

Research Briefing

Law, Policy and Governance for the Sustainable Management of Peatlands at the Local Level

Summary

This research will explore the potential opportunities and barriers to action at a local level in support of sustainable peatland management (SPM) as part of a multi-level governance response. It is funded by the UKRI Landscape Decision Making Programme and supported by Neath Port Talbot Borough Council.

Avenues for Investigation

Whether local government may have a role in SPM as follows:

- **Ownership of land**
- **Regulation** - of land designated for nature conservation (that includes peatlands); of 'development' on peatlands (including commercial extraction); and in water management.
- **Providing evidence and local knowledge of peatlands** and how they form a part of wider 'green infrastructure'.
- **Influencing land use change and management by others**, including as a partner in restoration projects, through assistance to farming and forestry communities and private finance initiatives.
- **Providing community education and engagement** on climate change, nature recovery and the role of peatlands.



Crymlyn Bog, Swansea.

The Changing Legal Landscape. The legal foundations for SPM are currently subject to considerable change given most stems from EU retained law shared with England. This includes the EIA and Habitats Regs.

Potential policy implications

- This research will result in recommendations for changes to law, policy and governance to support the role of local authorities in maximising the benefits of peatlands to their local communities.
- It may also have longer term implications for the way we view the role of local authorities in natural resource use more widely.

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Read Victoria's related work with Dr Jonathan Walker on the Welsh response in the Journal of Environmental law at: <https://academic.oup.com/jel/article/34/1/163/6501301?searchresult=1>