

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith /
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Cymru Sero Net / Net Zero Wales
NZ15
Ymateb gan Rhwydwaith Ffermio er Les Natur /
Evidence from Nature Friendly Farming Network



Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Consultation on the Welsh Government's Net Zero Wales Plan: NFFN Cymru Response

This paper outlines NFFN Cymru's high level initial views on the Welsh Government's [Net Zero Wales Plan](#)

We welcome many of the commitments and ambitions that are relevant to the food and farming system, in particular;

- Promoting widespread uptake of low input agroecological farming practices
- investigating the merits of a transitional scheme to provide financial support to farmers who are converting their operations to organic farming.
- Supporting for new and existing agro-ecological horticulture businesses
- Adopting a land sharing approach to food production
- Creating a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) centred on rewarding the delivery of environmental outcomes
- Commitments to improve resource efficiency and increase circularity on farms

However, we believe the following merits further scrutiny from the Committee;

- ***10% of agricultural land will be shared to support tree planting by 2050 while maintaining a strong food production sector across Wales*** – whilst we support ambitious tree planting targets, what procedures does the Welsh Government have in place to ensure we plant the right tree in the right place?
- ***Supply chains will be stronger and more localised, and value will be more fairly distributed, and more responsive to market demand*** – What practical steps are the Welsh Government going to take to achieve this, and what role will the proposed Community Food Strategy have to play?
- ***Whilst the SFS is being developed, we intend to continue to provide regular reliable income support for our farmers but in exchange for that income we will expect them to farm in different ways in order to reduce emissions.*** Whilst we welcome the Welsh Government's announcement that agri-environment contracts will be extended until 2023, the SFS which means there will be a significant wait and income gap for farmers who aren't currently enrolled in any agri-environment schemes. Bearing in mind the SFS won't be launched until 2025, is the pace and scale of action sufficient?
- ***In 2022, we will launch a range of interventions which will help both prepare the ground for the new scheme and continue to help farmers reduce emissions.*** We require further clarity on the above – what will these interventions entail and what will farmers be expected to do? Will every farm business be able to apply for support? Will farmers be offered business advice as we transition from direct payments? We urge the Welsh Government to roll out a trial programme aimed at promoting the concept of [maximum sustainable output](#) (MSO) amongst farmers, which is proven to improve farm profitability and enhance nature and climate.
- ***Over the next 5 years we will aim to restore 600-800 hectares of degraded peatland each year.*** Could these targets be more ambitious? Bearing in mind that degraded UK peatlands emit more carbon than what even the most ambitious UK Climate Change Committee tree planting targets could capture and store.
- ***Public sector support alone but will require attracting private sector investment into forestry. We want to ensure this investment benefits local communities and does not lead to widespread changes in land ownership.*** What procedures does the Welsh Government have in place to ensure this, bearing in mind the rise in large-scale corporations buying farms across the country to plant trees to offset their own carbon emissions.
- ***The Plan place places a lot of emphasis on the sheep, beef and dairy industry – but there is no mention of poultry.*** What steps are the Welsh Government taking to enhance the poultry sector's sustainability credentials,

bearing in mind the sector's negative effect on air and water quality, and its dependency on imported feed linked to global deforestation.

- ***The Welsh Government would welcome net zero commitment from all Welsh farm businesses.*** We would welcome further scrutiny into how carbon offsetting/ selling carbon credits may impact this ambition, bearing in mind that any carbon sold by farm business no longer belongs to that farm and thus cannot be used to offset their own emissions. Should farm business therefore be carbon negative prior to selling carbon credits?