

Dear Member of the Senedd,

We are writing to you as we are increasingly concerned the Agriculture (Wales) Bill 2022 does not stand up to the urgent need to help restore nature and [save our wild isles](#). Nearly 90% of Welsh land is farmland. Therefore, it is [crucial the Agriculture Bill is strengthened](#) to protect and restore nature. We are seeking your vote for a strengthened Agriculture Bill which includes our proposals laid out below.

The Biodiversity Intactness Index shows that Wales is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. We have lost 73 species since the 1970s and one in six species is at risk of extinction in Wales. None of our natural ecosystems are resilient enough to face threats such as climate change. Human activities such as unsustainable farming, including habitat loss and fragmentation, the overuse of pesticides, artificial feeds and fertilisers, overstocking, and agricultural pollution, have contributed to the degraded state of our nature and the ecosystems nature creates and maintains. The most extreme examples of the impacts of unsustainable farming include the near ecological death of the river Wye as well as others across Wales, and the destruction of Welsh ecosystems and habitats on land and at sea.

But nature is our life support system, and we must restore it. It protects our health, looks after our wellbeing, and is a vital ally in the fight against climate change; providing clean water, clean air, and nutritious food to everyone in our communities. Without nature, we would not have the resources to produce food or have our strong Welsh agricultural heritage. Without nature, we risk losing the vital role agriculture plays in sustaining our rural economy and communities. Without nature, we can't ensure health and wellbeing for our future generations.

If agriculture in Wales is to be truly sustainable the Agriculture (Wales) Bill must provide a stronger framework that ensures future farming produces the food we require whilst mitigating and adapting to the changing climate and restoring nature at the scale and speed necessary to save it. However, we are concerned because the current 'maintain and enhance' framework provided by the 2016 Environment Act is now significantly out of date and does not adequately reflect the requirements of the new COP15 Global Biodiversity Framework Agreement, which includes taking action to halt and reverse loss of nature by 2030.

Therefore, strengthening the Agriculture Bill is a crucial opportunity to ensure we halt the rapid decline of our natural world, and prevent further extinctions of Welsh species in the years to come. This is our one opportunity to secure an agricultural support scheme fit for current and future generations that actively supports nature restoration, in doing so securing resilient ecosystems and the benefits they provide for all the people of Wales.

To ensure the Bill is strengthened to restore nature – [we suggest against a baseline of circa 1970, in line with the Global Biodiversity Framework](#) – and prevent extinctions of iconic species like curlew, salmon, hedgehog and bats championed by Senedd Members such as yourself, we need you to take the following actions:

- 1. Include 'restore nature' on the face of the Agriculture Bill within Objective 3.**

2. Update the explanatory memorandum to include an explicit reference to the COP15 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and a statement that actions in the Sustainable Farming Scheme will contribute to achieving its goals.
3. Improve and extend public access provisions.
4. Include a sunset clause for the Basic Payment Scheme within the Bill to ensure that payments that are not linked to the sustainable land management objectives will end in 2029 when full transition to the Sustainable Farming Scheme is complete.
5. Ensure the Bill includes a clear reference to the need for National Minimum Standards which is critical to ensure a clear regulatory baseline is established across the farming industry in Wales.
6. **Vote for a strengthened Agriculture Bill on the 16th of May.**

We urge you to consider the evidence, table and/or support nature positive amendments to the Bill and take the action required to ensure agriculture in Wales can deliver for nature – and crucially – ensure our future generations have a healthy, nature positive country to live in.

We must be clear – this is our last chance to save Welsh nature.

Signed,

1. Iwan Rheon, Actor and WWF Cymru Ambassador
2. Professor Terry Marsden, Chair of Environmental Policy and Planning, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University
3. WWF Cymru



4. RSPB Cymru



5. Wildlife Trusts Wales



6. Nature Friendly Farming Network



7. The Soil Association Cymru



8. Gweithwyr y Tir – The Landworkers Alliance



9. The Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (CPRW)



10. Wales Environment Link



11. Climate.Cymru



12. British Mountaineering Council



13. Plantlife



14. Cymdeithas Eryri Snowdonia Society



Cymdeithas Eryri
Snowdonia Society

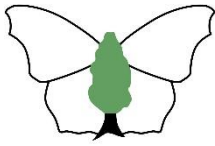
15. Social Farms and Gardens



16. Project Seagrass



17. Butterfly Conservation Wales



Butterfly Conservation Wales
Gwarchod Glöynnod Byw **Cymru**

21. Groundwork



18. Green Squirrel CIC



22. Tir Natur



19. The Mentor Ring



23. Rocha UK



20. Anglesey Sea Zoo Sw Mor Môn



24. The Co-production Network for Wales



25. The Climate Shop



29. Bumblebee Conservation Trust



26. The Campaign for National Parks



30. Zoe Binning



27. One Planet Centre CIC



31. Green Manatee



28. Open Spaces Society



32. Wild Roots Kitchen and Bar



33. Llais y Goedwig



37. Extinction Rebellion Cymru



34. Sustainable Wales



38. Save the Northern Meadows



35. The Mammal Society

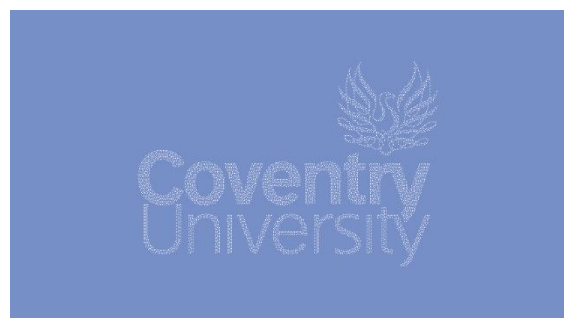


**Mammal
SOCIETY**

39. L.I.F.E Lessons in Future Environments



40. The Centre for Agroecology, Water, and Resilience at Coventry University



36. Coed Cadw – The Woodland Trust



41. The Welsh Beekeeping Association



45. Tal y Coed Associates



42. Bat Conservation Trust



46. Pip's Pets



43. Food Sense Wales



47. Pasture for Life



44. Buglife



48. Cardiff Quakers

49. Climate and Community (charity no. 117250)