



Addressing the climate and nature emergencies

What the Future Generations Report 2020 means for Local Authorities





Why we need to change our approach to address the climate & nature emergencies?

Stats and Trends:

Emissions in Wales have fallen by 31% since 1990 but they need to reduce dramatically in the next decade – the new target is 63% by 2030.



Global warming is likely to be the greatest cause of species extinctions this century - a 1.5°C average rise may put 20-30% of species at risk of extinction, while a warming of 2°C or more will mean that most ecosystems will struggle to survive.

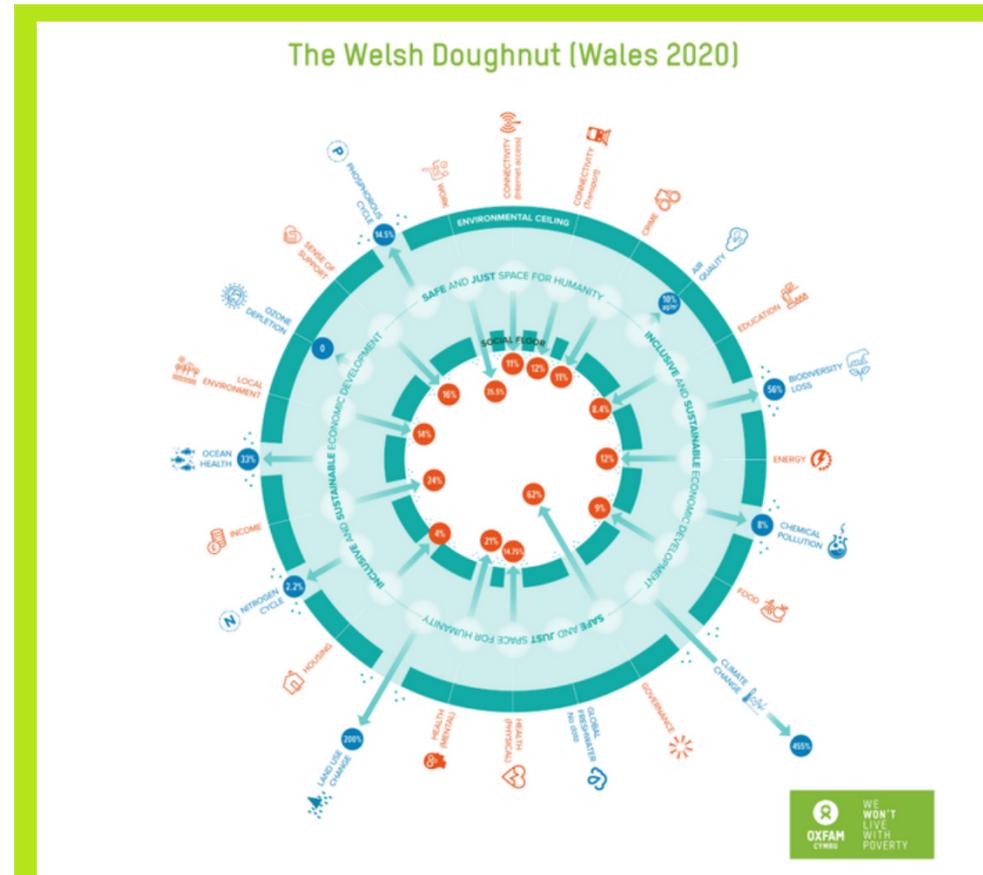


The top five global risks, are all environmental.

Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history. Biodiversity has seen an overall 60% decline in species across the globe since 1970.



Atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO²) levels have reached 414 ppm – the highest levels seen in human history.



Oxfam's Welsh Doughnut shows that Wales is not living within its environmental limits (which is the outside of the doughnut), or meeting its socio-economic goals (inside edge).

So, what's changing?

In Wales, we have the legislation and policies in place to ensure a more sustainable way of working.

The Environment Act requires public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems. The Well-being of Future Generations Act gives permission to public bodies to try out new solutions and work in a bolder and more integrated way to solve complex challenges like climate change and biodiversity loss.

Wales was the first country to declare a climate emergency in 2019 and has since declared its ambitions to be a leader in decarbonisation.

In February 2021, the Welsh Government laid regulations before the Senedd, which commit Wales to targets for net-zero emissions by 2050, as a response to the advice by the UK Climate Change Committee. The Welsh Government has also expressed ambitions to reach net-zero before 2050.

The COVID-19 pandemic has now given us an opportunity to rethink the way we do things and build back better in a green and just way that addresses both the climate and nature crises, along with other challenges facing our current and future generations.

In 2020 the Welsh Local Government Association established a Decarbonisation Panel to support local authorities in their decarbonisation efforts, and support the target of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030, specifically in the areas of procurement, transport, buildings and land use planning.



A vision for Wales and future generations



By 2050 Wales will have achieved its target of reducing emissions to net-zero, while contributing to all national well-being goals.

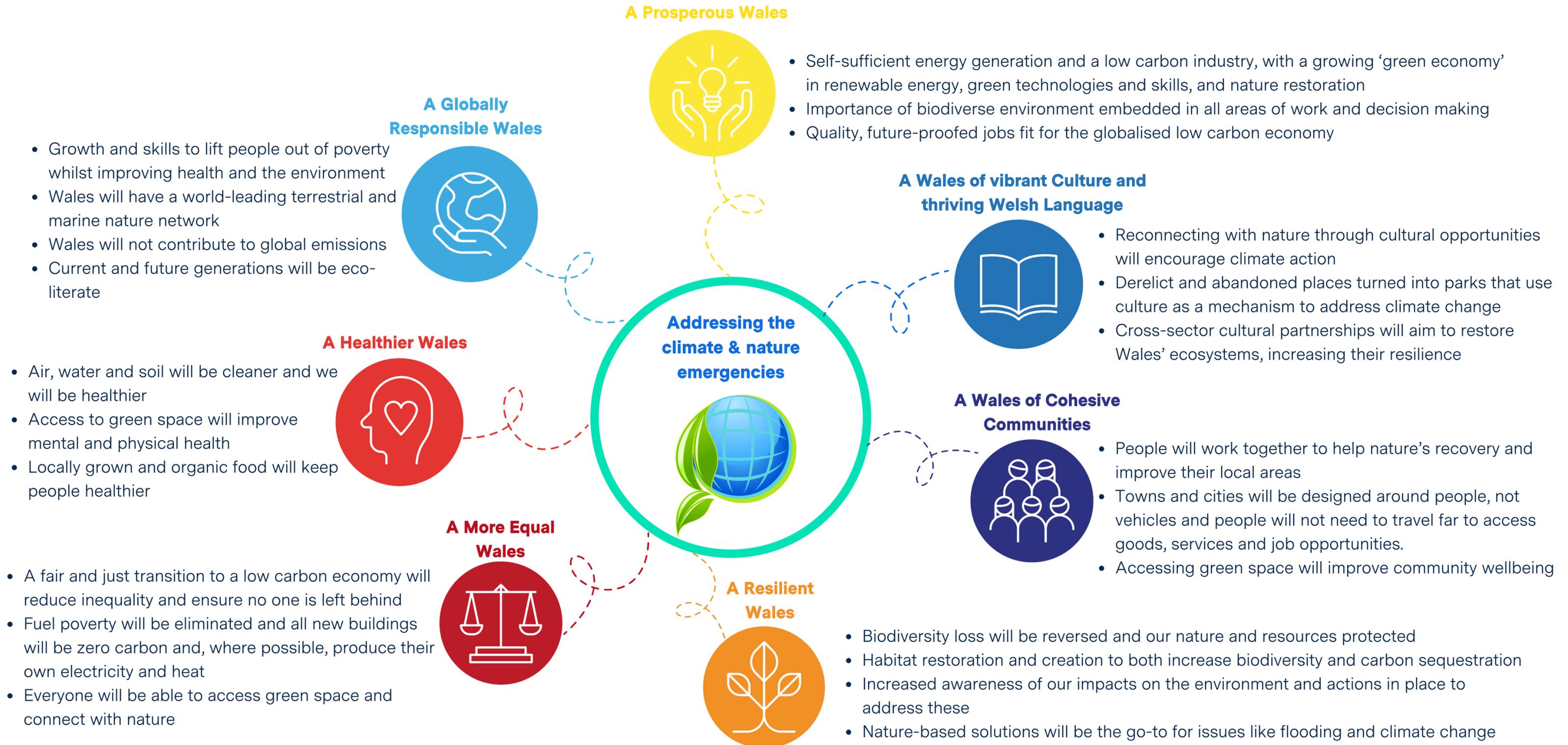
Our future generations will be living in a world where they don't have to fear their future; a low-carbon society that consumes within its means, has net-zero emissions, and is not contributing to climate impacts globally.

We will have reversed the decline of our biodiverse natural environment, developed a better awareness of our impacts as individuals and organisations and our future generations will be ecologically resilient, with healthy ecosystems, that support community well-being.

Sections on [Decarbonisation](#) and [A Resilient Wales](#),
Future Generations Report 2020



How can this vision contribute to the 7 well-being goals?



A Green & Just Recovery

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed deep structural inequalities in our economy and society including wage poverty, health inequalities, racial disparities, food poverty, job insecurity and imbalances in quality of housing. At the same time climate and ecological breakdown is escalating, and we risk exacerbating all of these challenges if we go back to the way things were.

Wales' recovery from the pandemic is an opportunity to enact change and build back better, that's why I have created a 5 point plan towards a green and just Covid-19 recovery for Wales:

1

Invest in skills and training to support the transition to a better future, creating new greener jobs.



2

Invest in nature and prioritise funding and support for large-scale habitat and wildlife restoration, creation and connectivity throughout Wales – including for natural flood defences, to implement the new national forest, and to ensure land use management and agriculture supports secure local food chains and distribution.



3

Invest in better ways to connect and move people through improving digital connectivity, active travel and public transport.



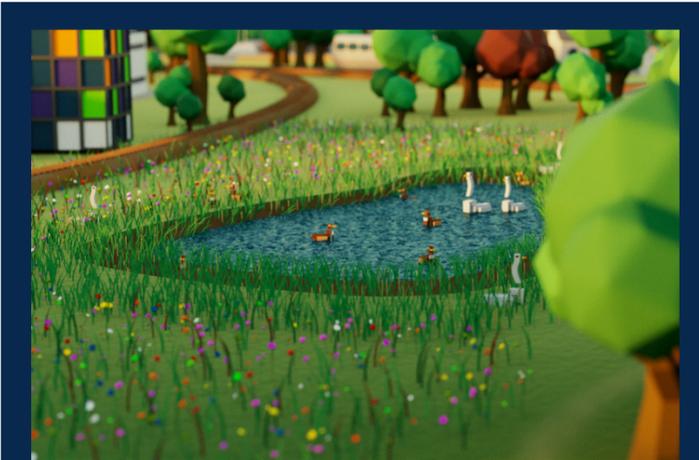
4

Invest in the industries and technologies of the future, and support for businesses that will help Wales to lead the low carbon revolution and lock wealth and jobs into local areas with investment in the foundational economy.



5

Develop an economic stimulus package that leads to job creation and supports the decarbonisation of homes, through building new low carbon affordable housing and investing in a national programme to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes.



A National Nature Service

The National Nature Service is a framework to rapidly establish new and future focused opportunities around skills, jobs and the restoration of Wales' natural environment, whilst also better aligning the existing mechanisms in place.

I have recommended that Welsh Government seek to deliver a National Nature Service to respond to the nature and climate emergencies and help address the economic and social (justice) fallout of the pandemic. It would do this by upskilling and expanding the workforce with good quality livelihoods in a sector shown to have significant job creation potential as part of a green and just recovery.

What can you do to contribute to this vision?



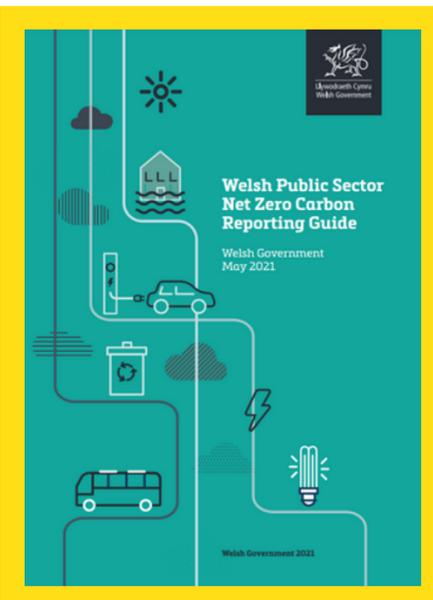
Local Authorities should :

- Take urgent action to address the climate and nature crisis together.
- Restore forests and peatland and take a more sustainable land-use approach to protect nature.
- Identify ways, including technology, to help connect all people with nature.
- Demonstrate how you are implementing Wales' Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Build zero carbon buildings and homes and retrofit existing buildings and homes.
- Promote and incentivise individual solutions to support behaviour change.
- Use land holdings to maximise biodiversity value.
- Require zero waste construction, and reduce emissions, through procurement processes.
- Prioritise local sustainable and active travel schemes.
- Support local initiatives on stewardship of land for biodiversity projects and renewable energy.
- Collaborate with other public bodies and environmental NGOs to combine ecological expertise and decision-making.
- Increase understanding of the natural environment among staff. Resource and prioritise carbon and eco-literacy training for all elected members and senior officers.
- Follow the principles of the circular economy and integrate this with areas like development of skills, innovation, the natural environment, local materials and saving money.
- Use sound evidence, such as Natural Resources Wales' Area Statements, i-tree assessments and natural capital accounting, to inform decision-making and development of plans and policies, demonstrating how you are investing in nature.
- Deliver year on year increases in biodiverse green and blue infrastructure, tree canopy cover, and nature-based solutions.
- Act on the health impacts relating to climate change, particularly the disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable.
- Ensure that all decisions, including pension fund investments, are compatible with the climate emergency.
- Accelerate action on reducing emissions to help meet Wales' new carbon targets by mapping the areas over which you have control and which have the biggest emissions and planning to reduce them.
- Wales' regional growth and city deals should demonstrate how investments are reducing carbon emissions overall and contributing towards local well-being objectives.
- Demonstrate how you are implementing Wales' Marine Plan and the marine Area Statement (where applicable).

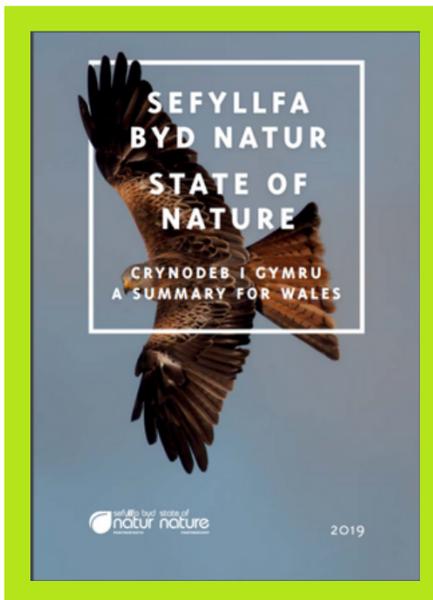




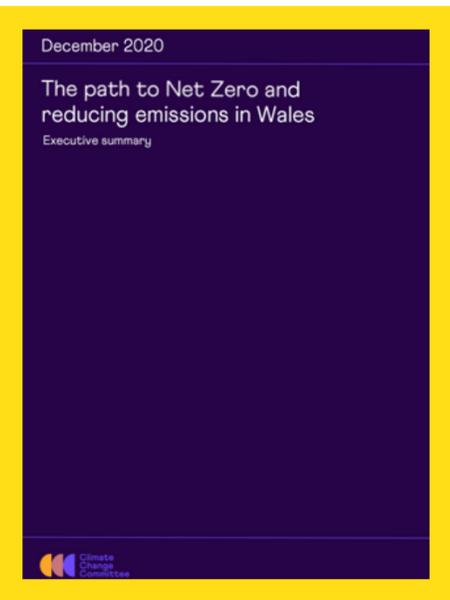
Useful resources and tools, which can help you follow these recommendations:



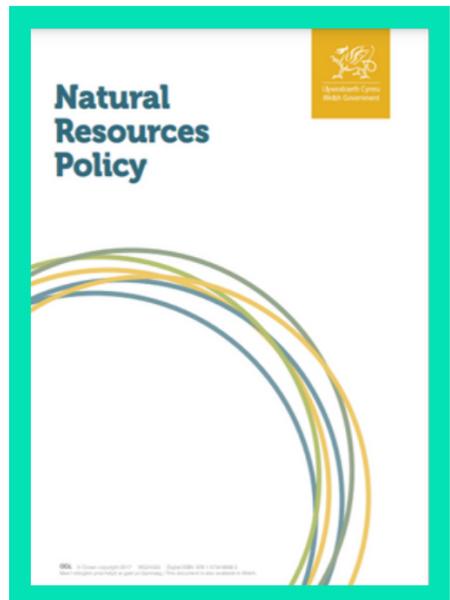
A once in five years report, setting out the Commissioner's assessment of progress made in implementing the Act within the reporting period.



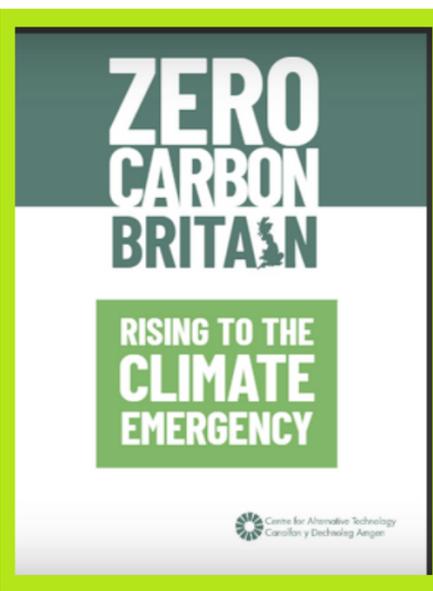
The RSPB 'State of Nature' 2019 Report provides a summary of wildlife in Wales and key findings from their research



In December 2020, the UK Committee on Climate Change produced two reports with advice to ministers on Wales' climate targets between now and 2050, and an assessment progress on reducing emissions to date.



Welsh Government outline their 3 priorities for managing natural resources and what they will do to support them.



Zero Carbon Britain: Rising to the Climate Emergency explores how we can achieve what is necessary. The scenario describes one possible future end point, in which the UK has risen to the challenges of the 21st century.



IPCC & IPBES participated in a four-day virtual workshop to examine the synergies and trade-offs between biodiversity protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation. This report details the findings and outcomes of the workshop.



NRW's 'Second State of Natural Resources Report 2020' looks at Wales' sustainability management of natural resources and the impact Wales has on the World. You may also wish to look at NRW's [Area Statements](#).



This is an independent, global review on the Economics of Biodiversity commissioned by HM Treasury. The report calls for changes in how we think, act and measure economic success to protect and enhance our prosperity and the natural world.

Useful contacts to support you with following these recommendations:

