

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Template – Part 1

Policy title and purpose (brief outline):	Natural Resources Policy. Under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Welsh Ministers are required to publish a statutory Natural Resources Policy. The Natural Resources Policy will form a key part of the delivery of the sustainable management of natural resources by setting out what Welsh Ministers consider to be the key risks, priorities and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, including what should be done in relation to biodiversity and climate change; and Welsh Ministers' policies for contributing to the sustainable management of natural resources.
Name of official:	Leanne Fraser
Department:	ERA EU Strategy and Exit
Date:	August 2017
Signature:	

1. Please provide a brief description of the policy/decision.

The Natural Resources Policy (NRP) is a statutory requirement of the Environment (Wales) Act. The Act requires that it must set out the Welsh Ministers' policies for contributing to the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and also set out the risks, opportunities and priorities for SMNR including what should be done in relation to biodiversity and climate change. The Act also requires that the NRP is developed and implemented by applying the principles of SMNR¹.

The Natural Resources Policy is an essential part of the framework for delivering the sustainable management of natural resources. The Act makes provision to help plan and manage Wales' natural resources at a national and local level, through specific requirements (ie) the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR), the NRP and area statements. The provisions will enable greater integration and simplification of policies, plans and programmes, where this is consistent with existing statutory duties.

Evidence presented in the statutory State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR), shows that none of Wales' ecosystems display all the attributes of resilience². Overall, biological diversity is declining, which can be seen by the loss of habitats and species. The extent of some habitats has also declined significantly. The NRP responds to this through use of international best practice by taking an integrated approach to maintaining and enhancing the resilience of Wales' ecosystems, recognising the interconnected nature of our economy, society, culture and environment.

Through applying the 9 principles of SMNR, the NRP identifies national opportunities and priorities to enable Wales to more sustainably use and manage natural resources. The NRP identifies where Wales' natural resources currently contribute across the well-being goals and opportunities and priorities to increase their contribution in the longer term, whilst mitigating the risks to the benefits society receives from them.

The NRP recognises that everyone has a stake in our natural resources and a role to play in ensuring these resources are sustainably managed. Through consultation feedback and the findings of our extensive engagement exercise, three national priorities for the management of our natural resources have emerged, namely:

- Delivering nature-based solutions;
- Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency; and,
- Taking a place-based approach.

¹ The objective of SMNR and the principles of SMNR are define by Part 1 sections 3 and 4 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

² <http://www.naturalresources.wales/sonarr?lang=en>

These priorities have been designed to work together to help us to tackle challenges and realise opportunities that our natural resources provide.

The NRP also sets out three broad challenges and four headline opportunities:

Key challenges

- Improving ecosystem resilience
- Climate change and the decline in biological diversity
- The UK's Withdrawal from the EU

Opportunities

- Supporting successful, sustainable communities;
- Promoting green growth and innovation to create sustainable jobs;
- Supporting a more resource efficient economy; and,
- Maintaining healthy, active and connected communities.

The NRP provides a key contribution to the delivery of programme for government 'Taking Wales Forward', as well as being crucial for the delivery of the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It is also a core part of our delivery of headline international obligations under the UN Global Goals, the Paris Agreement and the UN Convention on Biological diversity, which refers to a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources.

In order to realise the opportunities and maintain the current benefits derived from our natural resources, their resilience must be maintained and enhanced, along with that of the ecosystems that support them. This means that the wide range of benefits or services our natural resources provide for us, such as clean air and water, food and materials, the reduction of flood risk and mitigation of the current impacts of climate change, are at risk. In addition, biodiversity, which underpins the functioning of our ecosystems, continues to be in overall decline.

Within the Environment and Rural Affairs portfolio, the Natural Resources Policy is also important in the context of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

Given the profound implications of EU exit to the current policy, legal and financial framework, the Natural Resources Policy plays a key role as part of the Departmental response and the need to ensure that Wales benefits from the significant opportunities the better management of our natural resources can provide in parallel with addressing the clear challenges we face.

Under the legislation, Natural Resources Wales' Area Statements will facilitate the delivery of the policy at a local level, including through wider public service delivery. Local Development Plans and Well-being Plans under the Well-being of Future Generations Act must have regard to the evidence in the Area Statements.

The Natural Resources Policy will be reviewed on a 5 yearly cycle aligned to the Welsh Government elections. After the publication of NRP, NRW will commence the preparation of area statements in late summer/autumn 2017. Welsh Ministers have committed to Area Statements providing all Wales coverage by 2019.

2. We have a legal duty to engage with people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (please refer to Annex A of the EIA guidance) identified as being relevant to the policy. What steps have you taken to engage with stakeholders, both internally and externally?

The Natural Resources Policy is a strategic and cross-cutting policy on the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources. As such, there are no people or groups with protected characteristics specifically targeted by this policy as the benefits natural resources provide are for all. However, positive impacts have been identified for some groups in section 4.

In keeping with new ways of working under the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and to demonstrate compliance with the principles of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR), an engagement and collaborative approach has been taken to the development and to informing the production of the final Natural Resources Policy.

The 12 week public consultation on the NRP was launched on Monday 14 November 2016 and closed on 13th February 2017. Two cross-sectoral workshops were held during the consultation period; on 7th December an independently facilitated event was held, which also drew in expertise from the Natural Environment Research Council and is written up below. A further workshop was held 23rd January for the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment & Rural Affairs Roundtable. Throughout the consultation sectoral specific engagement events were undertaken and on 17th January 2017, Welsh Government presented at a webinar hosted by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), open to a large number of stakeholders, to discuss "Why the Natural Resource Policy Matters to Third Sector?" – Key Questions and Comments.

3. Your decisions must be based on robust evidence. What evidence base have you used? Please list the source of this evidence e.g. National Survey for Wales. Do you consider the evidence to be strong, satisfactory or weak and are there any gaps in evidence?

The Natural Resources Policy

The Environment Wales Act 2016 placed a duty on Natural Resources Wales to publish a State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR). The purpose of SoNaRR is set out in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. It states that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must prepare and publish a report containing:

- An assessment of the state of natural resources in Wales;
- An assessment of the extent to which the sustainable management of natural resources is being achieved;
- An assessment of biodiversity (to support the biodiversity duty on public bodies under section 6 of the Act, and the publication of a list of biodiversity of principle importance to Wales under section 7);
- What NRW considers to be the main trends and factors that are affecting and are likely to affect the state of natural resources; and
- Any aspects about the state of natural resources on which NRW considers it does not have sufficient information to make an assessment.

The first SoNaRR was published in September 2016.

SoNaRR is an evidence base to which Welsh Ministers must have regard when preparing or revising the Natural Resources Policy.

SoNaRR undertook an assessment of the contribution that Wales' natural resources provides across the well-being goals. This assessment incorporated the latest evidence base in relation to the role natural resources play in tackling inequalities.

SoNaRR can be accessed via the link below:

<http://www.naturalresources.wales/sonarr?lang=en>

In addition to SoNaRR;

Evidence from the EU Horizon 2020 project³ and International Union for the Conservation of Nature⁴ with regards to nature based solutions.

Evidence from the European Centre for Environment & Human Health⁵

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/index.cfm?pg=nbs>

⁴ <https://www.iucn.org/theme/ecosystem-management/our-work/ecosystem-based-adaptation-and-climate-change>

⁵ <http://www.ecehh.org/>

It is important to note any opportunities you have identified that could advance or promote equality.



Impact

Please complete the next section to show how this policy / decision / practice could have an impact (positive or negative) on the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010 (refer to the EIA guidance document for more information).

Lack of evidence is not a reason for *not* progressing to carrying out an EIA. Please highlight any gaps in evidence that you have identified and explain how/if you intend to fill these gaps.

4.1 Do you think this policy / decision / practice will have a positive or negative impact on people because of their age?

Age	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
Younger people <i>(Children and young people, up to 18)</i>	√			<p>The NRP is designed to benefit people of all ages rather than have a specific impact on people due to their age. It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p> <p>Tackling the long term challenges of improving ecosystem resilience, biodiversity decline, climate change and withdrawal from the EU and delivering the three national priorities will lead to benefit people of all ages but including providing long term benefits for young people. For example increasing renewable energy and moving to a more circular</p>

				economy NRP will reduce Co2 emissions and provide long term economic opportunities. Increasing the value from supply chains will make industries reliant on natural resources such as farming or timber more sustainable. Nature based solutions can increase physical and mental well-being, mitigate flood risk, help us adapt to climate change and reduce air pollution. Taking a placed based approach will help ensure that local priorities are understood and community led practical solutions lead to wider possible benefits for communities.
People 18- 50	√			The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their age. It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.
Older people (50+)	√			The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their age. It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.



4.2 Because they are disabled?

Impairment	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
Visual impairment			√	<p>The NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities equally, by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p> <p>The NRP should not have a specific impact on people with any disability or impairment.</p>
Hearing impairment			√	<p>The NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities equally, by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p> <p>The NRP should not have a specific impact on people with any disability or impairment.</p>
Physically disabled	√			<p>Tackling climate change and reducing emissions through nature based solutions can have a positive impact for people with disabilities. For example, those suffering from respiratory illnesses are likely to benefit from improved air quality through effective efforts to help reduce the likelihood of extreme weather events in future (including reduced frequency of high daily temperatures during summer).</p>

				<p>As well as the contribution to health impacts from external factors like air quality, access and use of green and blue space can help to tackle many of the key health issues faced by Wales which are associated with lifestyle choices and are in many ways considered 'preventable'. These include many of the chronic conditions caused by insufficient physical activity such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.</p> <p>There is significant potential for the NRP to have a positive impact on tackling mental health issues. Public Health Wales have listed Green Infrastructure as a "best buy" and responded positively to the consultation on the NRP and it's priorities, highlighting that access to green spaces has been linked to improved mental and physical health. The evidence indicates that access to green spaces can contribute to stress reduction and an increase in general well-being.</p>
Learning disability			√	<p>The NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities equally, by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p> <p>The NRP should not have a specific impact on people with any disability or impairment.</p>
Mental health problem	√			<p>There is significant potential for the NRP to have a positive impact on tackling mental health issues. Public Health Wales have listed Green Infrastructure as a "best buy" and responded</p>



				<p>positively to the consultation, highlighting that access to green spaces has been linked to improved mental and physical health. The evidence indicates that access to green spaces can contribute to stress reduction and an increase in general well-being.</p> <p>Green spaces can also lead to opportunities for outdoor physical activity which can again have a positive impact on mental health through improved physical fitness.</p>
Other impairments issues			√	<p>The NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities equally, by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p> <p>The NRP should not have a specific impact on people with any disability or impairment.</p>

4.3 Because of their gender (man or woman)?

Gender	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence)/ How might it impact?
Male			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on a particular gender.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current</p>



				and future generations.
Female			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on a particular gender.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>

4.4 Because they are transgender?

Transgender	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>



4.5 Because of their marriage or civil partnership?

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence)/ How might it impact?
Marriage and Civil Partnership			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on marriage or civil partnership.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>

4.6 Because of their pregnancy or maternity?

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
Pregnancy	√			<p>Tackling climate change through nature based solutions and reducing emissions can have a positive impact on pregnant women. For example it can help build resilience in communities to extreme weather events, such as extreme temperatures. The World Health Organisation: Protecting Health in Europe from Climate Change⁶ stated that “pregnant workers with increased body metabolism are at heightened risk from increased temperatures in the work environment”.</p>

⁶ http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/74401/E91865.pdf&rct=j&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=u2UVVa-RG4 iaP3iglgG&ved=0CBQQFjAA&usg=AFQjCNEv-fAVIihavKJfOxebesb2JxF6vA

Maternity (the period after birth)			√	
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4.7 Because of their race?

Race	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
Ethnic minority people e.g. Asian, Black,			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.
National Origin (e.g. Welsh, English)			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.
Asylum Seeker and Refugees			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.
Gypsies and Travellers			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.
Migrants			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.
Others			√	The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their origin or race.



4.8 Because of their religion and belief or non-belief?

Religion and belief or non – belief	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence)/ How might it impact?
Different religious groups including Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Others (please specify)			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on religious groups.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>
Belief e.g. Humanists			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on religious groups.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>
Non-belief			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on religious groups.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>



4.9 Because of their sexual orientation?

Sexual Orientation	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence)/ How might it impact?
Gay men			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>
Lesbians			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>
Bi-sexual			√	<p>The NRP will not have a specific impact on people due to their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities as a whole by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations.</p>



4.10 Do you think that this policy will have a positive or negative impact on people’s human rights? Please refer to point 1.4 of the EIA Annex A - Guidance for further information about Human Rights.

Human Rights	Positive	Negative	None / Negligible	Reason for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
Human Rights including Human Rights Act and UN Conventions	√			<p>The joined-up and proactive planning and management of Wales’ natural resources embodies fully the international values of sustainable development and has the potential to have a positive impact on all.</p> <p>The sustainable natural resource management provisions set out in Part 1 of the Act have been specifically designed to complement the principles confirmed in UN’s Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and align fully with the UN’s Framework Convention on Climate Change objectives. The EU Commission, UN CBD Secretariat and other international organisations have acknowledged the Act as an exemplar of best practice. The NRP, in setting out what Welsh Ministers consider to be the key risks, priorities and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, as well as the general and specific policies in relation to the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales. It is therefore consistent with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.</p>



If you have identified any impacts (other than negligible ones), positive or negative, on any group with protected characteristics, please complete Part 2.

Only if there are no or negligible positive or negative impacts should you go straight to part 2 and sign off the EIA.

Equality Impact Assessment – Part 2

Building on the evidence you gathered and considered in Part 1, please consider the following:

1.1 How could, or does, the policy help advance / promote equality of opportunity? For example, positive measures designed to address disadvantage and reach different communities or protected groups?

We have learnt from the experiences of our international partners and are using international best practice by for example, implementing the UN Convention on Biological Diversity ecosystem approach, to help Wales lead the way on Sustainable Development.

The NRP is a key part of delivery the sustainable management of natural resources for Wales. The sustainable management of natural resources is defined in section 3 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. It means using natural resources in a way and at a rate that promotes the achievement of the objective to maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide. In so doing, it meets the needs of present generations of people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and contributes to the achievement of the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Our natural resources provide many opportunities to support our communities in new, cost effective and resilient ways. Attractive, accessible and ecologically diverse green and blue spaces provide a focus for community activities and identity. They are associated with better mental and physical health and can provide a focus for community action and volunteering, helping to increase social capital, improve community cohesion and reduce antisocial behaviour. They can also be a stimulus to regeneration and investment. Low-income areas are often associated with lower quality housing and education, poor diet, and less access to good quality green space. Such deprivation is closely linked to poor health, yet health inequalities are halved in greener areas. Many of our most deprived communities live close to natural assets from which they are disconnected and currently provide very little benefit to those communities. Nature-based solutions, including increased access to green infrastructure, will help to reverse these negative impacts.

The NRP will ensure that decisions made by the Welsh Government and its partners, optimise the opportunities for our communities, economy and the environment in Wales – and that the needs of future generations are considered. By working collaboratively with other bodies, NRW will lead a new approach to planning natural resources at a local level, taking in to account local needs and priorities and publish area statements setting out the opportunities, challenges and broad actions required in a stated area to sustainably manage our natural resources. NRW has published a robust and current evidence base, SoNaRR, to ensure we have the right information to help inform decisions on how we can keep improving our environment and the communities we live in.

1.2 How could, or does, the policy / decision help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation?

The joined-up and proactive planning and management of Wales' natural resources embodies fully the international values of sustainable development and has the potential to have a positive impact on all.

The sustainable natural resource management provisions set out in Part 1 of the Act have been specifically designed to complement the principles confirmed in UN's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and align fully with the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change objectives. The EU Commission, UN CBD Secretariat and other international organisations have acknowledged the Act as an exemplar of best practice.

The NRP, in setting out what Welsh Ministers consider to be the key risks, priorities and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, as well as the general and specific policies in relation to the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, is therefore consistent with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

It will not have a direct influence on unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. However, it is intended that the NRP will lead to benefits for all local communities, as a whole, by encouraging decision makers to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of decisions on current and future generations. It is intended that all decision making will benefit all groups in society.

1.3 How could, or does, the policy /decision impact on advancing / promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

The joined-up and proactive planning and management of Wales' natural resources embodies fully the international values of sustainable development and has the potential to have a positive impact on all.

The sustainable natural resource management provisions set out in Part 1 of the Act have been specifically designed to complement the principles confirmed in UN's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and align fully with the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change objectives. The EU Commission, UN CBD Secretariat and other international organisations have acknowledged the Act as an exemplar of best practice.

The NRP, in setting out what Welsh Ministers consider to be the key risks, priorities and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, as well as the general and specific policies in relation to the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales, is therefore consistent with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The NRP will also encourage decision-makers to consider the needs and opportunities for different areas with the needs of communities by making 'taking a place based approach' a priority. The NRP focuses on collaborative working to deliver better results at a local level and recognises that communities are best placed to shape and understand local priorities and opportunities and to find practical solutions that bring the widest possible benefits.

1. Strengthening the policy

2.1 If the policy is likely to have a negative effect ('adverse impact') on any of the protected groups or good relations, what are the reasons for this?

What practical changes/actions could help reduce or remove any negative impacts identified in Part 1?

n/a – only positive or negligible effects were identified.

2.2 If no action is to be taken to remove or mitigate negative / adverse impact, please justify why.

(Please remember that if you have identified unlawful discrimination (immediate or potential) as a result of the policy, the policy must be changed or revised.)

n/a – only positive or negligible effects were identified.

2. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

<p>How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy?</p> <p>List details of any follow-up work that will be undertaken in relation to the policy (e.g. consultations, specific monitoring etc).</p>
<p>The NRP gives a firm commitment to develop an evaluation framework to demonstrate the extent to which Welsh Government is deliver our priorities in the NRP, supported by performance measures aligned to those in the suite of 'National Indicators for Wales'.</p>
<p>The results of all impact assessments where the impact is significant will be published on the Welsh Government's website.</p>
<p>N/a</p>



4. Declaration

***Please delete as appropriate:**

The policy *does / does not have a significant impact upon equality issues

Official completing the EIA
Name:
Department:
Date:
Signature:
Head of Division (Sign-off)
Name:



Job title and department:
Date:
Signature:
Review Date:

