

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith /
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Cymru Sero Net / Net Zero Wales
NZ04

Ymateb gan Y Gymdeithas Cadwraeth Forol / Evidence from Marine Conservation
Society



 mcsuk.org
 01989 566 017
 info@mcsuk.org

 [mcsuk](https://www.facebook.com/mcsuk)
 [mcsuk](https://twitter.com/mcsuk)
 [mcs_uk](https://www.instagram.com/mcs_uk)

The Marine Conservation Society welcomes the plans outlined in the [Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 \(2021 to 2025\)](#). We are pleased to see commitments to support research into the sources and sinks of carbon across the fishing and aquaculture industries and the potential and opportunities for decarbonisation of fishing activities, aquaculture and the fish supply chain supporting the priorities of the current Welsh Marine Evidence Strategy to 2025.

- There is currently no fisheries advisory group to plan for the future of fisheries in Wales. Brexit is already having a big impact on fishing communities and presents a real risk to the sustainable management of Welsh marine waters. We must use this opportunity to shape the way forwards in a collaborative way that benefits both the Welsh fishing industry and fish species and habitats in our waters around Wales.

We recommend: a national plan for sustainable fisheries management in Wales, with an implementation group that has wide representation of sectors, regular engagement, its own budget and the authority to put the plan into action.

- It is also good to see follow up on the plans that were set out in the Programme for Government to establish a targeted scheme to support restoration of seagrass and saltmarsh habitats along our coastline.
There is currently no legislative driver to protect areas of sea and coast specifically for the storage and sequestration of carbon dioxide in Wales.
A recent NRW report (July 2020) highlighted that at least 113 million tonnes of carbon are already stored in Welsh marine habitats; this equates to almost 10 years' worth of Welsh carbon emissions. It furthermore represents over 170 % of the carbon held in Welsh forests.

We recommend: the establishment and funding of a Wales Blue Carbon Forum in order to bring together statutory bodies, academics, and wider stakeholders to better understand R&D needs and future funding mechanisms for this work.

We recommend: Exploring how policies and products of the Wales National Marine Plan (WNMP) could support the identification and establishment of 'blue carbon protection zones' in Wales.

- We welcome the plan to report on the effectiveness of the Welsh National Marine Plan and to subsequently assess the effects of the policies in the plan with respect to marine renewable energy. According to the plan, evidence will come from statutory bodies.

We recommend: a working group to ensure collaboration with the third sector to be an active part in these discussions.