

**NOW IS THE TIME TO EMBRACE A GREEN  
RECOVERY TO RESET OUR ECONOMY AND MAKE  
WALES MORE SUSTAINABLE, MORE RESILIENT  
AND MORE GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE.**



**THIS IS A MANIFESTO  
FOR HOW, TOGETHER,  
WE CAN ACHIEVE THE  
TRANSITION.**



# THE NEXT WELSH GOVERNMENT MUST DELIVER A GREEN AND JUST ECONOMY BY PUTTING NATURE AT THE HEART OF EVERY DECISION AND CREATING A NATIONAL JOBS PROGRAMME WHICH IS FIT FOR THE FUTURE.

## DELIVER A GREEN AND JUST NATIONAL JOBS PROGRAMME WHICH IS FIT FOR THE FUTURE.

The economy and jobs market in every part of Wales has suffered due to the pandemic. Investing in a green and just jobs programme means the next Welsh Government can address this while also tackling climate and nature emergencies and enabling the Welsh economy to be less at risk from shocks and more resilient for future generations.

This programme can create jobs in sectors which support decarbonisation (such as installing energy efficiency measures in Welsh homes), but it's critical we see investment in

jobs for nature conservation and restoration – from woodland management to sustainable tourism.

The food system also provides an opportunity for creating jobs right across the supply chain that restore, rather than damage, the environment.

The next Welsh Government must also prioritise retraining for workers in high carbon industries across Wales to ensure a just transition to a growing green economy that leaves no-one behind.

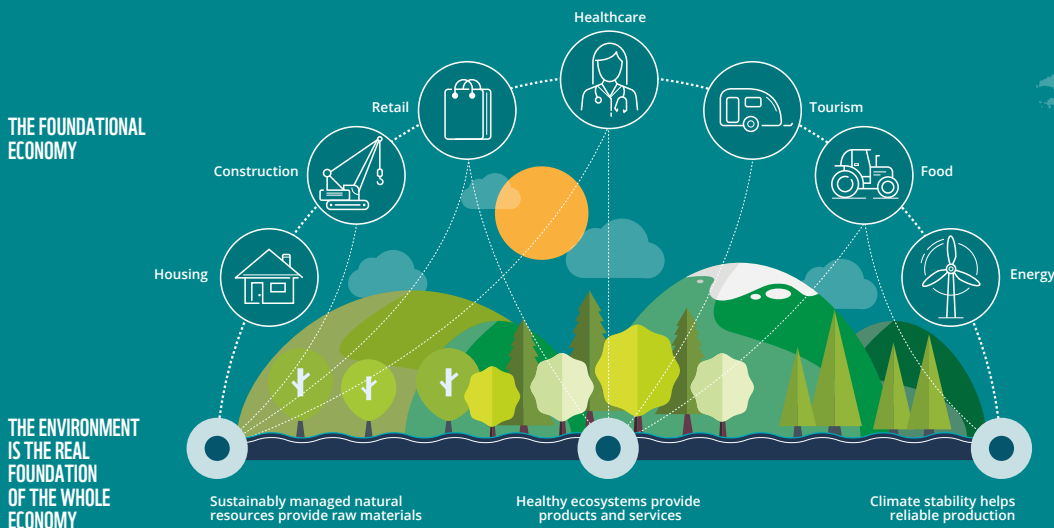
## INTEGRATE THE ENVIRONMENT INTO THE LOCAL ECONOMY.

A healthy environment is the foundation of everything. It provides thousands of direct and indirect Welsh jobs, and without it many parts of the economy and services essential for people's wellbeing would break down. This is the 'foundational economy' and includes basic products and services

like food, energy, construction and tourism – which underpin our lives and the wider Welsh economy.

The next Welsh Government must put the environment at the heart of its planning and conditions of funding for the foundational economy.

### INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENT INTO THE WELSH FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY





## MAKE NATURE CENTRAL TO THE ECONOMIC CONTRACT.

The Welsh Government's Economic Contract is an agreement between government and the businesses its supports.

The next Welsh Government must reform this contract to require businesses to maintain and enhance Welsh nature at

home and reduce their environmental footprint internationally by developing more sustainable and resilient supply chains. Signing up to it must be a condition for any business wishing to qualify for public funds or be awarded public contracts.



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## PRIORITISE FUTURE GENERATIONS BY SETTING A RESILIENT WALES WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE WHICH PUTS NATURE AT THE HEART EVERY DECISION.

The next Welsh Government must put building nature's resilience at the heart of all its policies and decision-making processes in order to deliver on the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

To achieve this Welsh Government must set a Well-being Objective for the restoration of nature to ensure all actions across government are collectively contributing to protecting and restoring Welsh nature.

A series of statutory targets and milestones for nature's recovery should be introduced - including for areas like air, water and soil quality; and the condition and extent of biodiversity. It should also support collaboration with other governments to set a bold new ocean recovery programme for UK seas.



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# THE NEXT WELSH GOVERNMENT MUST REFORM OUR FOOD SYSTEM SO IT DELIVERS FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE BY EMBEDDING NATURE FRIENDLY FARMING PRACTICES AND PROTECTING NATURE ABROAD BY MAKING US THE FIRST DEFORESTATION FREE NATION.

## DEVELOP, IN ITS FIRST YEAR OF GOVERNMENT, A CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM STRATEGY WITH ITS TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE OVERSEEN BY AN INDEPENDENT CROSS-SECTOR WALES FOOD COMMISSION.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted our dependence on a vulnerable global food system. The best way we can respond is by transforming our approach to food and farming.

The next Welsh Government should create a Wales Food Commission to direct and monitor a new cross-departmental food system strategy which will deliver for our environment, health, economy and society. This new strategy would drive and reward sustainable Farm & Fishing to Fork supply chains, address food waste and promote healthy, sustainable diets and consumption for all. Welsh Government must also ensure

there is enough funding in place to make it work.

Crucially, this strategy must be underpinned by a new approach to agriculture that works with nature, not against it; and which embodies principles of environmental, social, cultural and economic justice, in line with the values and aspirations of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Taking this approach will create new jobs, develop the skills of producers and growers, integrate mixed farming more widely, support biodiversity and ecological pest management, and ultimately foster a fair and equitable food system for all.

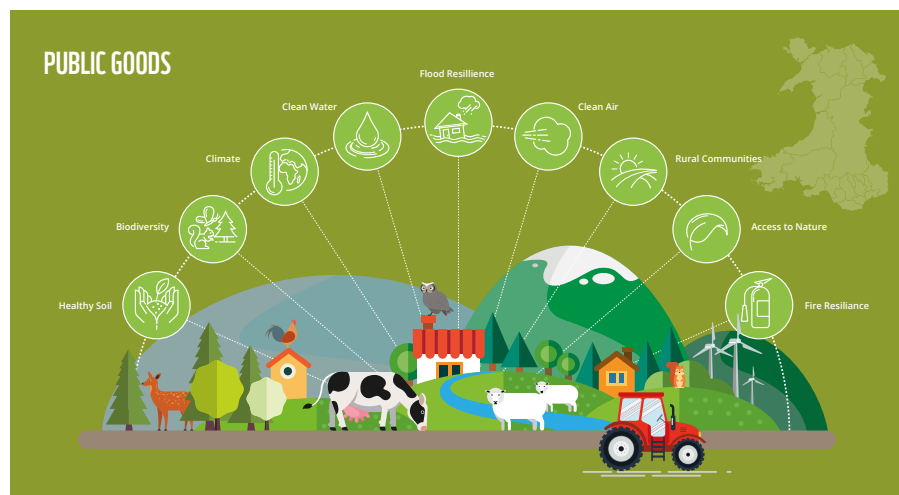
## LEGISLATE FOR AN AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME BASED UPON PAYMENTS FOR PUBLIC GOODS IN ITS FIRST YEAR, WITH TRANSITION COMPLETE WITHIN THE LIFETIME OF THE NEXT SENEDD.

Wales's departure from the EU Common Agricultural Policy means the next Welsh government can deliver a new and better support programme to replace it.

Farmers should receive public money for providing long-term services that support public goods – like flood protection, carbon

storage, or creating and maintaining healthier more biodiverse habitats.

This is a big transition, yet the state of our environment means we must move fast: unsustainable land management is the largest driver of Welsh nature's decline.



## TACKLE POLLUTION IN WELSH RIVERS

Pollution in Welsh rivers is a significant threat to nature and needs urgent attention. Today, only one in six freshwater habitat types in Wales are rated as having 'favourable conservation status'.

Major pollution incidents have had a huge impact in recent years, killing large numbers of fish and other aquatic species. Ongoing pollution from excessive chemical fertiliser use compounds the issue. Intensive farming, including sizable poultry units, also has an increasingly detrimental cumulative impact on our water and air quality.

While agricultural pollution is not the only form of pollution, tackling avoidable incidents would deliver immense benefits to biodiversity and human wellbeing, supporting the recovery of freshwater ecosystems and the fisheries that depend on them.

New regulations are a starting point, but they're not the whole solution. The next Welsh Government must introduce measures to prevent pollutants entering our rivers, support improved monitoring and management, provide advice services and ensure stronger enforcement.



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## MAKE WALES THE FIRST DEFORESTATION FREE NATION

Wales has set itself a national wellbeing goal of being more globally responsible, and this should include becoming a deforestation free nation. The next Welsh Government should eliminate products in global supply chains that are imported into Wales and cause significant damage to the environment – such as the deforestation linked to the production of soymeal and palm oil.

As well as destroying vital habitats and driving climate change, deforestation increases the risk of further zoonotic pathogens like COVID19 emerging as more natural habits disappear, viruses have more opportunities to jump the species gap into the human population. As long as we keep using products that drive deforestation, we risk more global pandemics.



# THE NEXT WELSH GOVERNMENT MUST PROTECT OUR RIVERS, SEAS AND LAND FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS BY DEDICATING 1% OF ALL BUDGETS TO RESTORING NATURE AND COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE.

## DEDICATE 1% OF ALL DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS TO NATURE AND SEEK NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Extra money is needed to encourage and support efforts to restore nature and combat climate change. The next Welsh Government must ensure that ALL Ministers are investing and embedding nature in decisions which will ultimately deliver for everybody - from health to local government planning decisions.

Imagine what could be achieved if just 1% of all departmental budgets were allocated to nature-based solutions! Enormous

investments could be created immediately – and the future returns would repay it many times over.

As part of this new way of investing, the next Welsh Government must make use of recently gained powers to raise public and private capital in new ways, such as natural capital investment to bring new money into the restoration and creation of nature.



## CREATE AND RESTORE CARBON-RICH HABITATS TO HALT NATURE'S DECLINE AND TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

From our peated uplands down to our coastal seagrass meadows, Wales plays host to rich and diverse ecosystems. They're home to some of our most iconic species, and they also provide us with vital natural services like flood defences and carbon storage.

However, decades of human activity and climate change have taken their toll. Many of these areas are degraded to the point where their futures are in doubt unless we act to restore them.

The good news is that we can bend the curve of Welsh nature's decline in a way which also helps in the fight against climate change. The next Welsh Government must focus investment on creating and restoring carbon-rich habitats – like peatland, saltmarsh, seagrass and woodland – that draw carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. This must include investment in our Natura 2000 site network; SSSIs; and Marine Conservation Zones.



# REMOVE ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS IN RIVERS TO LET NATURE FLOW

A healthy natural world thrives in vast connected landscapes. It means different species have larger and safer places to live than they would in a fragmented landscape, and it also makes them more resilient to change by allowing them more opportunities to move and adapt.

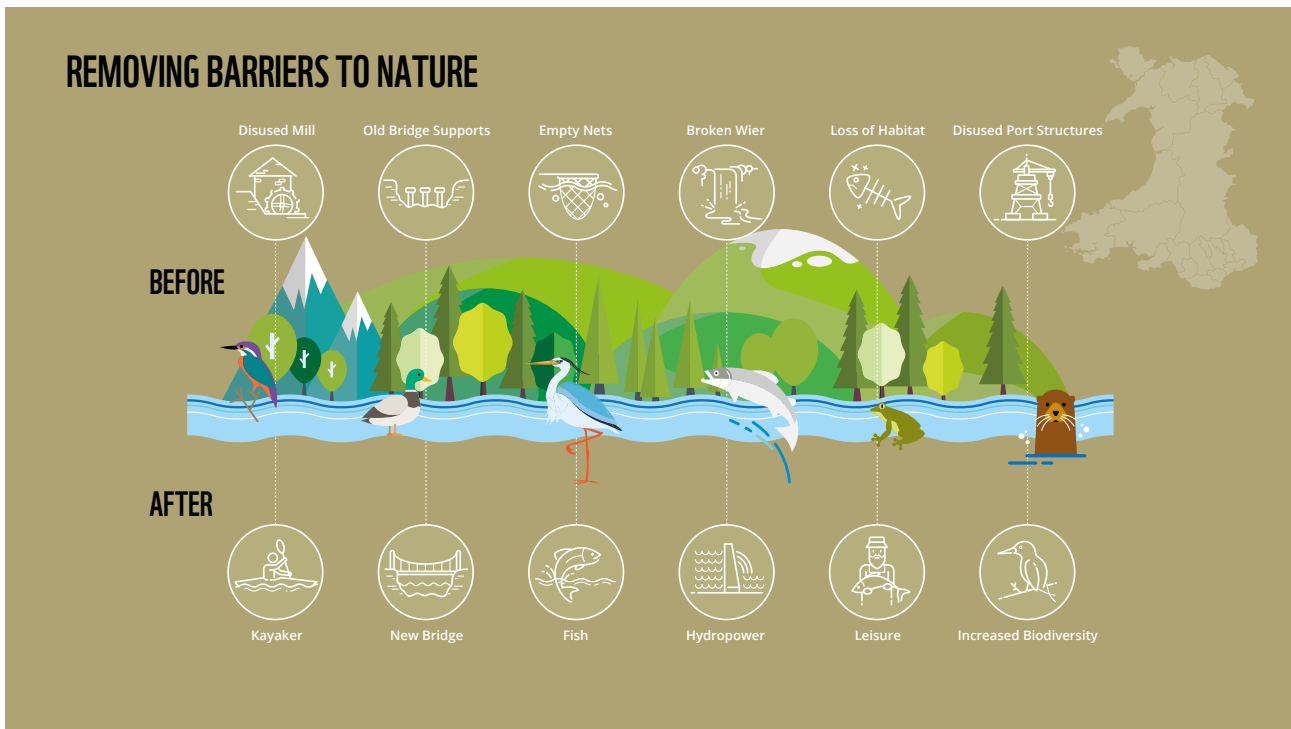
Yet those connected landscapes are rarely present across Wales, with things like roads; buildings; and dams regularly creating new barriers to nature which jeopardise its future. To deal with this we need to start building in a smarter way; but we also need to remove the barriers we no longer need.

We call such barriers 'Grey Infrastructure'. These are things we once needed but are no longer used – often left to decay or forgotten about. Looking specifically at

rivers these are things like old weirs, dams, old bridge supports and culverts.

By removing such barriers, the next Welsh Government would restore the natural flow of our rivers, improving their resilience to seasonal changes, flooding, pollution incidents, and major events such as storms which are likely to increase in frequency as a result of climate change. Over the longer term, restored connected landscapes promotes biodiversity by enabling displaced species to return and historic habitats to regenerate.

The next Welsh Government must work with Natural Resources Wales to conduct a national survey of all problematic grey river infrastructures and fund a programme to remove them.



# DELIVER A STRONG, INDEPENDENT POST-BREXIT ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE BODY IN ITS FIRST YEAR.

The next Welsh Government must ensure that our environmental principles and governance system is as good, if not better, following our departure from the European Union. EU legislation has helped strengthen protection of species and habitats, improve air quality and clean up rivers and seas: this progress must continue.

The EU process also protects citizens' rights by providing anyone a liability free way of raising environmental concerns and

accessing justice against those suspected of being in breach of environmental law. This can result in the guilty party being ordered to take action to put right their errors, as well as making repeat offences much less likely.

It's vital that the strength of this system is maintained, if not strengthened by the next Welsh Government: it must make it a priority to deliver a strong, independent and well-resourced environmental governance body within its first year.



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