



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Natural Resource Management *Information Pack*

Why we are taking action

- **Wales' natural resources are its greatest resource. Environmental actions must go hand-in-hand with economic ones. The current legislative framework and application thereof can create barriers to this objective.**
- **For over 60 years, governments have sought to protect, regulate and manage the environment largely by reacting to individual issues – this has led to a complex mix of regulation that doesn't always work together towards a common aim of improving Wales' long term future. The importance of the environment to Wales' society and economy in the long term is often not taken into account in decision making.**
- **We now have an opportunity to put in place a modern statutory framework that will enable us to manage our natural resources in a better way to achieve good outcomes for people, businesses and the environment.**
- **The 2011 Programme for Government emphasises the importance of managing our natural resources in a more integrated way, and we have made a number of commitments to do this in practice in relation to:**
 - **sustainable development**
 - **integrated natural resource management**
 - **delivery of an Environment Bill**
 - **establishing a single environmental body for Wales**
- **We want to manage our natural resources in a better way to achieve good outcomes for the environment, people and the economy. We call this integrated natural resource management.**

Why we need change

- The current regulatory framework focuses on environmental constraints, defending what we have left, rather than proactively seeking opportunities for the future
- Failure to meet 2010 biodiversity targets and ecosystem services continues to be in decline
- The impacts of climate change – there is mounting evidence that human activity has altered extremes of weather and will cause further changes in the future – which could have an impact on economy, communities and our natural resources.
- Evidence being used by decision makers inconsistently
- Legal procedures often seen as complex and rigid
- Opportunities for making the most of our natural resources are being missed

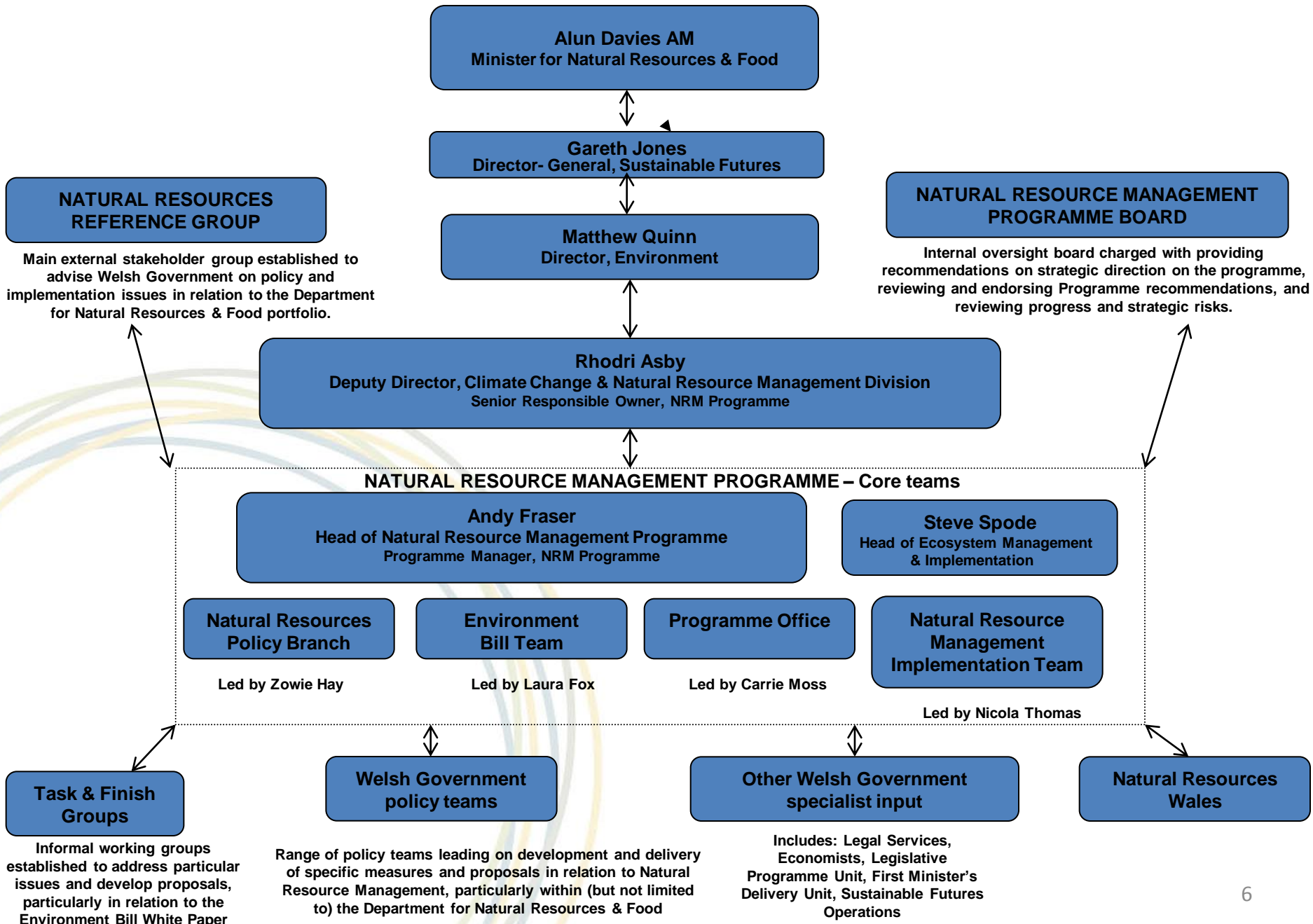
What have we done so far?

- We consulted on our plans for better natural resource management in 2010 and 2012.
- We have created a new single environmental body for Wales: Natural Resources Wales. It was launched in April 2013 and is a major step towards more joined up management. We are working closely with the new body to deliver our commitments.
- We created the Natural Resource Management Programme to deliver:
 - new policy measures to manage our natural resources
 - an Environment Bill for Wales
 - embedding of the ecosystem approach
 - coordination of work with Natural Resources Wales
 - communications and knowledge transfer work to help deliver the new approach

What has Natural Resource Management Programme delivered so far?

- High Level statement – Shaping a Prosperous and Resilient Future published in October 2013.
- Environment Bill White Paper published for consultation between October 2013 and January 2014.
- First Minister and Minister for Natural Resources & Food hosted Natural Resources conference in November 2013.
- Regional consultation events in December 2013 (Merthyr Tydfil, Aberystwyth, Llandudno Junction, Cardiff) & January 2014 (Cardiff).
- Nature Fund workshops in December 2013 (Merthyr Tydfil, Aberystwyth, Llandudno Junction, Cardiff).

Natural Resource Management Programme Governance Structure



What is Natural Resource Management?

- Natural resource management is about managing our natural environment in a joined up way that delivers real outcomes for the environment, people, the economy and our communities.
- It's a common approach to decision making about our natural resources and how they are managed in an area.
- This is an approach that we want to work at all levels in the decision making process from central Government through to landowners.
- It's about taking into account not only the environmental limits, but also the environmental opportunities.

What does it mean in practice?

- It provides a framework for coherent decision-making
- We can identify opportunities for natural resource management to better achieve long-term outcomes for society, the economy and environment
- It involves people and communities helping to make better decisions.
- We can join up decisions with evidence, carrying capacity and understanding of long-term impacts
- It will help to deliver our 2020 biodiversity target, alongside sustainable economic development and wider social outcomes

What we want to achieve

- We want to achieve better management of our natural resources as it provides the foundation for how we live. We want to ensure that we make the most of the opportunities that our natural resources provide.
- This needs to respect the limits of natural processes that continue to be our life support system. Our overall aim is to ensure that Wales has increasingly resilient and diverse ecosystems that deliver economic, environmental and social benefits.
- This can be achieved by better natural resource management.

How we are going to achieve it

Changing approaches which include:

- Embedding this integrated natural resource management in Natural Resources Wales, and across Government where appropriate, and beyond;
- Improving the regulatory system, through the Environment Bill, and possibly through additional legislation in future;
- Changing behaviours, for example in the way decisions are made to take into account area based planning;
- Delivering the Environment Bill;
- Developing the £6m Nature Fund.

What is the aim of the Environment Bill?

- To provide a modern statutory framework for the sustainable management of natural resources by legislating for a more joined-up and proactive process.
- To put in place the governance to ensure we use and manage Wales' natural resources in a way which will deliver lasting economic and social benefits as well as environmental.
- To deliver better outcomes for Wales by helping to strip away unnecessary complexity and simplifying processes.

How will this aim be achieved?

Proposals in the White Paper are organised under 4 main themes:

- **Theme 1** looks at **joining-up** the existing statutory frameworks for natural resource planning and management in Wales.
- **Theme 2** considers proposals to ensure Natural Resources Wales has the **right tools** to enable them to implement a joined-up approach to natural resource management.
- **Theme 3** sets out actions to ensure Wales' natural resources are used to best effect and **reduce** waste.
- **Theme 4** sets out proposals to simplify, streamline and clarify the law for a number of existing environmental regulatory regimes

Theme 1: Natural Resource Management

Aims:

- To establish a legal definition for Natural Resources in Wales - this will underpin the interpretation and application of NRW's functions and duties, as well as helping to deliver their core purpose
- To provide the framework for a joined-up approach to managing our natural resources. This includes the development and implementation of an area-based approach to natural resource management.

Theme 2: Opportunities to deliver

Aims:

- To provide NRW with the tools for innovative ways of working which will promote wider economic and social benefits – including Payments for Ecosystem Services, management agreements, and experimental powers to test and trial innovative approaches
- To enable future legislative change to our primary legislation to fully deliver a joined up approach where there are still identified barriers that restrict NRW in the delivery of its statutory purpose

Theme 3: Resource Efficiency

Aim:

- To help drive resource efficiency and maximise the opportunities realised by the move towards a greener economy.



Theme 4: Enabling Smarter Management

Aim:

- To promote simplification, streamline or clarify the law in relation to: Marine Licensing, Shellfisheries management, Flood and Water management, and Land Drainage.



What we want to achieve....

- **For businesses**

For example – to provide greater clarity on the opportunities, risks and challenges for the management of natural resources and better support for new markets in environmental services to support Green growth agenda.

- **For communities**

For example - Natural resource planning will ensure environmental, social and economic factors are appropriately considered in decision making and better targeted investment in local environments.

- **For the environment**

For example – Natural resource management as a single planning focus will enhance balanced decision making on the sustainable use land, air and water resources, recognising the needs of the natural environment and future generations.

How does the Environment Bill interrelate to other Bills?

There are a number of closely related Bills that include the Future Generations, Environment, Planning Reform, Housing, Heritage and Access Bills that, on their own and together, will ensure that:

- Decisions made by the Welsh Government and its partners support the economy, communities, and environment in Wales;
- The needs of future generations are considered;
- There are transparent processes, and communities are involved in the decisions that affect them;
- Processes are simplified and work is not duplicated, and;
- Priorities focus on what needs to be delivered, and ways to improve are considered, for example by collaborating with others.

What is the £6m Nature Fund?

- The new £6m Nature Fund forms part of a package, alongside the proposals for a new Environment Bill. Together, these have the aim of increasing the health and resilience of nature to ensure it can thrive, continuing to support our needs for food, water and raw materials while increasing biodiversity.
- In developing the Nature Fund we wanted to ensure that we were listening to those who manage our natural resources and who manage our land. For this reason, we issued a call for ideas. Over 460 ideas for fund were received from a wide range of interests.
- The ideas are available on the Welsh Government's website (where the relevant stakeholders have agreed to them being published). The aim of publishing the ideas is for stakeholders to see the emerging themes, identify links between ideas and see where collaboration could be established going forward.
- The Minister will be making an announcement on how the Nature Fund will be taken forward shortly.

Next Steps and Timings

- **New £6m funding to support innovation for nature and natural resource management. The Minister will make an announcement on how the Nature Fund will be taken forward shortly.**
- **Review the need for future legislation**

How to get involved

- Visit the website www.wales.gov.uk/naturalresourcemanagement
- Email the team naturalresourcemanagement@wales.gsi.gov.uk to receive our regular e-bulletin
- Follow the Natural Resources and Food Minister on twitter [@WG_NatResMin](https://twitter.com/WG_NatResMin)