

**REWILDING
BRITAIN**



WELSH REWILDING MANIFESTO

#ThinkBigActWild

IT'S TIME TO LET NATURE LEAD.

We need the Welsh Government to Think Big and Act Wild for nature, people and planet.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world with just half (53%) of its biodiversity remaining, a figure that places us in the bottom 10% of the world's countries for the state of our nature.¹

Welsh wildlife has declined by 20% since 1994 and 42% of Welsh plant species are found in fewer places than before. One in six of Wales's species is at risk of extinction, including much-loved species such as the water vole and the fen orchid.²

We need our government to make systemic and ambitious changes to reverse this decline and commit to ambitious landscape-scale nature recovery, by committing **30% of land and seas to nature recovery by 2030.**

By working with nature rather than against it, rewilding offers hope and the opportunity to give nature (and us) a fighting chance. Restoring nature at scale can help us transition to a nature-rich, low-carbon future while delivering real, locally-generated benefits today. These benefits include, climate resilience, thriving biodiversity, vibrant green economies, local livelihoods, flood mitigation, healthier air, water and soils, carbon storage and improved health and wellbeing. Doing so will help strengthen rural economies and make an important contribution to our wellbeing commitments under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We estimate less than 1% of Wales is currently rewilding and we need each political party to incorporate rewilding 30% of land and seas into their election promises and post-election delivery. We've laid out the key actions for political leaders in Wales and created the **Welsh Rewilding Manifesto** to enable our future government to act swiftly and decisively to protect, restore and rewild nature in Britain.

30%
LAND & SEAS
REWILDING BY
2030

WHAT IS REWILDING?

Rewilding is about hope for tackling the nature and climate emergencies, whilst delivering a wide range of benefits for people and local communities.

Rewilding has at its heart a focus on the large-scale restoration of natural processes, such as free-flowing rivers or predator-prey relationships and, where appropriate, missing species — allowing them to create dynamic, constantly changing habitat mosaics. It brings people and communities together to find ways to work, live and prosper within healthy, flourishing ecosystems.

In a world wrecked by biodiversity loss, habitat destruction and climate breakdown, rewilding can replenish nature's remarkable web of life — restoring habitats, natural processes, and the diversity and abundance of native species.

OUR MANIFESTO

Our manifesto has five key calls to action which will create positive and inclusive change:

1.

Rapidly deliver 30% rewilding and process-led management that restores natural processes by 2030:

Catalyse rewilding to help us transition to a nature-rich, low-carbon future while delivering real, locally-generated benefits today.

2.

Expand nature-based jobs and businesses:

Incentivise and invest in nature-based economies linked to rewilding as part of a just, green transition.

3.

Make wild nature a right for all:

Improve access to and restore our connection with wilder nature to benefit all our health and wellbeing.

4.

Empower communities to lead rewilding:

Place people and communities at the heart of decisions about our land and seas and its recovery.

5.

Create a game-changing shift in rewilding funding and investment:

Drive long-term, sustainable, public and private investment into 30% rewilding delivery within a financial system that values and invests in nature.

OUR POLICY ASKS NATURE & CLIMATE



Rapidly deliver 30% rewilding and process-led management that restores natural processes by 2030

Catalyse rewilding to help us transition to a nature-rich, low-carbon future while delivering real, locally-generated benefits today for our future generations tomorrow.

Our land and seas

- The Welsh Government should commit to confirming secondary legislation in the forthcoming Environmental Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Bill, within 18 months of the primary legislation being set. Targets need to clearly align with the Global Biodiversity Framework and establish targets for natural-process led land management.
- Engage a wide range of stakeholders in the production of a 'Wild Nation' 30by30 action plan. This would foster the recommendation of a 'Team Wales' approach to deliver wider global and domestic biodiversity commitments that was put forward by the Welsh Parliament's Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee in its *Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030* report.³
- This 'Wild Nation' plan should set out how Wales can achieve 30% of land and seas rewilding by 2030, examine how rewilding can deliver for people, nature and climate, and ensure natural capital investments are regulated to maximise public and community benefits.



- Establish legally-binding national and local Land Use Frameworks that adequately balance nature, net zero, food and timber production targets with a commitment to rewilding 30% of Wales.
- Develop a truly strategic and integrated marine spatial planning framework, while finalising and delivering a coherent network of Marine Protected Areas.
- Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to government departments that are tasked with delivering nature restoration at all levels across Wales.
- Empower Natural Resources Wales, the largest land manager in Wales, to lead nature's recovery through the Term of Government Remit letter – starting with the creation of wilder forests within the public estate. Allowing natural processes to restore ecosystems, so that they are fully functioning, will create valuable spaces for our communities, while continuing to produce sustainable timber.
- Ensure the Sustainable Farming Scheme includes clear metrics and a monitoring framework to track progress towards biodiversity recovery targets.

Our wildlife and habitats

- Streamline legislation for vital reintroductions of missing native species to help rebuild healthy ecosystems.
- Develop a species reintroduction strategy outlining how keystone species, such as beaver, will be supported to re-establish across Wales – helping communities realise the benefits they bring for water quality, storage and management, while creating new habitats and restoring ecosystem functions.
- Set national species recovery targets, including an increase in range and abundance, for a minimum of 100 of our most threatened species.
- Commit to delivering the recommendations set out in the Welsh Parliament's report *Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030*.



- Incentivise the large-scale restoration of natural processes across 30% of Wales's land and seas, including the following measures:
 - Double woodland cover, using natural regeneration as the default approach wherever possible.
 - End moor burning and the illegal burning of our uplands in spring.
 - End the environmentally damaging activities associated with driven grouse shooting by banning this activity in Wales.
 - Ensure the sustainable management of deer numbers.
 - Transition the management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) from a feature-based to whole-site approach.
 - Ban industrial bottom trawling and dredging across our MPAs.

Our coasts and rivers

- Support land managers to become our river restoration heroes – with proper funding to expand riparian restoration and natural flood management to reduce nutrient pollution and to fast-track adaptation to climate change.
- Create Integrated Catchment Management Plans that are owned and delivered by local communities and a wide group of stakeholders, and give catchment partnerships the power to govern and determine community-led actions, along with catchment-based funding.
- Enable ambitious projects to restore blue carbon habitats at scale around our coasts, including saltmarshes, seagrass, sea kelp and oyster beds. Doing so will not only help tackle climate change, but provide a nature-based solution to adapt to its impacts, building resilience against coastal erosion, storm surges and flooding events.

Our protected landscapes and seascapes

- Make nature recovery a primary purpose of all our protected landscapes and seascapes, to restore ecosystems, help arrest climate breakdown and drive vibrant nature-based economies.
- Set legally-binding targets for the restoration of Sites of Special Scientific Interest that allow for and encourage a rewilding approach.

OUR POLICY ASKS JOBS & ECONOMY



Expand nature-based jobs and businesses

Incentivise and invest in nature-based economies linked to rewilding as part of a just, green transition.

- Unleash a wave of innovation in nature-based enterprise and nature-led food, fisheries and timber production linked to a rewilding approach, e.g.
 - Create markets and food chains for wild/semi-wild meats.
 - Develop and deliver a climate-smart fisheries strategy.
 - Support community-led low-impact nearshore fishing.
 - Expand nature-led forestry practices and local sawmilling to produce timber and wood products.
- Establish 'nature-based enterprise zones' with associated packages of business development support.
- Deliver a skilled green workforce by fast-tracking the development and accreditation of training and apprenticeships to fill rewilding and nature-based enterprise skills gaps.
- Create a network of community-based, trusted and accredited advisors to support land managers and sea users to transition to rewilding approaches.

OUR POLICY ASKS HEALTH



Make wild nature a right for all

Improve access to and restore our connection with wilder nature to benefit all our health and wellbeing.

- Support a Right to a Healthy Environment, establishing a human right to healthy ecosystems and a stable climate.
- Support a Right to Access Wild Nature and put in place solutions, including public transport infrastructure, to deliver this right to all citizens.
- Require and incentivise cities and towns to integrate urban rewilding into their plans, including wilder areas across all green and blue spaces.
- Support Y Môr a Ni (The Sea and Us) – the framework for Ocean Literacy in Wales – and embed its vision in decision-making.



OUR POLICY ASKS COMMUNITY & SOCIETY

4

Empower communities to lead rewilding

Place people and communities at the heart of decisions about our land and seas.

- Enable and empower local community-led partnerships to co-design and upscale rewilding initiatives.
- Diversify public, private and community ownership models that enhance localised decision-making, e.g. through supporting Community Rights to Buy for nature restoration, as well as effective community benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Clarify commoner and tenancy rights for carbon and biodiversity to ensure they unlock – and share benefits from – nature restoration.
- Reform the marine restoration licensing processes to streamline applications, incentivise seascape scale projects and enable communities to actively intervene to restore their coastline.





OUR POLICY ASKS INVEST IN OUR FUTURE

5

Create a game-changing shift in rewilding funding and investment

Drive long-term public and private investment into 30% rewilding and process-led management that restores natural processes within a financial system that values and invests in nature.

- Commit to long-term public funding and payment schemes that provide stability to and reward land managers and fishers for their vital role in balancing food and timber production, climate action and nature restoration.
- Rapidly upscale high-integrity private sector and philanthropic investment to support a portfolio of large-scale rewilding initiatives.
- Enshrine and adhere to our five financing rewilding principles to ensure that funding and investments bring shared value for nature, the economy and local communities.
- Develop and publish a comprehensive nature finance strategy.

IMAGES

Pages 1, 3, 5: Cefn Garthenor © Alex Hyde, page 6: Wildcat © Pete Cairns/scotlandbigpicture.com, page 9: Y Môr a Ni © Marine Conservation Society, page 10: Wild Tolworth @ Alex Hyde, page 11: Fisher © Toby Roxburgh/2020VISION, page 12: White-tailed eagle © Mark Williams

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2. State of Nature 2023. <https://stateofnature.org.uk/countries/wales/>
3. Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee, Welsh Parliament (2025). Measuring rewilding progress. <https://senedd.wales/media/ts0f1ekc/cr-ld16916-e.pdf>



WHO WE ARE

We are Rewilding Britain. We're helping to create a wilder Britain for nature, climate and people. We're inspiring a movement of rewilders across Britain's land and seas — a groundswell of hope, so that together we can ensure a wilder, nature-rich future that benefits us all. Rewilding in Wales will be shaped by the country's unique legislative, cultural and ecological context.



Let's work together to commit to rewilding 30% of our land and seas by 2030. **It's time to act.**
#ThinkBigActWild

REWILDING BRITAIN

