae'r rhan fwyaf o Gymru ar lefel >200 FCD, sy'n golygu yn aml mai nifer y diwrnodau pan ellir gweithio ar bridd a gyrru cerbydau arno yw <165 diwrnod y

flwyddyn. O'i chymharu, mae'r ffigur ar gyfer rhai ardaloedd ar yr arfordir ac ar y ffin yn is, sef 151-200 FCD, a'r ffigur ar gyfer llawer o leoedd yn Lloegr yw <151 FCD. Os yw'r pridd yn ddirlawn llawn am y rhan fwyaf o'r flwyddyn, mae'n cynyddu'r risgiau sy'n gysylltiedig â thrin tir (erydu, cywasgu, sefydlu cnydau, trin a chynaeafu) ar draws rhannau helaeth o Gymru, a dyma un o'r prif resymau mae'r rhan fwyaf o'r tir yn laswelltir yn hytrach na thir âr.

Ffigur 2: Parthau Dyddiau Capasiti Cae



Ni ellir defnyddio'r un dull ar gyfer pob math o bridd, defnydd tir a chyd-destun hinsoddol. Er mwyn diogelu a gwella pridd mae angen rhywfaint o waith ar ddehongli'r cyd-destun penodol, gan gydnabod y risgiau. Mae'r prif Amcanion

Polisi Pridd wedi'u hamlinellu yn y **Datganiad Polisi Pridd Amaethyddol**. Y nod yw darparu fframwaith penodol i Gymru i ystyried datblygu ymyriadau.

Dyma'r Amcanion:

Amcan 1: Cynyddu gwybodaeth am briddoedd Cymru

Amcan 2: Annog rhannu gwybodaeth am briddoedd

Amcan 3: Diogelu, cynnal a gwella priddoedd, swyddogaethau pridd a gwasanaethau pridd

Mae'r is-amcanion hyn yn darparu rhagor o wybodaeth sydd yn y Datganiad Polisi Pridd Amaethyddol:

- i) Diogelu priddoedd rhag erydu drwy eu rheoli mewn modd priodol mewn ardaloedd sydd mewn perygl.
- ii) Cynnal y lefel bresennol o ddeunydd organig wedi'i storio yn y pridd a'i chynyddu pan fydd hynny'n briodol, drwy reoli pridd mewn modd effeithiol.
- iii) Cydbwysu cylchdroi maethynnau pridd i sicrhau bod swyddogaethau a gwasanaethau pridd yn cael eu cyflawni mewn modd effeithiol.
- iv) Cynnal a gwella strwythur y pridd, gan ganolbwyntio ar leihau cywasgu pridd, drwy reoli pridd mewn modd priodol pan fydd amodau gwlyb yn peri risg uchel.
- v) Diogelu a meithrin bioamrywiaeth pridd drwy reoli priodol.

Mae'r Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy, Cyswllt Ffermio, y Fframwaith Polisi Cynllunio, Addasu i'r Hinsawdd, ERAMMP, y Rhaglen Dystiolaeth Polisi Pridd, SoNaRR, y Polisi Adnoddau Naturiol, y Rhaglen Weithredu Genedlaethol ar Fawndiroedd i gyd yn chwarae rôl bwysig ac amlwg wrth gymryd y camau dynamig mae angen eu cymryd er mwyn diogelu a gwella priddoedd Cymru.

2. Rôl a chyflwr priddoedd mewn systemau amaethyddol:

Mae priddoedd amaethyddol yn adnodd gwerthfawr i Gymru – yn ecolegol, yn economaidd ac yn gymdeithasol. Ystyrir eu bod yn adnodd cyfyngedig, oherwydd eu cyfraddau ffurfio araf. Mae priddoedd amaethyddol yn cyflawni nifer o swyddogaeth a gwasanaethau:

- — darparu'r sail ar gyfer bwyd, ynni sy'n deillio o fiomas, a deunyddiau crai fel pren neu gnydau ffeibr eraill
- — rheoleiddio cylchoedd amgylcheddol maethynnau a charbon
- — darparu cynefinoedd gwerthfawr a chynnal bioamrywiaeth
- — rheoleiddio llif ac ansawdd dŵr
- — rheoleiddio'r hinsawdd a lliniaru rhai effeithiau newid yn yr hinsawdd
- — cadw treftadaeth ddiwylliannol ac archaeolegol megis tir amgaeedig hanesyddol a phatrymau tyfu traddodiadol
- — darparu platfform ar gyfer seilwaith

Mae'r rhan fwyaf o dir amaethyddol (tua 87%) yn laswelltiroedd parhaol a newydd a thir pori garw. Mae'r tir â'r tir sy'n cael ei ddefnyddio ar gyfer garddwriaeth tua 5–6% o arwynebedd y tir amaethyddol. Mae ardaloedd mawr o laswelltir a reolir ac amodau hinsoddol gwlyb (sydd wedi creu ardaloedd mawr o fawn a phridd organo-fwynol) wedi arwain at lefelau uwch o garbon yn y pridd na'r rhan fwyaf o briddoedd yn Lloegr ac Ewrop.

I grynhoi, mae priddoedd amaethyddol yng Nghymru yn unigryw ac at ei gilydd mewn cyflwr da¹ oherwydd lefel y diogelu pridd a roddir gan systemau glaswelltir; fodd bynnag, mae problemau pridd sy'n gysylltiedig yn gryf â lleoliad penodol.

Mae'r bygythiadau presennol yn cynnwys colli deunydd organig pridd yn lleol, erydu pridd, colli strwythur a chywasgu pridd a chylchoedd maethynnau pridd

¹ [Synthesis o Dystiolaeth Pridd Cymru](#)

anghytbwys. Bygythiadau sy'n dod i'r amlwg yw newid yn yr hinsawdd a newid dulliau rheoli amaethyddol, sy'n rhyng-gysylltiedig ac y disgwylir iddynt gynyddu pwysau ar briddoedd ymhellach. Mae hwn yn faes â blaenoriaeth ar gyfer dadansoddi'r data monitro pridd hirdymor ymhellach.

3. Monitro Iechyd Pridd

Ariennir Rhaglen Monitro a Modelu Materion Gwledig a'r Amgylchedd (ERAMMP) gan Lywodraeth Cymru, i ddarparu tystiolaeth a dadansoddiadau gwyddonol i ategu'r gwaith o ddatblygu polisiau a gwerthuso'r ffordd mae rhaglenni amaethyddiaeth a defnydd tir yn cael eu gweithredu. Mae [Arolwg Maes Cenedlaethol ERAMMP](#) yn adeiladu ar fonitro'r gorffennol, gan gynnwys ailadrodd arolwg maes sylfaenol Rhaglen Monitro a Gwerthuso Glastir ([GMEP](#)) i nodi tueddiadau cenedlaethol mewn adnoddau naturiol, gan gynnwys priddoedd ac i asesu effaith cynllun Glastir.

Mae mesuriadau pridd Arolwg Maes Cenedlaethol ERAMMP yn cynnwys deunydd organig pridd, carbon organig mewn pridd, lleithder a dwysedd, pH, cyfanswm y nitrogen, y ffosfforws sydd ar gael, mesoffawna, eDNA ar gyfer poblogaethau microbaidd ac anifeiliaid a manau problemus ar gyfer colli pridd ac erydu. Mae'r holl fesuriadau wedi'u cyd-leoli â defnydd tir a llystyfiant.

Mae monitro pridd yn elfen allweddol o ERAMMP ac mae [Dangosydd Lles Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol-13](#) cydnabod hyn drwy adrodd am y mesuriad ar gyfer faint o garbon sydd yn y pridd a chynnwys y deunydd organig yn y pridd (0–15cm).

Mae rhai priodweddau iechyd pridd yn cymryd blynyddoedd lawer i ymateb i newidiadau rheoli, ond mae eraill yn newid yn dymhorol. Er [bod Adolygiad Tystiolaeth Pridd Cymru](#) yn dod i'r casgliad bod priddoedd yng Nghymru mewn cyflwr da yn gyffredinol, mae monitro hirdymor ERAMMP yn caniatáu i Lywodraeth Cymru asesu newidiadau a thueddiadau tymor hwy.

Mae mynychder systemau glaswelltir yn helpu i ddiogelu priddoedd a storio carbon. Fodd bynnag, mae adroddiad [Tueddiadau Cenedlaethol Cymru a Gwerthusiad Glastir](#) a gyhoeddwyd yn ddiweddar yn tynnu sylw at sawl maes ar gyfer ymchwilio pellach. Mae'r rhain yn cynnwys cyfraddau tarfu ac erydu pridd; cynnydd cyffredinol mewn dwysedd priddoedd amaethyddol; a dirywiad mewn carbon yn y pridd ar gyfer priddoedd garddwriaethol ac âr. Mae adrodd cenedlaethol yn galluogi Llywodraeth Cymru i gomisiynu ymchwiliadau pellach i'r rhesymau dros y tueddiadau, i dargedu monitro ac i ddatblygu ymatebion polisi.

Mae polisiau, tystiolaeth, adroddiadau a phrosiectau gweithredol penodol ar gael yn [ERAMMP \(Adroddiadau Tystiolaeth a Dadansoddi\)](#), [Yr Adroddiad ar Sefyllfa Adnoddau Naturiol](#) (SoNaRR), a'r [Rhaglen Tystiolaeth Polisi Pridd](#) (SPEP).

Y Blaenoriaethau Presennol:

Mae Asesiad SoNaRR o Fynyddoedd, Rhostiroedd a Rhosydd yn cadarnhau bod priddoedd a chynefinoedd ein mawndiroedd at ei gilydd mewn cyflwr diraddiedig, a dyma pam mae angen Rhaglen Weithredu Genedlaethol ar Fawndiroedd (NPAP) bwrpasol a neilltuedig i adfer y cynefinoedd gwlyptir gwerthfawr hyn. Mae'r Rhaglen Weithredu Genedlaethol ar Fawndiroedd yn sicrhau cydgysylltu cenedlaethol wrth fonitro ac adrodd ar weithgareddau adfer mawndiroedd ledled Cymru. Mae'n cyhoeddi'r holl weithgareddau adfer a rheoli cynefinoedd ar Borth Data Mawndiroedd Cymru.

Mae Astudiaeth Beilot Monitro Risg Moel y Rhaglen Dystiolaeth Polisi Pridd yn brosiect 12 mis ar ddefnyddio delweddau lloeren i asesu'r risg y mae priddoedd moel yn ei hachosi i gyrsiau dŵr ym mhob dalgyloch yng Nghymru. Disgwylir i'r system fonitro ddechrau ym mis Mehefin 2025 ac adrodd ar y canfyddiadau ar ddiwedd 2026.

Diweddariad Technegol Llawn y System Dosbarthiad Tir Amaethyddol: prosiect ar y cyd rhwng DEFRA a Llywodraeth Cymru yw hwn i ddiweddarau'r System Dosbarthiad Tir Amaethyddol yn llawn, gan gynnwys y data a'r methodolegau sylfaenol, er mwyn sicrhau bod data am ansawdd tir yn gywir ac yn gynhwysfawr yn y dyfodol. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi darparu mewnbwn technegol sylweddol ar gyfer y prosiect hwn gan adeiladu ar y Gyfres o Adolygiadau Technegol Rhannau 1-5 a'r Asesiad Cwmpasu a gynhyrchwyd gennym ar ran y ddwy lywodraeth.

4. Dosbarthu Priddoedd yn ôl Defnydd Tir:

Mae Dosbarthiad Tir Amaethyddol Cymru a Lloegr yn dosbarthu tir amaethyddol yn chwe gradd (1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4 a 5) yn ôl y graddau y mae nodweddion hinsoddol, pridd a safleoedd yn cyfyngu ar ddefnydd amaethyddol. Gall y cyfyngiadau effeithio ar yr amrediad o gnydau, y cynnyrch a'r gost sy'n gysylltiedig â ffermio'r tir.

Mae 10-15% o dir Cymru yn cael ei ddosbarthu yn Dir Amaethyddol Gorau a Mwyaf Amlbwrpas (BMVAL), a ddiffinnir gan raddau 1, 2 a 3a Dosbarthiad Tir Amaethyddol. Gellir defnyddio BMVAL i dyfu amrediad o gnydau, a dyma'r tir mwyaf hyblyg, cynhyrchiol ac effeithlon wrth ymateb i fewnbynau, sy'n golygu mai dyma'r tir gorau ar gyfer darparu amrywiaeth o nwyddau a gwasanaethau bwyd a difwyd.

Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn chwarae rôl weithredol wrth ddiogelu BMVAL drwy bolisiau cynllunio, gwneud sylwadau ar geisiadau cynllunio, darparu tystiolaeth am ddosbarthiad tir a chynnal safonau ar gyfer cynnal arolygon o ddosbarthiad tir. Mae Cymru yn unigryw o ran cynnig gwasanaeth dilysu² arolygon o ddosbarthiad tir i sicrhau bod pob parti yn gallu dibynnu ar yr wybodaeth dechnegol a gyflwynir iddo.

Mae Polisi Cynllunio Cymru³ yn ceisio gwarchod BMVAL fel adnodd cyfyngedig ar gyfer y dyfodol. Hefyd dylid rhoi pwyslais sylweddol ar amddiffyn tir o'r fath rhag cael ei ddatblygu oherwydd ei bwysigrwydd arbennig. Mae cwmpas a phwysigrwydd y polisi yn cael ei egluro ymhellach mewn Llythyrau at y Prif Swyddog Cynllunio⁴.

Yn 2017 cynhyrchodd Cymru y [Map Rhagweld Dosbarthiad Tir](#) – y diweddariad sylweddol cyntaf yng Nghymru neu Loegr ers y 1970au. Mae wedi cael ei ddylunio i helpu Awdurdodau Cynllunio Lleol, Datblygwyr, Syrfewyr a Ffermwyr i wneud penderfyniadau tymor hir gwybodus o fewn y system gynllunio ynghylch defnyddio'r tir ac i dargedu'r tir mwyaf addas i gynnal arolyg ohono.

Mae'r disgrifiad o'r gwaith o reoli pridd Cymru yn y cyd-destun hwn, yn y papur 'The global standard bearers of soil governance'⁵ gan Lewis R. Peake a Cairo

² [Dosbarthiad Tir Amaethyddol: canllawiau map rhagweld](#) (adran 3)

³ [Polisi Cynllunio Cymru \(Argraffiad 12\)](#) – paragraffau 3.58 a 3.59.

⁴ [BMVAL ac araeau PV solar](#) ac [Adroddiadau dosbarthu Tir Amaethyddol](#)

⁵ [The global standard bearers of soil governance – ScienceDirect](#) 4.1.6. Wales (UK)

Robb, fel a ganlyn: *“With respect to soils, the “letter of the law” varies little across the four countries [of the UK], but the interpretation, enforcement and supporting infrastructure of Wales sets it apart from its neighbours... In Wales, however, the primacy of ALC and BMV land has been maintained”*.

5. Y mecanweithiau polisi a deddfwriaethol i ddiogelu priddoedd a thir cynhyrchiol.

Datganiad Polisi Pridd Amaethyddol – Tirlun Polisi

Cynyddu gwybodaeth am bridd Cymru	Annog rhannu gwybodaeth am briddoedd	Gwarchod, cynnal a gwella priddoedd				
		Cynnal a gwella deunydd organig pridd (SOM)	Gwarchod priddoedd rhag erydiad	Cynnal a gwella strwythur pridd	Gwarchod a meithrin bioamrywiaeth pridd	Cydbwysu cylchredau maetholion pridd
Sbardunau Polisi						
Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru) 2015						
Deddf yr Amgylchedd (Cymru) 2016						
Polisi Adnoddau Naturiol 2017						
Targed Sero Net erbyn 2050 (Cymru)						
Fframwaith Bioamrywiaeth Byd-eang Kunming-Montreal 2022						
Polisi Amaethyddol						
Y Rhaglen Weithredu Genedlaethol ar Fawndir (2020-2025)						
Deddf Amaethyddiaeth (Cymru) 2023						
Trawsgydymffurfio						
Cynllun Glastir (wedi dod i ben 31 Rhagfyr 2023)						
Cynllun Cyneffn Cymru (o 1 Ionawr 2024)						
Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy (o 2026)						
Rheoliadau Cysylltiedig â Phridd						
Rheoliadau Swtsh (Defnydd Amaethyddol) 1989					Rheoliadau Swtsh (Defnydd Amaethyddol) 1989	
					Rheoliadau Trwyddedu Amgylcheddol (Cymru a Lloegr) 2016	
Rheoliadau Asesu'r Effeithiau Amgylcheddol (AEA) (Amaethyddiaeth) (Cymru) 2017						
		Rheoliadau Amgylchedd Dŵr (Cyfarwydddeb Fframwaith Dŵr) (Cymru a Lloegr) 2017			Rheoliadau Amgylchedd Dŵr (Cyfarwydddeb Fframwaith Dŵr) (Cymru a Lloegr) 2017	
					Rheoliadau Tertynau Uchaf Allyriadau Cenedlaethol (y DU) 2018	
Polisi Cynllunio Cymru (PPW) a Cymru'r Dyfodol – Cynllun Cenedlaethol 2040						
					Rheoliadau Adnoddau Dŵr (Rheoli Llygredd Amaethyddol) (Cymru) 2021	
Rhaglenni, Gwybodaeth a Chyngor ar Fonitro Pridd						
Rhaglen Monitro a Modelu Materion Gwledig a'r Amgylchedd (ERAMMP)						
Yr Adroddiad ar Sefyllfa Adnoddau Naturiol (SoNARR)						
Cyswllt Ffermio						
Cod Ymarfer Amaethyddol Da (COGAP)						

Ffigur. 2 Trosolwg o'r fframwaith polisi pridd yng Nghymru

Cyn i'r Datganiad Polisi Pridd Amaethyddol gael ei gyhoeddi, nid oedd polisi pridd cyffredinol ar gyfer diogelu'r pridd yng Nghymru. Mae polisiâu sy'n berthnasol i briddoedd ar waith, ond maent wedi'u gwasgaru ar draws llawer o feysydd polisi ac at ei gilydd wedi'u cyfyngu i swyddogaethau penodol neu effeithiau priddoedd. Mae hyn yn cyfyngu ar eu heffeithiolrwydd cyfunol i amddiffyn priddoedd. Mae'r Datganiad Polisi Priddoedd Amaethyddol yn ceisio rhoi gweledigaeth gydgyssylltiedig a fframwaith eang ar gyfer rheoli pridd mewn modd cynaliadwy i fynd i'r afael â'r bwlch hwn. Nid yw'n nodi mesurau polisi newydd nac yn cynnwys canllawiau manwl i ymarferwyr ac nid yw'n ddogfen reoleiddio.

Mesurau Penodol:

Mae Polisi Cynllunio Cymru (PCC) yn amlinellu polisiâu Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer cynllunio defnydd tir. Mae'n cael ei ategu gan gyfres o Nodiadau Cyngor Technegol (TANau), Cylchlythyrau Llywodraeth Cymru, a llythyrau egluro polisi sydd, ynghyd â PCC, yn darparu'r fframwaith polisi cynllunio cenedlaethol ar gyfer Cymru. Gyda'i gilydd, PCC, y TANau y TANau Mwynol a'r llythyrau egluro yw'r polisi cynllunio cenedlaethol.

Cymru'r Dyfodol – Y Cynllun Cenedlaethol 2040 yw ein fframwaith datblygu sy'n pennu cyfeiriad datblygu yng Nghymru hyd at 2040. Cynllun datblygu ydyw gyda strategaeth ar gyfer mynd i'r afael â blaenoriaethau cenedlaethol allweddol drwy'r system gynllunio, gan gynnwys cynnal a datblygu economi fywiog, cyrraedd targedau datgarboneiddio a gwrthsefyll yr hinsawdd, datblygu ecosystemau cryf a gwella iechyd a llesiant ein cymunedau.

Mae polisiâu a chyd-destun BMVAL, pridd a mawn yn ymddangos ym mhob dogfen ac yn ymdrin â rheoli datblygu cyffredinol, seilwaith cenedlaethol a pholisiau cynllunio mwynau.

Paragraffau a Phenodau perthnasol Cymru'r Dyfodol:

- Pennod 2 – yn nodi bod ein tir amaethyddol (BMVAL) yn adnodd hanfodol. Mae amaethyddiaeth wedi creu ein tirweddau a chefnogi ein trefi gwledig a marchnad ers cenedlaethau. Rhaid inni barhau i werthfawrogi a diogelu ein tir amaethyddol a sicrhau y gall ein bwydo a'n cynnal.
- Mae Polisi 9 ar Rwydweithiau Ecolegol Gwydn a Seilwaith Gwyrdd yn nodi dibyniaeth ar BMVAL a phridd sy'n gyfoethog mewn carbon.

- Polisi 18(11) Datblygiadau Ynni Adnewyddadwy a Charbon Isel o Arwyddocâd Cenedlaethol – mae darpariaethau derbyniol yn ymwneud â dadgomisiynu'r datblygiad ar ddiwedd ei oes, gan gynnwys cael gwared ar seilwaith ac adfer y safle yn effeithiol.

Paragraffau a Phenodau Perthnasol PCC:

- 3.58 –3.59 Gwarchod y Tir Amaethyddol Gorau a Mwyaf Amlbwrpas
- 5.14.29 – 5.14.30 Mawn (cynllunio mwynau)
- 5.14.40 – 5.14.55 Pridd (Cynllunio mwynau)
- Pennod 6: Bydd y Canlyniadau Unigryw a Naturiol yn seiliedig ar gynnal a chreu lleoedd lle bydd cyfleoedd ym mhob ardal i wella gwydnwch ecosystemau'n cael eu cymryd drwy fynd i'r afael â phroblemau fel adeiladu ar orlffidiroedd, llygredd gwasgaredig, cywasgu a selio pridd, diogelu mawn a gwella dulliau o amddiffyn rhag llifogydd arfordirol mewn ardaloedd trefol a glandiroedd arfordirol;
- 6.4.15 – Y Dull Fesul-Cam 1a ac 1b sy'n ymwneud â chynefinoedd mawn na ellir eu disodli a phriddoedd na tharfyd arnynt ers amser maith.
- 6.4.34 – Pridd mawn

Deddfwriaeth, Cyngor Technegol a Chylchlythyrau:

- [Llythyrau at Brif Swyddog Cynllunio Cymru Tir amaethyddol gorau a mwyaf amlbwrpas ac araeau PV solar | LLYW.CYMRU](#)
- [Nodyn Cyngor Technegol 6](#) – Pennod 6 (BMVAL) ac Atodiad B (Trefniadau ar gyfer ymgynghori â Llywodraeth Cymru).
- [Nodyn Cyngor Technegol Mwynau 1](#) – Agregau – Pennod D – Adfer ac Ôl-ofal – Trin ac Ailddefnyddio Pridd.
- [Atodlen 5 i Ddeddf Cynllunio Gwlad a Thref 1995](#) – ôl-ddefnydd buddiol – mwynau.

Y Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy: Disgwylir i bridd ymddangos yn uniongyrchol ac yn anuniongyrchol drwy haenau Sylfaenol, Opsiynol a Chydweithredol y Cynllun

Ffermio Cynaliadwy, gan gynnwys gofyniad cyffredinol am brofion pridd (o leiaf 20% y flwyddyn) wedi'i gefnogi drwy gyngor wedi'i ddarparu drwy Cyswllt Ffermio. Bwriad hyn yw codi ymwybyddiaeth ffermwyr o gyflwr eu pridd i gefnogi camau rheoli cadarnhaol. Bydd camau gweithredu sylfaenol hefyd yn gwella priddoedd yn anuniongyrchol drwy ofynion i reoli cynefinoedd a pharatoi cynlluniau ar gyfer rheoli safleoedd dynodedig. Bydd camau eraill i wella iechyd y pridd, atal erydu a chywasgu, a diogelu stociau carbon yn cael eu cefnogi'n uniongyrchol drwy Weithredoedd Opsiynol penodol ar gyfer pridd ac yn anuniongyrchol drwy weithredoedd eraill sy'n gysylltiedig â choed, dŵr a chynefinoedd.

Bydd y Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy yn cynnwys Gofynion Cyflwr Amaethyddol ac Amgylcheddol Da (GAEC) system y taliad sengl i ffermydd i ddiogelu priddoedd rhag erydu a chywasgu (GAEC 4 a 5).

Rydym yn parhau i weithio gyda ffermwyr a rhanddeiliaid, ar y cyd, i sicrhau bod y Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy yn cydnabod bod iechyd pridd yn sail i gynhyrchu bwyd cynaliadwy a'r rôl y mae'n ei chwarae wrth storio ac atafaelu carbon. Bwriedir cyhoeddi manylion terfynol y Cynllun yr haf hwn.

Cyswllt Ffermio:

Ariennir Cyswllt Ffermio, sy'n Rhaglen Trosglwyddo Gwybodaeth sydd ar gael ledled Cymru, gan Lywodraeth Cymru drwy'r Cynllun Buddsoddi Gwledig (RIS), ac mae'n elfen hanfodol o'r cymorth mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn ei ddarparu i fusnesau amaethyddol.

Mae sawl ymyriad sy'n berthnasol i briddoedd ar gael drwy Cyswllt Ffermio, gan gynnwys y Gwasanaeth Cyngori sy'n darparu cyngor cyfrinachol pwrpasol un-i-un â chymhorthdal gan Gyngorydd Cymwys FACTS⁶ - mae'r ymyrryd yn cynnwys cymryd a dadansoddi 15-20 sampl pridd ynghyd â chynllun rheoli maethynnau manwl yn seiliedig ar y canlyniadau.

Mae Cyswllt Ffermio hefyd yn darparu cymorth drwy ymyriadau un-i-lower gan gynnwys Grwpiau Trafod sy'n edrych ar bwysigrwydd iechyd a strwythur pridd. Mae'r pynciau wedi'u trafod hyd yma yn cynnwys Egwyddorion Iechyd Pridd; Egwyddorion Amrywiaeth Rhywogaethau Planhigion; Rôl Bioleg Pridd a Da Byw wrth Hyrwyddo Cynhyrchiant Porfeydd; Technegau Rheoli i hyrwyddo storio dŵr ac atafaelu carbon; a Gwyndwn Cymysg a Chnydau Gorchudd. Mae dosbarthiadau meistr, gweithdai sy'n cynnwys cymysgedd o theori a dysgu ymarferol i fynychwyr, wedi canolbwyntio ar iechyd pridd ac annog dadansoddi

⁶ Cynllun FACTS

pridd, ac roedd y pynciau a drafodwyd yn cynnwys arferion ffermio adfywiol a rheoli glaswelltir.

Mae rhwydwaith arddangos ffermydd Cyswllt Ffermio – Ein Ffermydd – wedi cyflawni 40 o brosiectau ar draws 15 fferm sy'n edrych ar sut i wella iechyd y pridd. Mae'r holl wybodaeth a gasglwyd a'r technegau wedi'u defnyddio'n cael eu rhannu â ffermwyr ledled Cymru drwy ddiwrnodau agored, taflenni ffeithiau technegol, podlediadau a fideos gwybodaeth.

Bydd estyn y contractau i'r gwasanaethau presennol tan wanwyn 2026 yn sicrhau bod y ddarpariaeth yn parhau ac yn helpu i gyflwyno'r Cynllun Ffermio Cynaliadwy yn 2026. Mae gwaith yn mynd rhagddo i ddatblygu'r hyn mae Cyswllt Ffermio'n ei gynnig yn y dyfodol .

Safon Coedwigaeth y DU:

Mae Safon Coedwigaeth y DU yn darparu gwybodaeth ychwanegol ym Mhennod 8 ar goedwigoedd a phridd gan gydnabod eu rôl sylfaenol mewn ecosystemau tir fferm. Yn yr un modd â phriddoedd amaethyddol, mae'n cydnabod bod pridd yn adnodd hanfodol ond bregus y mae'n rhaid ei ddefnyddio mewn ffordd gynaliadwy drwy wybod a gweithio yn ôl math a chyflwr pridd.

Y Rhaglen Weithredu Genedlaethol ar Fawndiroedd

Mae mawndiroedd yn cefnogi amrywiaeth o gynefinoedd a rhywogaethau, maent yn dal ac yn storio carbon, yn rheoleiddio allyriadau nwyon tŷ gwydr, yn cynnal bioamrywiaeth ac yn rheoleiddio llif ac ansawdd dŵr. Ariennir y rhaglen hon gan Lywodraeth Cymru, a chafodd ei sefydlu i ysgogi, cydgysylltu a chyflawni camau gweithredu i adfer mawndiroedd yng Nghymru.

Cynhaliwyd camau i adfer mawndiroedd ar dros 3,000 hectar yn y pedair blynedd gyntaf (2020–24) sy'n golygu bod y rhaglen wedi rhagori ar ei tharged adfer 5-mlynedd cychwynol. Mae camau gweithredu Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer y maes polisi mawn yn y Strategaeth Addasu i'r Hinsawdd ar gyfer Cymru (2024) yn cynnwys cynyddu'r gyfradd adfer flynyddol i adfer 1,800 hectar o fawndir y flwyddyn erbyn 2030 ac yn y pen draw adfer 45,000 hectar erbyn 2050.

6. Y potensial ar gyfer fframweithiau cyfreithiol a thargedau ar gyfer priddoedd.

Wrth edrych i'r dyfodol, bydd monitro cenedlaethol ERAMMP, SoNaRR, y Rhaglen Dystiolaeth Polisi Pridd ac ymchwil ar y cyd â Defra i gyd yn parhau i lywio dull Llywodraeth Cymru o ddiogelu priddoedd a thir cynhyrchiol. Bydd hinsawdd sy'n newid yn gofyn am ddull hyblyg i fynd i'r afael â newid defnydd tir, deunydd organig, maethynnau, gwlypter a sychder.

Bydd pridd yn ystyriaeth bwysig wrth ddatblygu'r fframwaith dangosyddion a thargedau ar gyfer Rheoli Tir yn Gynaliadwy. Bydd dangosyddion a thargedau'n cael eu gosod gerbron y Senedd erbyn diwedd y flwyddyn hon. Bydd dangosyddion yn cael eu datblygu gyda rhanddeiliaid dros yr haf.

Roedd adolygiad y Rheoliadau Rheoli Llygredd Amaethyddol a gyhoeddwyd ar 31 Mawrth 2025 yn ystyried rôl pridd a rheoli pridd ar gyfer yr holl dir amaethyddol yng Nghymru. Nododd fod rheoli pridd gwael yn peri risg sylweddol o lygredd i ddŵr. Mae hyn o ganlyniad i ddŵr ffo o bridd, mecanwaith sylweddol ar gyfer colli maethynnau a gwaddodiad, a chyflwr y pridd. Mae'r ddau ffactor yn cael effaith sylweddol ar allu cnwd i ddefnyddio'r maethynnau a roddir, gan gynyddu'r risg o lygredd.

Nododd yr adolygiad fod diffyg amddiffyniad deddfwriaethol ar gyfer priddoedd yng Nghymru, lle roedd yn rhan o ddeddfwriaeth mewn rhannau eraill o'r DU, ac argymhellodd fesurau i leihau'r risg o golli pridd i'r amgylchedd. Bydd yr argymhellion yn cael eu datblygu yn llawn.

- Argymhelliad 6 (tymor byr): Cynnwys gofynion yn y Rheoliadau Rheoli Llygredd Amaethyddol i ddiogelu rhag colli pridd i'r amgylchedd, gan efelychu o bosibl gofynion Cyflwr Amaethyddol ac Amgylcheddol Da (GAEC) Trawsgydymffurfio.
- Argymhelliad 7 (tymor canolig): Ystyried effaith tyfu cynydau risg uwch ar golledion pridd posibl i'r amgylchedd a thechnegau lliniaru effeithiol fel lleiniau clustogi.

Eitem 5.1

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/HIDCC/0636/25

Andrew RT Davies AS
Cadeirydd
Y Pwyllgor Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

1 Mai 2025

Annwyl Andrew,

Yn unol â'm llythyr ym mis 25 Mawrth 2024, rwy'n ysgrifennu i hysbysu'r Pwyllgor fy mod wedi rhoi fy nghaniatâd i'r Gweinidog Gwladol osod Rheoliadau Diwygio'r Cyfnod Trosiannol o Ran Rheolaethau Swyddogol 2025 mewn perthynas â Chymru. Rwyf wedi gosod Datganiad Ysgrifenedig

<https://dogfennauaosodwyd.senedd.cymru/ws-ld17140-cy.pdf>

Rhoddir caniatâd i Lywodraeth y DU wneud y Rheoliadau hyn er mwyn osgoi bwlch rhwng diwedd yr esmwythiadau a chychwyn polisiau newydd. Mae hyn yn sicrhau nad yw rhai nwyddau SPS yr UE yn ddarostyngedig i reolaethau swyddogol diodyn o 1 Gorffennaf 2025. Mae'r Rheoliadau'n cydblethu â pholisi datganoledig ac fe'u cymhwysir yng Nghymru. Mae'r Offeryn Statudol yn destun gweithdrefn negyddol ac fe'i gosodwyd gerbron y Senedd ar 29 Ebrill 2025.

Rwyf wedi ysgrifennu'n debyg I Mike Hedges AS, Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Deddfwriaeth, Cyfiawnder a'r Cyfansoddiad

Yn gywir,

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Huw.Irranca-Davies@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Tudalen y pecyn 82

Tonia Antoniazzi AS

Cadeirydd Grŵp Seneddol Hollbleidiol San Steffan ar Ieithoedd Modern

Y Farwnes Jean Coussins

Cyd-gadeirydd Grŵp Seneddol Hollbleidiol San Steffan ar Ieithoedd Modern

1 Mai 2025

Annwyl Tonia a Jean,

Y bwriad i gau adrannau ieithoedd a diwylliannau ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd

Diolch i chi am eich llythyr ar 3 Ebrill ynghylch y bwriad i gau cyrsiau gradd ieithoedd a diwylliannau ym Mhrifysgol Caerdydd.

Er ein bod yn nodi eich pryderon, nid cyfrifoldeb pwyllgorau'r Senedd yw cynnal asesiadau effaith economaidd.

Efallai eich bod yn ymwybodol bod Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg a Phwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol y Senedd yn cynnal ymchwiliadau sy'n berthnasol i'r materion rydych wedi'u codi. Mae'r Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg yn cynnal ymchwiliad byr i faterion sy'n wynebu'r sector addysg uwch, ac mae disgwyl iddo glywed tystiolaeth gan Brifysgol Caerdydd ym mis Mehefin.

Ar hyn o bryd rydym yn cadw golwg ar y sefyllfa o ran Addysg Uwch yng Nghymru ac yn bwriadu dilyn gwaith y Pwyllgorau hyn, a byddwn yn mynd ar drywydd materion yn ôl yr angen ynghylch unrhyw bryderon a godwyd am effaith economaidd bosibl y cau arfaethedig.

Rwy'n anfon copi o'r llythyr hwn at Buffy Williams AS a Delyth Jewell AS yn eu rolau fel Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg a Chadeirydd y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol.

Cofion gorau,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies AS

Cadeirydd: Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

Copi at:

Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol



Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol y DU a'r UE: Adroddiad cryno'r pumed cyfarfod

Mai 2025

Mae'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol yn gorff ffurfiol a sefydlwyd o dan y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu rhwng y DU a'r UE. Mae ganddo rôl bwysig o ran goruchwyllo gweithrediad y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu a phob cytundeb dilynol rhwng y DU a'r UE.

Cynhaliwyd pumed cyfarfod y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol ym Mrwsel ar 17-18 Mawrth. Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn rhoi crynodeb o faterion pwysig i Gymru a drafodwyd yn y cyfarfod.

Cymerodd Delyth Jewell AS, Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol a Hannah Blythyn AS, aelod o Bwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig ran yn y pumed cyfarfod ac maent wedi cytuno ar yr adroddiad yn rhinwedd y cyfranogiad hwnnw.



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1. Rolau a chyfrifoldebau

Mae'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu rhwng y DU a'r UE yn darparu ar gyfer sefydlu Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol rhwng y DU a'r UE fel rhan o'i strwythurau llywodraethu, y cyfeirir atynt fel y 'fframwaith sefydliadol'. Bydd y fframwaith hwn yn goruchwyllo'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu a phob cytundeb dilynol rhwng y DU a'r UE.

Mae'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu yn darparu y dylai'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol gynnwys aelodau o Senedd Ewrop a Senedd y DU. Mae gan y Cynulliad rôl bwysig o ran goruchwyllo gweithrediad y Cytundeb.

Dyma'r unig gorff a all ddwyn i gyfrif ar y cyd Gyngor Partneriaeth y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu. Y Cyngor Partneriaeth yw'r corff sydd â chyfrifoldeb cyffredinol am y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu. Mae'n cynnwys cynrychiolwyr o'r Comisiwn Ewropeaidd a Gweinidogion Llywodraeth y DU.

O ran y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol:

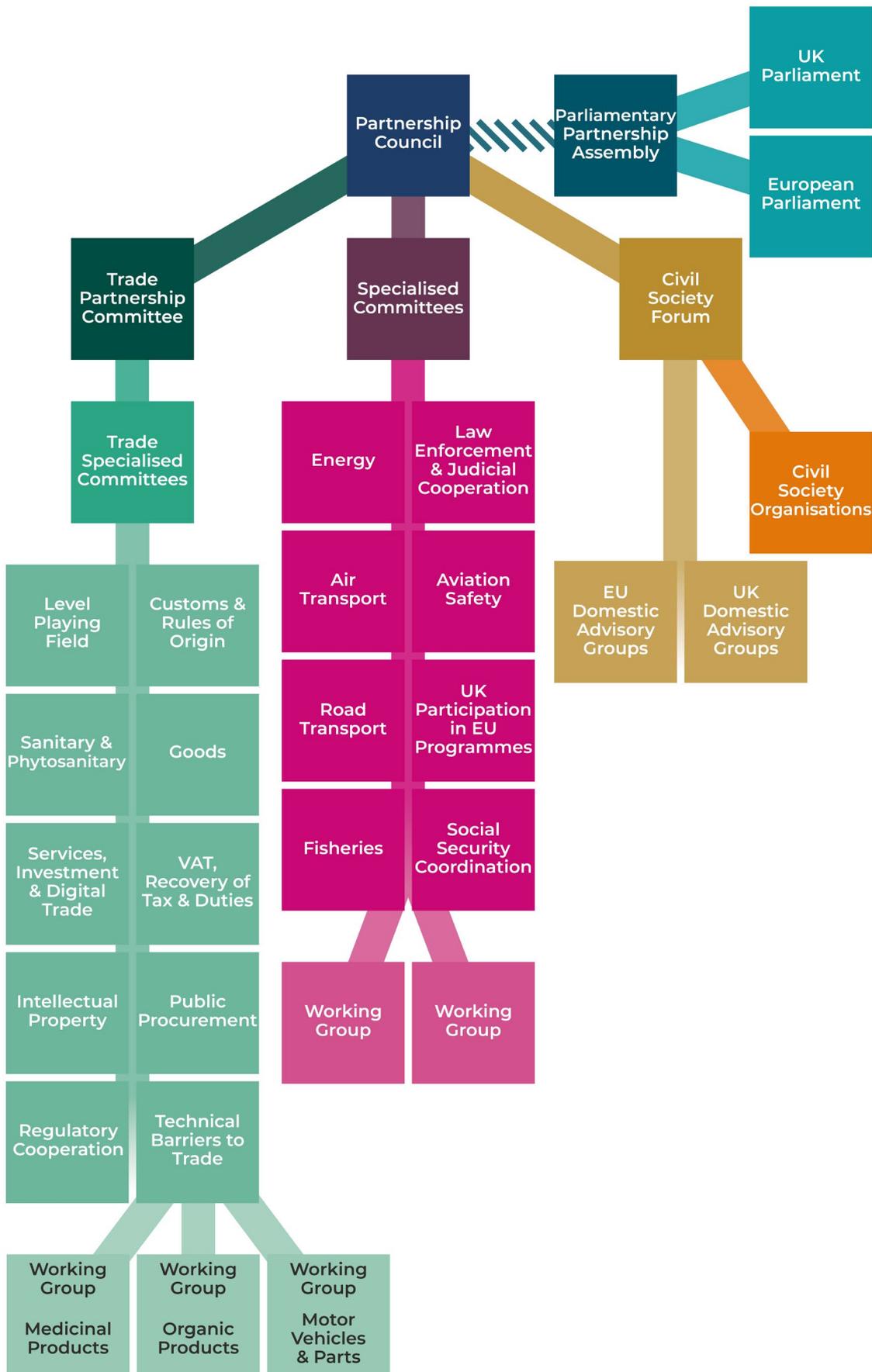
- gall ofyn am wybodaeth am y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu a chytundebau rhwng y DU a'r UE yn y dyfodol gan y Cyngor Partneriaeth, a rhaid i'r corff hwnnw ddarparu'r wybodaeth;
- rhaid iddo gael gwybod am benderfyniadau ac argymhellion y Cyngor Partneriaeth; a
- gall wneud argymhellion i'r Cyngor Partneriaeth.

Mae'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol hefyd wedi mabwysiadu ei reolau gweithdrefnau ei hun ers ei sefydlu, sy'n nodi sut y bydd yn gweithredu'n ymarferol.

Mae cynrychiolwyr o Senedd y DU a Senedd Ewrop yn cadeirio'r Cynulliad ar y cyd. Y Cyd-gadeiryddion ar hyn o bryd yw Marsha de Cordova AS a Sandro Gozi ASE. Mae rhestr lawn o gynrychiolwyr o Senedd y DU ac o Senedd Ewrop i'w cael ar eu gwefannau.

Mae'r ffeithlun isod yn dangos ble mae'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol yn sefyll o fewn fframwaith sefydliadol cyffredinol y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu.

Y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu: Fframwaith Sefydliadol



Rôl y Senedd

Nid yw'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu yn darparu rôl ffurfiol i ddeddfwrfeydd datganoledig y DU, na rhanbarthau a dinasoedd yr UE yng ngwaith y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol, nac i gymdeithas sifil.

O ystyried, fodd bynnag, bod rhannau helaeth o'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu yn dod o fewn meysydd cymhwysedd datganoledig neu yn cael effaith arnynt, mae'r rheolau gweithdrefnau a fabwysiadwyd yn caniatáu i'r deddfwrfeydd datganoledig gael eu gwahodd i fod yn bresennol mewn cyfarfodydd fel arsylwyr. Nid oes gan gynrychiolwyr sydd â statws arsylwr hawliau siarad cyffredin yn ystod sesiynau'r Cyfarfod Llawn ac nid oes ganddynt hawliau pleidleisio.

Gwahoddwyd y Senedd i anfon dau Aelod o'r Senedd i'r cyfarfod o'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol. Mae Fforwm Cadeiryddion y Senedd wedi penderfynu, o ystyried eu cylchoedd gwaith priodol, y dylai'r Senedd gael ei chynrychioli gan y Cadeirydd neu Aelod o'r Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol a'r Cadeirydd neu Aelod o Bwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig.

Mae'r trafodion ar gael i'w gwyllo ar [wefan Senedd Ewrop](#).

Cyfraniadau'r Aelodau o'r Senedd

Gofynnwyd i'r Aelodau o'r Senedd gyfrannu at un eitem o'u dewis ar agenda'r Cyfarfod Llawn ac i gymryd rhan lawn mewn grwpiau trafod.

Y Cyfarfod Llawn

Cyfrannodd Delyth Jewell AS at yr eitem ar agenda'r Cyfarfod Llawn ar gyfleoedd i bobl ifanc. Dywedodd:

Yn y Senedd, clywn dro ar ôl tro sut mae cyfleoedd i bobl ifanc yn agor drysau i'r byd.

Ym mis Tachwedd, roedd fy Mhwyllgor, sy'n arwain ar ddiwylliant a chysylltiadau rhyngwladol, yma ym Mrwsel i gyhoeddi ein hadroddiad ar effeithiau Brexit ar y sector diwylliant, a oedd yn tynnu sylw'n benodol am y tro cyntaf at effeithiau cenedliadol ar artistiaid ifanc ac artistiaid sy'n dod i'r amlwg yng Nghymru.

Mae ein sectorau'n dweud wrthym pa mor gryf maen nhw'n teimlo am gollu cynllun Erasmus+ a chynllun Ewrop Greadigol. Maen nhw'n galw ar y DU i ailymuno â'r cynlluniau hyn.

Roedd y Farwnes Bull yn gywir pan soniodd am "gyfle a aeth i'r gwynt i bobl ifanc". Byddwn i'n ychwanegu fy llais yn llwyr at y sylwadau a wnaeth hi yn gynharach.

Rwy'n siŵr ein bod ni i gyd wedi clywed straeon torcalonnus tebyg – lle mae pobl ifanc yn cael eu gorfodi i beidio â mynd ar drywydd mentrau newydd, ac i beidio â gwneud cysylltiadau sy'n newid bywydau, oherwydd mae'r drysau hynny bellach ar gau iddyn nhw.

Rydym yn cefnogi'n llwyr argymhelliad rhagflaenydd y Cynulliad hwn, a oedd yn cydnabod bod y sefyllfa'n arbennig o heriol i bobl ifanc. Gobeithio y gallwn ni fynd â hynny ymhellach.

Rhaid inni ddangos iddynt y gallwn ddod o hyd i atebion ar gyfer eu dyfodol. Os na allwn, rydym mewn perygl o ddieithrio cenedlaeth gyfan ymhellach. Y gwirionedd yw, nad yw cymaint o'r hyn sy'n cael ei gollu yn cael ei gofnodi mewn graffiau nac ystadegau, sef cyfleoedd heb eu cymryd, cysylltiadau heb eu gwneud, bywydau heb eu newid er gwell.

Mae'n ddyletswydd arnom o ran pobl ifanc heddiw, ac i genedlaethau'r dyfodol, iddynt beidio â dod yn ddiოდdefwyr o ganlyniad i'n diofalwch ni. Rhaid i ni gynnig gobaith iddynt.

Dywedodd y Farwnes Deborah Bull, a roddodd dystiolaeth ar gyfer ymchwiliad y Pwyllgor:

One additional mechanism for cultural exchange that's often overlooked is Creative Europe, the EU's flagship programme. The UK and its cultural organisations were highly valued partners and it had a major impact on projects in the UK's nations and regions.

So, I echo the Welsh Senedd's excellent Culture Shock report, as well as colleagues in Creative Scotland, who are calling for consideration of the UK's reassociation to Creative Europe as these youth opportunities discussions move forward.



Hannah Blythyn AS a Delyth Jewell AS yn ystod sesiwn y Cyfarfod Llawn

Grŵp trafod: Diogelu data a deallusrwydd artiffisial

Cymerodd Hannah Blythyn AS ran yn y grŵp trafod ar ddiogelu data a deallusrwydd artiffisial.

Cydnabu'r cynrychiolwyr wahanol ddulliau'r DU a'r UE o reoleiddio deallusrwydd artiffisial, a thrafodwyd y bygythiadau a'r cyfleoedd a ddaw yn ei sgil. Roedd cytundeb y gallai'r sefyllfa fyd-eang bresennol, yn enwedig datblygiadau yn yr Unol Daleithiau a Tsieina, ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r DU a'r UE gydweithredu, a rhannwyd pryderon y gallai fframweithiau cyfreithiol lluosog gynnig cyfleoedd i dramgwyddwyr.

Tynnodd Hannah sylw at ymchwiliad diweddar Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig ar Ddeallusrwydd Artiffisial, a phwysleisiodd fod llais gweithwyr a deialog gymdeithasol yn ganolog i effaith y cyfleuster ar ddemocratiaeth a'r gweithle.

Galwodd y cynrychiolwyr am fuddsoddiad ar y cyd mewn ymchwil a datblygu, ac am gamau brys.

Grŵp trafod: Cydweithredu o ran yr hinsawdd ac ynni

Cymerodd Delyth Jewell AS ran yn y grŵp trafod ar gydweithredu o ran yr hinsawdd ac ynni.

Roedd cydnabyddiaeth eang bod newid hinsawdd yn niweidio'r economi. Roedd y cynrychiolwyr yn cefnogi bod angen rhagor o ddiplomyddiaeth o ran yr hinsawdd yn ogystal â'r ymrwymiau presennol ar ddiogelwch ynni, datgarboneiddio a'r cyflenwad ynni, gan gynnwys datgysylltu oddi wrth olew a nwy o Rwsia. Tynnwyd sylw hefyd at ddiwydrwydd dyladwy o ran y gadwyn gyflenwi fel mater pwysig, yn ogystal â'r goblygiadau sy'n deillio o'r ffaith bod yr Unol Daleithiau wedi tynnu'n ôl o Gytundeb Paris.

Pwysleisiodd Delyth y rôl bwysig sydd gan gymunedau gwahanol wrth ymateb i ddigwyddiadau tywydd garw, fel llifogydd a thomenni glo yn llithro, a'r angen i'w cefnogi i drawsnewid i ynni adnewyddadwy.

Cyflwynwyd meysydd posibl ar gyfer cydweithredu mwy helaeth rhwng y DU a'r UE ar gyfer systemau masnachu allyriadau (ETS), mecanweithiau addasu ffiniau carbon (CBAMs) a lleihau'r bwlch sgiliau o ran y trawsnewid ynni.



Delyth Jewell AS yn cymryd rhan yn y grŵp trafod ar gydweithredu o ran yr hinsawdd ac ynni.

2. Materion allweddol i Gymru a'r Senedd

Mae'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu yn gosod y telerau ar gyfer y berthynas rhwng y DU a'r UE wedi i'r Cytundeb Ymadael dynnu'r DU o'r UE. Mae'r mwyafrif o'i ddarpariaethau naill ai'n dod o fewn cymhwysedd datganoledig neu'n effeithio

ar feysydd o fewn cymhwysedd datganoledig, o bysgodfeydd i gydweithredu ar ofal iechyd.

Mae rhagor o wybodaeth am beth yw'r rhain, sut y mae'r rhain yn effeithio ar Gymru a rôl y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol ar gael yng nghanllawiau Ymchwil y Senedd ar y Cytundeb.

Y sefyllfa sydd ohoni

Rhoddodd Maroš Šefčovič, Comisiynydd Masnach a Diogelwch Economaidd o'r Comisiwn Ewropeaidd, a Nick Thomas-Symonds, Gweinidog Cysylltiadau â'r UE, Llywodraeth y DU, y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am y sefyllfa bresennol gan y Cyngor Partneriaeth. Manteisiodd y naill a'r llall ar y cyfle i nodi eu blaenoriaethau ar gyfer cysylltiadau'r DU a'r UE:

Rhoddodd Comisiynydd Šefčovič, amlinelliad ar nifer o faterion allweddol ar gyfer yr UE, gan gynnwys hawliau dinasyddion, a dri maes blaenoriaeth bras ar gyfer "gwella cydweithrediad strategol â'r DU". Y rhain oedd diogelwch a gwydnwch, "cysylltiadau pobl â phobl", gan gynnwys symudedd pobl ifanc ac "amddiffyn y blaned a'i hadnoddau".

Tynnodd Nick Thomas-Symonds AS, Gweinidog Cysylltiadau â'r UE, Llywodraeth y DU, sylw at dair blaenoriaeth Llywodraeth y DU, sef diogelwch, diogeledd a ffyniant.

Dywedodd fod Llywodraeth y DU yn barod i drafod partneriaeth diogelwch ac amddiffyn, a hefyd, gytundeb ar Gynllun Taliad Sengl. Ailadroddodd linellau amlwg Llywodraeth y DU i beidio â dychwelyd at Farchnad Sengl yr UE, at yr undeb tollau nac at ryddid i symud.



Hannah Blythyn AS a Delyth Jewell AS gyda'r cyd-gadeiryddion Marsha de Cordova AS a Sandro Gozi ASE

Meysydd cydweithredu penodol

Dros ddau ddiwrnod, bu'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol yn trafod meysydd cydweithredu penodol rhwng y DU a'r UE sydd o bwys i Gymru a'r Senedd:

- Pwysleisiodd y cynrychiolwyr y rôl bwysig sydd gan y DU a'r UE o ran **polisi tramor, diogelwch ac amddiffyn**, gan gynnwys drwy NATO, ac wrth hyrwyddo heddwch a sefydlogrwydd. Fe wnaethant ailddatgan eu cefnogaeth i Wcráin yn wyneb ymosodiadau gan Rwsia, ac i heddwch parhaol.
- O ran **masnach, tollau, glanweithdra a materion ffytoiechydol (SPS)**, croesawodd y cynrychiolwyr ddarpariaethau'r Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu ar gydweithredu, trin yn yr un modd, caffael, dim tollau dim cwotâu, cydweithredu rheoleiddiol ar gymorthdaliadau ac ar ddatblygu cynaliadwy. Cytunodd y cynrychiolwyr fod pawb yn cydweithio'n agos, gan gynnwys bod cyfarfodydd pwyllgor ar y Cytundeb Masnach a Chydweithredu yn fforymau defnyddiol i ddatrys problemau, i wirio bod dealltwriaeth gyffredin ac i ragweld problemau sy'n codi. Amlinellwyd llwyddiannau ochr yn ochr â nodi eu cydnabyddiaeth bod meysydd i'w gwella. Nododd cynrychiolwyr y DU fod y meysydd i'w gwella yn cynnwys cytundeb ar y Cynllun Taliad Sengl (SPS), cydnabyddiaeth gydfuddiannol o gymwysterau proffesiynol ac ar gyfer artistiaid teithiol, ac roedd galwadau ar i'r DU ailystyried ei llinellau amlwg. Codwyd pwysigrwydd allforion o Gymru, gan gynnwys allforion cig oen, gan Catherine Fookes, yr AS dros Sir Fynwy.
- Mynegodd y cynrychiolwyr gefnogaeth eang i gynyddu **cyfleoedd i bobl ifanc** a chafwyd y wybodaeth ddiweddaraf gan y Pwyllgor Ewropeaidd, Economaidd a Chymdeithasol (EESC) ar ei waith. Cafwyd galwadau gan y ddwy ddirprwyaeth ar ran y DU i ailymuno â chynllun Erasmus, i sicrhau partneriaeth symudedd gref a chydfuddiannol ar gyfer pobl ifanc, ac am eithriad diwylliannol a hepgor fisa i'r ddwy ochr ar gyfer y diwydiannau creadigol. Roedd cynrychiolwyr o'r ddwy ochr yn gresynu am yr anghytuno sydd o ran symudedd a rhyddid i symud. Nododd y cynrychiolwyr fod angen i drefniadau fod â chwmpas ehangach na chynlluniau prifysgol yn unig, ac y dylent gynnwys pobl o gefndiroedd incwm isel a difreintiedig. Yn hyn o beth, nododd y Pwyllgor Ewropeaidd, Economaidd a Chymdeithasol (EESC) fod gwersi pwysig i'w dysgu ar gynhwysiant o ran 'Taith', sef rhaglen gyfnewid ryngwladol Llywodraeth Cymru.

3. Argymhellion

Mae gan y deddfwrfeydd datganoledig lawer i'w gyfrannu at y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol ac mae ein cyfraniadau cadarnhaol at y grwpiau trafod wedi bod yn gyfle gwerthfawr i godi materion ac i rannu arfer da o Gymru.

Er mwyn datblygu'r berthynas rhwng y Senedd a'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol ymhellach, rydym yn argymhell:

Argymhelliad 1: Dylai Cadeirydd ac Is-gadeirydd dirprwyaeth y DU edrych ar y posibilrwydd o gynnal cyfarfod o'r Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol yn un o'r gwledydd datganoledig.

Argymhelliad 2: Rydym yn croesawu'r cyfle i gyfrannu at grwpiau trafod ac i annerch y Cyfarfod Llawn ar gyfer un eitem o'n dewis ar yr agenda. Rydym yn parhau i bwysu, fodd bynnag, am i gynrychiolwyr y gwledydd datganoledig gymryd rhan lawn pan fydd materion datganoledig yn cael eu trafod.

Argymhelliad 3: Rydym yn ailadrodd Argymhelliad 3 o adroddiad blaenorol, sef bod cynrychiolwyr y Senedd a phwyllgorau perthnasol y Senedd yn cydweithio i ddatblygu perthnasoedd anffurfiol ag aelodau dirprwyaeth y DU ac o'r Undeb Ewropeaidd y tu allan i gyfarfodydd ffurfiol y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol, ar feysydd o ddiddordeb cyffredin.

Argymhelliad 4: Fel gydag adroddiadau blaenorol, bydd yr adroddiad hwn yn cael ei anfon at bwyllgorau perthnasol y Senedd ac at Lywodraeth Cymru.



Cynrychiolwyr yng nghyfarfod y Cynulliad Partneriaeth Seneddol rhwng y DU a'r UE

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Andrew RT Davies AS
Cadeirydd Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

8 Mai 2025

Annwyl Andrew

Rwy'n ysgrifennu atoch i'ch hysbysu, yn unol â'r cytundeb cysylltiadau rhyngsefydliadol, y bydd cyfarfod o'r Grŵp Rhyngweinidogol ar gysylltiadau rhwng y DU a'r UE yn cael ei gynnal ar 12 Mai 2025.

Yn y cyfarfod, bwriedir trafod yr ailosodiad rhwng y DU a'r UE, a'r uwchgynhadledd ar 19 Mai.

Yn gywir,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Tudalen y pecyn 97



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref

Mike Hedges AS
Y Pwyllgor Deddfwriaeth, Cyfiawnder a'r Cyfansoddiad
Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1SN

8 Mai 2025

Annwyl Mike,

Yn unol â'r cytundeb cysylltiadau rhyng-sefydliadol, ysgrifennaf i'ch hysbysu chi fy cyhoeddwyd Memorandwm Cyd-ddealltwriaeth rhwng yr Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau a Llywodraeth Cymru ar 29 Ebrill 2025. Mae ar gael i'w weld [yma](#).

Mae'r Memorandwm Cyd-ddealltwriaeth hwn yn nodi set glir o amodau ac egwyddorion ar gyfer cydweithio rhwng yr Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau a Gweinidogion Cymru i fynd i'r afael ag anweithgarwch economaidd yng Nghymru yn gyffredinol drwy gynlluniau "**Trailblazer**" ac mae'n ymdrin â'r canlynol:

- Nodau'r Trailblazer
- Yr amserlen Ariannu/Taliadau
- Yr egwyddorion cydweithio

Rwyf hefyd wedi anfon copi o'r llythyr hwn at Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip, Jane Hutt AS, a chadeiryddion y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, a'r Pwyllgor Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig.

Yn gywir,

Rebecca Evans AS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

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Tudalen y pecyn 98
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Mae cyfyngiadau ar y ddogfen hon