

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,  
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

**Climate Change, Environment,  
and Infrastructure Committee**

Huw Irranca-Davies MS,  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for  
Climate Change and Rural Affairs

17 April 2025

Dear Huw,

**Approach to consideration of the Environment (Governance, Principles and Biodiversity Targets)  
(Wales) Bill**

I understand the Welsh Government is aiming to introduce the Environment (Governance, Principles and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill (the EGPBT Bill) to the Senedd in June. Given the subject matter of the EGPBT Bill, we anticipate it will be referred to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee (the Committee) for scrutiny.

You may be aware that the Committee is currently scrutinising two Bills: the Disused Mine and Quarry Tips (Wales) Bill and the Bus Services (Wales) Bill. It is vital that we are able to manage effectively our Bill scrutiny over the coming months. As such, we are suggesting a creative approach in relation to the EGPBT Bill.

Subject to the Senedd's agreement of the general principles of the Bus Services (Wales) Bill, Stage 2 scrutiny will begin in the autumn term. We are keen to minimise overlap between Stage 1 scrutiny of the EGPBT Bill and Stage 2 scrutiny of the Bus Services (Wales) Bill. Our strong preference, therefore, would be to hold oral evidence sessions with external stakeholders on the EGPBT Bill before the end of the summer term. However, the disadvantage of this proposal is that it will, in practice, reduce significantly the time available for key stakeholders to prepare written evidence in advance of their respective oral evidence sessions.

The EGPBT Bill is highly anticipated. Further, based on your assertion that the Bill will be one of the most significant "pieces of legislation this Senedd will have seen", we presume it will be lengthy and complex. It is essential, therefore, to provide external stakeholders with sufficient time to prepare to give evidence. To this end, we consider it would be beneficial for the EGPBT Bill and associated

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materials, such as the Explanatory Memorandum, to be published in draft in May, in advance of the Bill's introduction. This would give key stakeholders the opportunity to consider, at an early stage, the proposals in the draft Bill. You will recall that a similar approach was taken for the Environment (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Bill, albeit for a different reason, i.e. to enable the Committee to take evidence and report on the draft Bill in the absence of Stage 1 scrutiny.

I am sure you can appreciate that the Committee finds itself in a difficult position, having to scrutinise two Bills concurrently, with a third Bill due shortly. We would not, of course, want our proposed approach to set a precedent that would result in less time available for Senedd Committees to undertake Bill scrutiny. However, these are exceptional circumstances and require a creative approach from the Welsh Government. If you are unable to consider this proposal, it is likely that the Committee will need to request more time for Stage 1 scrutiny of the EGPBT Bill in due course. We ask that you consider our proposed approach at the earliest available opportunity.

I am copying this letter to the Rt Hon Elin Jones MS, Chair of the Business Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,  
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg./ We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.