



Unit 4 Talgarth Business Park
Trefecca Road
Talgarth
Brecon
LD3 0PQ

Michael Kay Esq
Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
By Email

25th November 2014

Dear Mr Kay

The Wye and Usk Foundation is an NGO heavily involved in correcting adverse land use issues within the catchments of Wye and Usk, two rivers that are EU designated Special Areas of Conservation. It will be appreciated that there are many areas of activity that can be promoted and deployed to lessen the impact of agri and silvicultural activities as well as restoring what we have termed as “Ecosystem Disservices”- negative impacts – that cause flooding, and pollute our water supply, cause soil loss as well as impacting on climate change.

We see Glastir as an important component in supplying opportunities to put right some of the environment wrongs affecting our countryside and these comments stretch right across Wales. Our comments reflect support for WG’s ecosystem approach and the need to achieve targets for the Habitats and Water Framework Directives as well as provide good value for money and the need for simplicity of application.

These are the outcomes which we think should be supported in Glastir:

1. Fencing stream side corridors, excluding stock and providing independent drinking supplies where possible, so that stock is kept totally out of rivers and streams
2. Small woodland creation adjacent to rivers and streams as well as in strips or hedges to break overland flow as described so well in the Pontbren project. It is important that widths are not overly prescriptive as the farmer might be giving away too much of his productive land, for which he should ideally be compensated. Trees are an essential defence against climate change and for allowing water ingress leading to significant reductions in flooding
3. It should be allowable to plant native shrubs along with the trees within these areas and planting of both could be at lower density than at present
4. Ideally these essential activities should be available as standalone and part of main Glastir schemes

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5. These actions have significant biodiversity fisheries and other ecosystem service benefits and hence deliver wider benefits for society
6. It is important for the achievement of the directives that these small woodland elements (and there will no doubt be others who suggest additional actions eg parkland trees, gates stiles etc) can be put in place as quickly as possible

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S.J. Marsh-Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr Stephen Marsh-Smith OBE
Executive Director, Wye and Usk Foundation