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Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00144/22

Roger Thomas, Chair
Karen Whitfield, Joint Director
Susan Evans, Joint Director
Wales Environment Link

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21 February 2022

Dear Roger, Karen and Susan,

Thank you for your letter of 17 January addressed to the First Minister, myself and the Deputy Minister of Climate Change regarding the nature and climate emergency. I am responding as this matter falls within my portfolio.

The climate and nature emergency is not the next global crisis. It is already upon us and our vision and ambition is to plan a better, fairer, and greener future for us all. The 2020s need to be the decisive decade of action in tackling the climate emergency.

Ahead of COP26 we published *Net Zero Wales* to focus on how we will achieve our second carbon budget. Progress was made at COP26 but I agree we can and must do more. We should use the momentum generated to seek even greater commitments and action.

I was pleased to see progress on fossil fuels, including new members joining us in the Powering Past Coal Alliance and the new Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, which Wales joined as a core member. The Welsh Government's policy objective is to avoid the continued extraction and consumption of fossil fuels and to bring to a managed end the extraction and use of coal. Coal licences may be needed in wholly exceptional circumstances, but the presumption will always be against coal extraction. I am determined to deliver on these commitments, converting words into action on the ground.

In March 2021 the Senedd formally committed Wales to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Alongside the net zero target, we also updated our interim targets and 2nd and 3rd carbon budgets, as follows:

- Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) – 37% average reduction,
- Carbon Budget 3 (2026-30): 58% average reduction
- 2030 - 63% reduction,
- 2040 - 89% reduction
- 2050 – at least 100% reduction (net zero)

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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.

This pathway means our goals in Wales would be consistent with meeting the Paris 1.5°C goal as well as the goal of a Globally Responsible Wales, enshrined in our Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. More than half of Welsh emissions occur in areas where policy is partly or fully reserved, which means we are heavily reliant on UK Government action and we are calling on them to play their part too. The global challenge of climate change requires the same collective response from world leaders and requires everyone to act both locally and internationally.

Our Programme for Government has at its heart the ambition to tackle the nature and climate emergencies, enhance green spaces at all scales, and ensuring we meet our existing and emerging international commitments for biodiversity. Actions to tackle climate change should look to benefit and not further harm nature, tackling both emergencies through nature based solutions where possible. We aim to strengthen the connections between communities and nature. Increasing and diversifying investment into nature recovery, and building capacity in the delivery sector are essential. Funding initiatives over the next three years such as the Nature Networks programme, Local Places for Nature, the National Peatlands Action Programme, Natur am Byth and LIFE will ensure our most precious habitats and species are able to thrive and deliver nature to wherever people live.

We welcome *Nature Positive by 2030* and we have demonstrated our commitment to becoming 'nature positive' by declaring a nature emergency. We will consider the recommendations and look for opportunities to incorporate them into our approach and build on the actions already underway. Our legislative and policy frameworks give us the platform to deliver integrated actions and the wider benefits the report refers. It is imperative we all work together to ensure our finite resources are targeted effectively.

The UK Biodiversity framework has set out how we will work together following the conclusion of COP 15 negotiations. We will need to set out targets for Wales to deliver our domestic and international obligations up to 2030 through our National Resources Policy and Nature Recovery Action Plan. Securing sustainable public and private funding, and targeting it effectively, will be key.

The Welsh Government's path to decarbonisation puts the welfare of our people, the health of our economy, and the protection and enhancement of nature front and centre. The challenge of climate change requires everyone to work together across geographic and sectoral boundaries, and collaboration is essential if we are going to be successful. Part of my role is to lead a Team Wales approach where all of my Cabinet colleagues, local government, individuals, businesses and communities step up and play their part. The Welsh Government welcomes the partnership and engagement of WEL's member organisations.

Attached are detailed comments on the eight points in your letter.

Yours sincerely,



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Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change