

Sustainable Land Management Branch  
Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Strategy Division  
Welsh Government  
Rhodfa Padarn  
Llanbadarn Fawr  
ABERYSTWYTH  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3UR

25 June 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

**Consultation Response: The Future of the Agriculture Wages Board (AWB)**

Thank you for consulting Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on the Future of the Agriculture Wages Board (AWB). Our response to the consultation questions is provided below.

**Question 1**

**Which one of the three options outlined above would you prefer? Please provide your reasons.**

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) support option 2 - “Legislate to maintain the functions of the AWB in Wales. NRW together with WG is committed to work with a dynamic agricultural sector and its objective is to support the foundation of a resilient, sustainable and well-trained agricultural workforce in Wales.

We believe that establishing a Wales-only agricultural wages board to safeguard minimum agricultural rates; promote a structured career development and training programme and safeguard working conditions, specific to the agricultural sector is essential. We need people in the countryside working smarter in agriculture; otherwise many of the Welsh Government's sustainable development objectives won't be achieved. A new and modernised AWB has the potential to contribute significantly to the creation of sustainable rural communities throughout Wales.

## **Question 2**

**What do you see as the potential benefits to the Welsh agricultural sector of having a body similar to the AWB?**

The bulk of rural Wales is managed by farmers. In order for the agricultural workforce to deliver against the ecosystems approach (Natural Environment Framework – January 2012) it is important to ensure that they are well trained and well motivated. We see that the benefits of establishing a Wales-only agricultural wages board will safeguard minimum rates; promote a structured career development and training programme especially for young farmers entering the industry and safeguarding working conditions, specific to the agricultural sector. This is essential to meet the future challenges that face the agricultural sector and Natural Resources Wales. The link between a vibrant economically viable agricultural industry and that of a diverse healthy environment has never been so important. Establishing such a body similar to the AWB would significantly contribute to a successful rural economy and healthy environment in Wales.

## **Question 3**

**Please provide your suggestion on how a modernised advisory or statutory AWB could operate in Wales in relation to supporting the agricultural sector and skills development within the sector.**

We see a modernised advisory or statutory AWB operating in Wales in relation to supporting the agricultural sector and skills development in a streamlined simplified manner with reduced costs. The wages boards in the other Devolved Administrations, Northern Ireland and Scotland, could be used as models for establishing a modernised, effective and low cost AWB for Wales.

## **Question 4**

**Do you think that it is necessary to retain a separate AWC in Wales? Please provide your reasons.**

No. This role could be covered by the functions of the new modernised AWB as is currently done in Scotland.

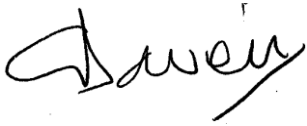
## **Question 5**

**Do you think that it is necessary to retain a separate ADHAC in Wales? Please provide your reasons.**

No. This role could be covered by the functions of the new modernised AWB as is currently done in Scotland.

Please do not hesitate to contact [Alun.L.Davies@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:Alun.L.Davies@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk) if you would like to discuss any aspect of our response in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ceri Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**CERI DAVIES**

Executive Director for Knowledge, Strategy & Planning

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