

**Sustainable Farming and Environment:
Action towards 2020
A summary of the report and assessment of implications for BBNPA
Executive Summary**

- Farming activity essential to maintenance & integrity of landscapes
 - Significant proportion of beef & sheep may be extensively managed where ecological management will be at least as important as food production
 - Extensive systems using indigenous breeds to manage grazing at lowest cost
 - Will be unprofitable in own right – will need financial incentives
 - Collaboration will become the norm for marketing, production **and environmental projects**
 - Farming can contribute to climate change adaptation/mitigation:
 - Self sufficiency in energy supplies
 - Reduction in transport costs
 - Soil/vegetation management for carbon storage/flood risk mitigation
 - Small scale energy schemes to reduce emissions and increase profit
 - Biomass for on farm and community use
 - Water conservation
 - Demand for agri-environment schemes will always outstrip supply
 - Need to develop sustainable approaches to reward provision of EGS
 - Reducing soil carbon loss will require restoration of peatland water tables to reduce risk of oxidation
 - Countering flooding needs creation of:
 - coastal/riverine wetlands
 - tree/shrub planting
 - natural regeneration
 - managed grazing
- To create vegetation required to slow down run off from increasing rainfall
- Woodland management and increased planting will contribute to diversification income
 - Planning guidance an essential component of sustainability in rural areas including:
 - Affordable housing
 - Farm diversification
 - Empowerment allows rural communities to devise local solutions/ideas for:
 - Business development
 - Diversification
 - Environmental initiatives

Connecting to the Market (Chapter 3)

Recommendation 3.7

- Facilitate closer working links between agencies (e.g. Welsh Agricultural Organisation Society and Wales Co-Operative Centre) to make best use of their expertise to assist farmer collaboration both in terms of specific food marketing but also the wider contexts such as purchasing collaborations and **environmental projects**.

Recommendation 3.9

- Provide industry support to increase the number of branded products achieving protected name (PGI, PDO, TSG) status and extend opportunities for more valuable **(environmental/ethical) export sales**.

Recommendation 3.20

- Farming industry representatives should co-ordinate a campaign to promote the positive **benefits delivered by Welsh farming including environmental services (e.g. biodiversity, water and carbon management)**, animal health and welfare, fresh local food of high quality.

Delivering Environmental Goods & Services (Chapter 4)

- Soil & vegetation management will enhance carbon storage & help to reduce flood risk
- AE schemes need better integration with rural economy (Axes 3/4) to help deliver more sustainable farming incomes and improved environmental management
- Government needs to seek out new ways for the market to help cover a greater proportion of the cost of providing essential EGS

Recommendation 4.3

- The introduction of a 'payment-by-results' element within agri-environment schemes needs further investigation in order to reinforce the overall philosophy of connecting to the market.

Recommendation 4.4

- The Welsh Assembly Government should pilot a range of co-operative agri-environment scheme models based on the key themes of local engagement and innovation.

Recommendation 4.9

- Dealing with climate change should be clearly identified as a major priority within the Rural Development Plan. Through meeting this priority, individual measures should improve the management of biodiversity, landscape and water resources whilst delivering a stronger rural economy that provides proper rewards for those engaged in sustainable land management.

Recommendation 4.18

- Evaluate the scope for developing closer links between retailers, consumers and those participating in land management schemes so as to improve returns to the producers of environmental goods and services.

Recommendation 4.20

- Investigate the establishment of a more systematic approach to involving farmers in the provision of carbon off-setting and water management services.

Sustaining rural communities (Chapter 5)

Recommendation 5.2

- Pilot new forms of engagement between National Park Authorities and local communities to improve their socio-economic development performance, and undertake a further review of their function and performance in 2012.

Recommendation 5.3

- Experiment with new landscape designations in a form modelled on the Regional Nature Park, and also consider extending existing designations to cover a larger proportion of Welsh rural land area.

Recommendation 5.5

- The Welsh Assembly Government must keep under close review the appropriateness of current planning advice, and report on the performance of local authorities in meeting the targets to be set in their Local Development Plans for the provision of affordable housing.

Recommendation 5.7

- Assess the feasibility and impact of introducing a tourism business mandatory registration scheme in Wales.

Recommendation 5.9

- Reprioritise and invigorate the resource available to develop rural tourism and strengthen the links between agriculture, forestry and tourism (e.g. country sport, local food, farm based tourism).

Recommendation 5.10

- Mainstream the Adfywio approach of providing infrastructure and related support to integrate outdoor recreation users with tourism businesses and the natural environment.