

Press Release

June 2022

Leading health and environment charities demand that Welsh Government enshrine laws to protect nature.

Over 30 leading health and environmental organisations in Wales, have written an open letter to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford demanding that the Welsh Government brings forward legislation to establish statutory targets for nature's recovery, alongside an independent body to hold public authorities to account on their environmental commitments.

The letter highlights the nature and public health crises facing Wales, and calls for ambitious government action to create a healthy environment for nature and people to thrive in.

One in six of species is at risk of being lost from Wales, with only a fraction of the best nature sites on land and at sea are reported to be in good condition. Toxic air cannot be ignored with over 1600 people dying early in Wales each year due to air pollution.

Wales is the last country in the UK to set up a new independent body to enforce environmental laws. This continued delay in passing laws to protect and improve Wales' environment undermines people's right to environmental justice and is diminishing the reputation of the Welsh Government has a reputation as a world leader on sustainable development.

Annie Smith, Chair of Wales Environment Link's Biodiversity Working Group said:

"We are in the midst of a nature and climate emergency - and as one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, Wales can ill afford to fall behind in matters of environmental protection. Nature is our life support system. We need new laws to drive its recovery for the benefit of current and future generations, and an independent watchdog to hold government to account."

Joseph Carter, Chair of Healthy Air Cymru said:

"Over 1600 people die early as a result of air pollution every year in Wales, it exacerbates lung conditions and causes new ones. Toxic air is affecting the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Just as no one should have to drink dirty water, no one should be forced to breathe dirty air. It's time

we move into action, and movement requires leadership. We need the Welsh Government to lead the way by enshrining environmental laws to clean our air, water and restore nature.”

Supported by all WEL members



Wales Environment Link (WEL) is a network of environmental, countryside and heritage Non-Governmental Organisations in Wales. WEL is a respected intermediary body connecting the government and the environmental NGO sector. Our vision is a thriving Welsh environment for future generations.

Swyddfa Caerdydd

Tramshed Tech
Uned D, Stryd Pendyris Caerdydd CF11 6BH
F: 07498 228066 | E: enquiry@waleslink.org
Twydar: @WalesLink

Cardiff Office

Tramshed Tech
Unit D, Pendyris Street, Cardiff CF11 6BH
T: 07498 228066 | E: enquiry@waleslink.org
Twitter: @WalesLink

www.waleslink.org