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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00016/18

Dr Stephen Marsh – Smith OBE

stephen@afonyddcymru.org

16 January 2018

Dear Stephen

Thank you for your letter of 2 January, regarding the Written Statement on Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) issued on 13 December 2017.

It is essential a sufficiently robust approach is developed to address agricultural pollution issues across Wales. I recognise your concerns regarding phosphate pollution. Nitrate pollution cannot be addressed in isolation and all forms of agricultural pollution must be considered in the development of the approach.

While we remain within the European Union we have a legal obligation to meet the requirements of the Nitrates Directive and, therefore, at this time NVZs will form part of the approach. Applying the NVZ measures to the whole of Wales has not been ruled out.

I want to consider the introduction of a voluntary approach as an option, where this can provide greater flexibility for farmers in how they manage the land where better environmental outcomes than the regulatory baseline can be achieved.

The Welsh Government will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders, including those with an interest in the aquatic environment, to ensure we achieve our objectives. I am pleased representatives of the Carmarthen Fishermen's Federation attend meetings of the Wales Land Management Forum Sub-group on Agricultural Pollution. I believe it is essential we take into account the views of all affected parties.

The Consultation on NVZs was an open consultation, available for any organisation or individual to respond to. You may wish to be aware responses were received from many organisations and individuals with an interest in the aquatic environment, including anglers and those with business interests linked to water quality.

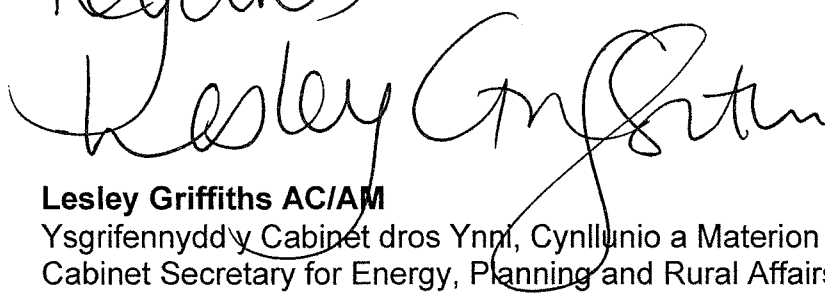
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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

My officials will be pleased to meet with you at any farm within Wales to hear more about the work of the Wye and Usk Foundation. Please contact andrew.chambers@gov.wales to make arrangements.

Regards


Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

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