

EPGBTWB 36 - Tystiolaeth gan: Y Grid Cenedlaethol | Evidence from: National Grid

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith | Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Bil yr Amgylchedd (Egwyddorion, Llywodraethiant a Thargedau Bioamrywiaeth) (Cymru) | Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill

1. What are your views on the general principles of the Bill, and is there a need for legislation to deliver the stated policy intention?

We support the principles of the Bill and to enshrine these principles into law. The decline of biodiversity in the UK is well documented and National Grid takes steps to protect and enhance the wider environment in which we operate. We are delivering vital projects to connect more clean, low-carbon power to the transmission network in Wales and enhance Wales energy security. We therefore support the Bill's purpose, to establish a robust framework to combat the combined impact of climate and nature emergencies, protecting the environment from harm.

2. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 1 - Environmental objective and principles (sections 1 to 7)**

We broadly support these principles.

3. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 2 - The Office of Environmental Governance Wales (sections 8 to 32 and Schedules 1, 2 and 3)**

We support the creation of a new office of environmental Governance Wales. Welsh Government will need to consider this new bodies' role in the planning system, particularly how they can balance protecting and enhancing the natural environment whilst also playing a key role supporting the swift approval of vital electricity network infrastructure needed at pace, to connect low carbon power and support the clean energy transition, thereby combating the climate emergency.

4. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 3 - Biodiversity targets, etc (sections 33 to 38)**

We support the proposed provisions to introduce a biodiversity target setting framework and provide the Welsh Ministers with a power to set biodiversity targets in regulations. Although all National Grid projects aim to avoid or minimise environmental impacts through careful route optioneering and sighting studies, the significant work required to deliver the electricity network upgrades needed to achieve UK Government's ambition of "clean power" by 2030 will have an impact on biodiversity. National Grid's approach to biodiversity is to deliver the best outcomes for nature from consumer funding and the introduction of clear biodiversity targets would be helpful in supporting this.

5. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 4 - General (sections 39 to 45 and Schedule 4)**

N/A

6. What are the potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and how does the Bill take account of them?

N/A

7. How appropriate are the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Explanatory Memorandum)

We consider it appropriate for the Bill to establish powers for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation on environmental principles, a new office for environmental governance in Wales and biodiversity targets. This mirrors similar provisions set out in the Environment Act 2021 by the UK Government.

8. Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

N/A

9. What are your views on the Welsh Government's assessment of the financial implications of the Bill as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum?

N/A

10. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise about the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum or any related matters?

N/A
