



Ein cyf/Our ref: FM -/00105/24

Huw Irranca-Davies  
Chair  
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Senedd  
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16 February 2024

Dear Huw

I am writing in response to your letter of 18 January regarding the agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Convention and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (the BBNJ Treaty).

In September 2023, UK Ministers wrote to the Minister for Climate Change to notify her about the agreement. The Minister was asked to consider any implications of the Treaty on the Welsh marine zone. No further inter-Ministerial correspondence has been received about this matter.

Officials are considering the policy requirement for legislation and have notified legal services, however, capacity to consider this is limited. At this stage, the requirement for Welsh legislation is not clear, as the Welsh marine zone does not have any direct access to Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). It is, therefore, unlikely that any proposals within the ABNJ would have any impact on the Welsh Marine Protected Area Network. Additionally, there is little evidence to suggest the Welsh fishing fleet operate within the ABNJ.

We have duly provided the UK Government with an official point of contact and agreed to support any progressional work when appropriate. However, beyond the initial September 2023 correspondence, further inter-governmental work has not taken place. It is not clear at this stage if the UK Government has progressed this matter further.

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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.