

Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution

Minutes

Title of meeting:

Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Date of Meeting: 20th February 2023

Present:

Zoe Henderson, (Chair and NRW Board Member)

Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru

Dennis Matheson, TFA

James Ruggeri, HCC

Einir Williams, Farming Connect

Shane Thomas, Carmarthen Fishermen's Federation

Andrew Chambers, Welsh Government

Chris Mills, WEL

Sarah Jones, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water

Fraser McAuley, CLA

Nichola Salter, NRW

Sarah Hetherington, NRW

Delyth Lewis-Jones, AHDB

Ieuan Stephen Davies, NRW

Kate Snow, United Utilities

Bernard Griffiths, FUW

Marc Williams, NRW

Rachael Madeley Davies, HCC

Additional Attendees Present:

John Owen, Gelli Aur Coleg Sir Gar (Item 4)

Eirian Macdonald, NRW (Item 5)

Secretariat:

Bronwen Martin, NRW

Apologies:

Katy Simmons, NRW

David Letellier, NRW

Creighton Harvey, Carmarthen Fishermen's Federation

Mathew Walters, Welsh Government

David Ball, AHDB

Item 1 Introductions, Apologies and Declaration of Interest

1. Zoe Henderson (NRW Board Member and WLMF Sub Group Chair) welcomed all to the Microsoft Teams meeting and noted apologies. Zoe welcomed Rachael Madeley Davies who is representing Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC).
2. The meeting is being recorded for the purpose of capturing the minutes and the digital file will be deleted once the meeting minutes have been approved.
3. No declarations of interest were raised in respect of agenda items.
 - NB: All members of the group have completed declaration of interest forms already but should also declare if they have an interest in anything on the agenda.

Item 2 Review of Minutes and actions

4. The Chair confirmed that once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed by the group, they will be published on the NRW website for the public to access. Therefore, it is important that the minutes are an accurate record of the meetings.
5. The group reviewed the previous meeting minutes from 23rd January 2023. Zoe recalled the discussion about the Minister's Phosphate summit, however this event got postponed and has been rearranged for 8th March.
6. No comments or suggested amendments were received in respect of the January meeting minutes.
7. Bronwen Martin shared the actions log and reviewed the outstanding actions.

Item 3 Matters Arising

8. The group was encouraged to discuss any matters arising from the previous meeting minutes, relevant documents, or recent topics.
9. No matters arising were raised by the group.

Item 4 Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership

10. John Owen, Gelli Aur (Coleg Sir Gar) joined the meeting to provide a follow up presentation on the Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership Project. The final project report has recently been published which can be found here - [Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership Final Report](#).
11. John provided a brief background to the project. John briefly recapped some of the other projects including the SMART Expertise Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership and the Tywydd Tywi Weather Project.
12. John described some of the processes within the Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership Project including using innovative technology designed to aid nutrient management. The objective set out at the start to separate the water has been achieved to the extent that the emphasis has changed from the discharge to full water recycling. Concentrating the nutrients in a solid form has reduced by up to 80% the total storage capacity requirement and reduced the potential pollution potential. Current escalation of chemical fertilizer prices has highlighted the need for improved efficiency in the use of home-grown nutrients. John then mentioned some of the nutrient capture rates.
13. Finally, John mentioned some of the aspirations for future developments to the current project, including:
 - To increase partnerships and collaborations.
 - Look to add value to farm nutrients if production exceeds demand.
 - Set up local treatment hubs.
 - Look at AD digestate treatment.
 - Evaluate the production of Bio Secure Char
14. Zoe asked whether they have sold all of their slurry tankers at Gelli Aur. John said no, this is a development project and to date, the development staff are running the plant, not the farm staff. We are ramping up the treatment but are not treating all of the slurry on the farm so far. It is an alternative process which could be operational on a lot of farms. It does need a level of supervision and expertise to make it work properly but some farms would be really appropriate, although others perhaps not quite so much.
15. Chris Mills asked what it actually costs to carry out the process. John said it is detailed in the report. As far as the running costs are concerned, the treatment costs about £15 per cubic meter and that includes the current electrical running costs and the chemical costs. Chris said one of the avenues for this is actually to export to areas where it is needed. Chris asked if they have looked at that economic model and how that works out in comparison to commercial fertiliser. John said there is a comparison in the report, but we are looking to add value to it. This is where we envisage the localised

treatment hubs working, where in conjunction with the AD, we could produce a product that is further dried from the current solids which could be bagged and exported quite efficiently across the border with a value to it. What we need to work out is what is the added value that we could generate, what are the revenues we could generate from electricity, what are the associated costs and what the balance is. That is a piece of work that needs to be done going forward, but potentially it could actually cover the cost of running the plant which means that farmers would not have to contribute towards the treatment of the slurry and the excess nutrients could be exported away from the problem areas.

16. Dennis Matheson, TFA said the plant that he originally looked at was relying on electrolysis. One of the problems was the cost of the aluminium electrodes, which were used up very quickly but recalled John did not mention electrolysis in the presentation. John said the original configuration was with electrolysis but because of issues associated with high contaminants within the slurry, the electrolysis was not able to cope with the high level of contaminants in both the fibre and the nutrients. We moved away from the electrolysis back to liquid chemical treatment and when we made that swap the whole process became far more efficient.

Dennis also asked if they have looked at pathogens in the slurry such as TB, which can live in the slurry for a year and what happens to that when you separate it. John said they have not done any work on the survival of TB through the separation process and there is nothing that suggests the bacteria would be killed in the process, so there is further work to be done on that. However, what we are proposing on the biochar production would definitely kill any bacteria within that process. This is a real advantage to looking at further treatment and the efficiency associated with transport of that biochar as compared to the solid element.

Dennis mentioned that human sewage appears to be quite easy to separate and the water goes straight back into the river so why is it so difficult to treat livestock slurry compared to human sewage. John said the difference between human sewage and livestock is just the contaminant level and the solid fibre content within the slurries.

17. Zoe asked can you separate out the nitrates and the phosphates. John said that is the Holy Grail as far as nutrient management is concerned. Due to the different removal rates, we are able to remove a very high percentage of the phosphates in the solid form and retain about 30% of the nitrogen in the liquid. This is where we are irrigating the liquid, but we can only do that during the growing season. We have got two plots at Gelli Aur where we delivered over 170 kilograms of nitrogen just by the fertigation process and eliminating the need for any bagged fertiliser on those plots with similar growth rates. It is only to that extent though; we cannot fully separate the two nutrients. About 77% of the nitrogen is in the solid form and about 98% of the phosphates are removed. The good thing is that you can actually get the phosphates virtually completely out of the liquid by the mechanical process, so you have got a product that is still around 20% dry matter but can be exported.
18. Zoe recalled John mentioning selling the system and that there are two being sold to England. Zoe asked who do people contact if they are interested in commercialising this. John said GEA seem to be leading on it and they are bringing together the other partners, but it depends on what the demand is on individual farms.

19. Bernard Griffiths, FUW asked about Welsh Government's response to this work. We are approaching the stage where we are probably within touching distance of sorting out on farm slurry problems, so does Welsh Government accept that perhaps all the regulations being introduced at the moment could be superseded with innovation and technology. John said the Minister came to have a look following an invitation and the Minister was very complimentary in what we are doing. However, we are really disappointed that we have not had a response to our Alternative Measure proposals that we put forward. Some of those certainly integrate the technology that we have developed, and we would really like to see that being taken up. Welsh Government supported the development of the process so perhaps it is only appropriate that now that we have proven the process, that they look at integrating it into legislation.

Andrew Chambers said Welsh Government received quite a few Alternative Measures proposals and those are being considered in the range. We do not want to decide on one proposal where it may interlink with another proposal, so they need to be considered all together. That process is ongoing at the moment. The Minister will be making a statement on this, certainly by the 1st April, which is the deadline under the regulations for the Minister to make a statement on any action that is going to be taken forward. Welsh Government funding has gone towards the Gelli Aur project, and we are extremely interested in the application. It is certainly something that can be given consideration especially where there are any barriers within the regulations. We will certainly be looking at that as time moves forward.

Chris commented that surely it would not supersede the regulation, it would just make the regulations far easier to comply with. We still need to have limits to make sure that we are not actually causing problems through excess nutrients. This is not compulsory; this is for people to adopt on a voluntary basis. So, it would not supersede the regulations, but would make it far easier for farmers to actually comply with it. Bernard said maybe supersede was not the right word, but surely if you have a process on the farm to treat the slurry, have added value and produce things on farms, then you would not need the five months storage.

20. Fraser McAuley, CLA asked if there is any carry over into other sectors, for example poultry. John said yes, the elements are applicable to all sectors. In particular, the centralised treatment where poultry manure could be used in an AD process and the digestate at the end of that AD process could then be dewatered. We could add value to that through biochar production using some of the energy generated and some of the excess heat generated as well. Therefore, it has cross sector applications.

AP February 01: Bronwen Martin, NRW to circulate a copy of John Owen's Tywi Farm Nutrient Partnership presentation, link to the final report and contact details.

Item 5 The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021: NRW Update

21. Andrew Chambers, Welsh Government provided an update regarding resources for the Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021. Andrew said following NRW's baseline review, it was identified that there was a need to develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA). One of those SLAs was in respect of compliance with the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations (CoAPR). NRW and

Welsh Government were tasked to develop an SLA which has been undertaken. The SLA has been drafted and approved and Welsh Ministers have agreed to allocate £2.55 million to NRW for the enforcement of the regulations over the next two financial years. This is a completely new enforcement compliance programme covering the CoAPR and is not related to the Dairy Project.

22. Eirian Macdonald, NRW said she was deputising for Dav Letellier and Simon Neale, who are leading on this particular area within NRW. Eirian provided a background to what has been done within NRW so far.
23. Eirian said based on the agreed SLA, NRW are looking to employ additional staff over the next 12 to 18 months to deliver the activities within the CoAPR SLA. NRW's programme is currently under development. The SLA itself covers delivery of a targeted compliance inspection programme which includes Cross Compliance inspections with RIW and associated enforcement. The compliance work will be focused on farms carrying out higher risk agricultural activities such as cattle farms (beef and dairy) producing slurry, pig units under the EPR threshold, poultry units under EPR threshold and anyone importing organic manures (as defined in the Regulations) which includes biosolids, digestate, composts and wastes recovered to land. NRW will also produce hot spot maps of these activities with known data. We will also be utilising the information gained from the Dairy Project and will continue to follow up on the identified required actions. NRW are developing a data collection, recording, and reporting system, an internal technical query archive and appropriate technical training, although much of this is already being piloted. NRW are in the process of finalising new staff guidance as well. There will also be a reporting dashboard, developed with Welsh Government to ensure content and frequency meet requirements.
24. Some of the activities may need to be implemented incrementally over the next one to two years including:
 - Staff recruitment, the subsequent training and development of new staff including supporting material.
 - Producing information for the 4-yearly statutory report into the effectiveness of the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations.
25. Nichola Salter clarified that there will be a profiled recruitment so that it is a manageable process. Nichola is currently drawing up the maps for the hotspot areas which will help with locating the new staff.
26. Chris asked whether more resource could go into incident investigation because that is an area where resource has been a limiting factor in the past. Regarding the new staff, Chris asked what knowledge, experience, and personal qualities NRW are looking for. Eirian said NRW are currently developing the recruitment programme. The key skills that are going to be required for these roles is something that will be under consideration. Nichola said NRW are drafting the role profiles and she is in communication with the Environment Agency (EA) to see what lessons they have learned from the recent recruitment process of their Test Approaches to Regulation of Agriculture (Project TARA). These new NRW staff will be carrying out inspections and associated enforcement (where required) in line with the published [NRW: Enforcement and Sanctions Policy](#).

Nichola clarified that the recruitment is just for delivery of the SLA for the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations compliance and enforcement. Chris said this is disappointing because the reality on the ground is that the inspection, compliance, and enforcement is going to cross over with incident response and therefore you need to be able to make connections. Nichola said she is trialling a training module for staff, so they will know these regulations inside out. The CoAPR SLA does not include incident response, standby rotas or out of hours calling; but does include the technical compliance follow up undertaken after the initial incident response.

27. Chris asked does the SLA include success criteria for the new staff and what they are doing. Nichola said NRW have been asked to create a reporting dashboard for Welsh Government. Chris mentioned activity is easy to measure, outcomes are not. Nichola said this will be outcome driven, for example the number of farms brought into compliance, rather than the number of farms visited.
28. Fraser McAuley asked about engagement with actual farmers, would you like the group to inform our respective memberships of this and the potential increase in visits from NRW, or is there going to be something instigated by NRW. Nichola said it is early days, but there will be internal and external communications. Once we have recruited, we will be able to give progress updates to this group. Fraser asked if there is going to be a scale of interventions from NRW in a letter which indicates what potentially needs to change such as a 'right to put right', advice and guidance and the worst-case scenarios with financial penalties. Nichola said that is how NRW currently work, it is in our Enforcement and Sanctions Policy which is on our website ([NRW: Enforcement & Sanctions Policy](#)). The Regulations form part of Cross Compliance, we are obliged to report any breaches to RIW. For NRW "day job" enforcement, it will be based as always on environmental impact. The level of enforcement will depend on the level of impact, and that will range from advice and guidance all the way through to full prosecution in court.
29. Rachel Lewis-Davies said advice and guidance is going to be really important but do not underestimate the scale of the challenge in bringing the whole farming industry in Wales up to speed with the complexity of these regulations. Rachel asked about the approach that NRW will be adopting with this SLA, is there an element of advice and guidance within it. Is NRW planning to publish information, we had 'when the inspector calls' that came out of the Gareth Williams review of regulation so is there going to be guidance for these regulations. If so, when is that information going to be provided. Nichola said 'when the inspector calls' was published by Welsh Government and was not aware of a reprinting. Nichola said as with other NRW visits, the intention is that when an Officer contacts the farmer, there will be information about what they are going to check and some guidance around that. Rachel said will that notification of inspection be in writing or over the phone because if a farmer is in the middle of a job, they may not have captured all the information and you will be adding to their burden rather than putting their mind at rest. Nichola said every inspector has a different way of working, but whether they contact the farmer by telephone or by letter, they would then you follow it up with a letter.

Regarding the staffing, Rachel asked if they are going to receive training on farmer well-being and mental health. In the UK, we lose one farmer per week to suicide and regulation has been identified by Public Health Wales as a key contributor to poor mental health among the farming community. This is an important aspect that should

be included in the training if it is not already proposed. Nichola said yes definitely, that will be included. Nichola recalled that people came to talk to the Dairy Officers about the well-being of farmers and to make them aware of stress and pressures.

Rachel wanted to understand more about the methodology that NRW is going to employ for the 4 yearly review and whether that would be possible to share with stakeholders. Nichola said NRW will provide data as requested by Welsh Government who will carry out the review.

30. Chris said there has been years of advice and guidance and the outcome has not been great. If you want to have the right outcome, which is to reduce agricultural pollution, then you have to have the right approach. There must be a balance between advice, guidance and helping with investment. Ultimately, we also have to have some action in relation to noncompliance and particularly repeated noncompliance. Andrew said there is a proportionate approach in terms of advice, guidance, or instruction when it is appropriate. There would be a more stringent approach when, for example a water body has been directly impacted with a significant pollution event. Rachel clarified that her comments relating to advice and guidance were specifically related to the complexity of the regulations and meeting the requirements. Do not underestimate how complex the paperwork is and how difficult it is for the farming community who are grappling with this. Farmers are going to Farming Connect meetings and are still very overwhelmed by the complexity of the paperwork for which they are going to be under inspection and a breach if they are not found to be compliant. Therefore, farmers do need support through advice and guidance. A regulatory approach that just goes out and penalises people for getting paperwork wrong is going to add to their burden at a time when they are already facing very significant pressures, we all need to be respectful of that. Chris said having been through the Alternative Measures exercise, he understands exactly what Rachel is saying.

31. Dennis Matheson, TFA said NRW have discretion on how to proceed with any sanctions on breaches with the regulations, but they have no say over breaches on Cross Compliance. Dennis asked how discretion can fit into RPW inspection, if they are also doing inspections, presumably it would have to be come from Welsh Government and asked whether that can happen while we are still subject to some EU funding rules. Andrew said this comes down to that level of proportionality and obviously we have the penalty matrix within Cross Compliance and that is used to determine the level of penalty that is applied in any cases of noncompliance.

Dennis asked whether the Dairy Project is finally going to finish. Nichola said the Dairy Project was funded by NRW until 31 March 2023 and is not aware of any further funding.

Dennis asked what has happened to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Tenant Farmers document. Nichola said this has not been forgotten about it is on the list of things to do.

Dennis recalled that Nichola gave a presentation at a recent Farming Connect webinar but it did not have a dial-in facility so he could not participate. Dennis said he has been sent a print out of the presentation. Einir said she would raise it with the marketing team.

32. Eimir Williams, Farming Connect said she has sent an e-mail to colleagues in the marketing department to ask for statistics on the agricultural pollution events they have run. We are holding digital workbook workshops which will be sectoral, so they will be specialised for poultry, mixed farming, dairy, chicken and beef. Those are starting up in March and the Development Officers are going to be sending out invitations to those via e-mail. A lot of it is digital but that is the nature of the beast. Regarding the workbook, we have run 1-2-1 clinics all over Wales. A print out version of the workbook is available in the Guidance Notes on the Welsh Government website ([Welsh Government - Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations: Guidance](#))
33. Fraser asked about Slurry Investment Grants and if there are any open at the minute or is there an additional window opening later in the year. Andrew said he was not able to give an update but could look into this.

AP February 02: Andrew Chambers, Welsh Government to provide an update on the current/future Slurry Investment Grant windows.

34. Rachel requested clarity regarding the approach to the 4 yearly review. Andrew said the regulations include a mandatory 4-year review which require Welsh Government to consider any scientific evidence (including from NRW) and whether the regulations achieve the outcomes effectively. The feedback from members of this group is welcomed and will be taken into consideration as part of that review. Welsh Government will look at things like innovation, whether there any barriers to the uptake of innovation in the regulations, whether we can do things in a more effective way to reduce the burden on farmers to reduce the complexity. We do not have a date regarding when the review will be initiated but we will be able to give an update on the timelines in due course. Although, the end of the 4-year period will be the 1st of April 2025.
35. Zoe asked about an update on the £20 million announced in October 2022. Andrew said that funding has been committed but not allocated to any particular projects yet.
36. Zoe summarised the discussion and said we need to make sure that we are managing communications. We all need to help farmers understand what is coming, how it is going to affect them and make sure they receive the information in a positive and understandable way, so it does not cause additional stress.

Item 6 SAC Rivers Project: Agricultural Technical Group Update

37. Ieuan Stephen Davies, NRW provided a brief overview and update regarding the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Agricultural Technical Group.
38. Ieuan is a Specialist Advisor for Agriculture within the SAC Rivers Project and is in this post until November. The SAC Rivers Agricultural Technical Group has been established and the first meeting was held in early February. This is a small external group made up of agricultural industry representatives – there is a slight crossover of membership with the WLMF Sub Group. The Agriculture Technical Group currently does not have representative from the poultry industry but has good expertise within the other sectors so they will be looking to fill that poultry gap as soon as possible.

39. Delyth Lewis-Jones, AHDB is the Chairperson for the Agriculture Technical Group which provides a link to the SAC Rivers Oversight Group (SACROG). The membership of the group is intentionally small and is limited to those who will help meet the aims and objectives while ensuring that there is the right level of expertise to deliver. The group has initially been set up for six months but will potentially be reviewed for extension if we need to provide further technical support to the other work stream elements of the SAC Rivers Project. The Agriculture Technical Group will report their main updates to both the WLMF Sub Group and the SACROG. Even though it is led by industry, there is an NRW presence on the group. Marc Williams, NRW is providing regulatory advice and the general overall facilitation of the group. Ieuan is providing the Secretariat support to the group.
40. The main aim of the group is to provide an understanding of the evidence relating to agriculture and rural pollution. The group will identify the evidence and evidence gaps and create workstreams to get those gaps plugged. This will help to have a proportioned and balanced understanding of the water quality issues related to agriculture and the various management techniques within the sectors.
41. The initial task for the group is to understand the processes of phosphorus within soils and understand the wider picture, including actions in conjunction with other nutrients and plant and crop availability, uptake, and various pathways to water.
42. The group has a common understanding and have had good discussions around what we need to do. The group needs to come up with simple and accurate explanations as to what the phosphate issue is within the various agricultural practices, what is contributing to the problem, which practices are there to mitigate it, and what extent do we have evidence to back up the various claims behind those.
43. The main output from the group will be a paper or a presentation which will underline and communicate the issues presented in a clear and concise manner so that they will be accepted by the agricultural industry. This output will be shared with Welsh Government and to the wider agricultural industry. The rough deadline is May/June for that paper or presentation (whatever form it comes in). A draft will hopefully be available for review in May.
44. Further actions and outcomes from the group include understanding the various technical innovations that will help provide solutions to mitigate agricultural pollution and highlight any areas of support around technical financial areas that will be needed by the industry to bring about the improvement. The group also exists to provide technical knowledge, expertise, and consistent advice from a national scale to the local SAC Technical Advisory Groups as part of the wider SAC Rivers Project. They will also feed information into the SAC Rivers Oversight Group.
45. Zoe said it will be really interesting to see a comprehensive presentation around the whole area which will help our understanding moving forward.

AP February 03: Bronwen Martin, NRW to share Ieuan Stephen Davies, NRW contact details with the group.

Item 7 WLMF Sub Group: Outcomes for 2023

46. A copy of the WLMF Sub Group Terms of Reference were circulated ahead of the meeting along with a copy of the [WLMF Sub Group Progress Report \(2018\)](#). The group were asked to think about what outcomes they think this group should work on in 2023. This is an opportunity to discuss some ideas and decide what the group will focus on this year.
47. Chris Mills said there is nothing in the Terms of Reference that he would disagree with, however it is how we translate those Terms of Reference into the actual meetings and provide a bit more focused. Chris suggested whether we should perhaps look at the agenda in a slightly different way in terms of going back to those Terms of Reference and the sorts of things that could clearly lay out what we are trying to achieve. Perhaps we need to be a bit more strategic in choosing the agenda items to fit into the outcomes that are there within the Terms of Reference. The impression at the moment is that it more a matter of people coming forward offering to give presentations and putting those together in the agenda. Some of them will meet some of those objectives but it is not the most targeted way of doing it.
48. Dennis mentioned the Terms of Reference says that the WLMF Sub Group look at agricultural pollution, but it does not specifically say nitrate only. Dennis said he has brought this up in the past because there seems to be other groups being set up to deal with phosphate pollution, particulate pollution etc when the WLMF Sub Group has covered these the fairly extensive detail. There is a great danger that things get repeated by other groups by going over the same things that we have already discussed and have suggested solutions for. Dennis suggested that there should be more integration between the different groups looking at pollution because the recommendations coming from some of the other groups are identical to those which we have come up with for nitrate provision. Zoe agreed and said the phosphate group aims to be a short term look at getting up to speed with the issues and challenges.
49. Bronwen recalled that Chris suggested that we look at the agenda in a different way and a more strategic way and asked Chris to elaborate a bit more on what he had in mind. Chris said if you look at point 2.8 in the Terms of Reference, there are series of bullet points which seem to be what this group is about. It starts with 'undertake root cause analysis in order to achieve common understanding of the causes of agricultural pollution', then 'identify potential options for legislative and non-legislative measures. It is how we translate that into our work programme. Chris suggested that the group could go through that list of objectives to see which of these have actually been achieved and to what extent. That would be a very useful first step. Then look at the areas where we have made least progress and need to make most progress. You could then target who we ask to come to talk to us or whatever initiative we want to try and meet that objective. The danger here is where you just keep going round in various loops. You need to see if the group is achieving anything and to what extent are we meeting those objectives, what do we need to concentrate on and how do we then organise our meetings around that.
50. Rachel agreed with Dennis and reiterated that there are lots of different groups. There is the establishment of the SACROG the Agricultural Technical Group and a Welsh Government task and finish group on nutrient trading. Having attended one meeting of the SACROG and listened to some not very strategic conversations and discussions in

that meeting, there is ambiguity now about the roles and remit of what is a really complex governance structure. As well as this, we've also got the Wales Land Management Forum and the Wales Water Management Forum. There is a real risk that we just attend meeting after meeting, repeating what we say in everyone and that is not actually conducive to progress. Clarity around roles remits of these respective groups from very senior level would be appreciated. As the WLMF Sub Group, we have experienced putting a significant amount of effort, reaching consensus, and coming up with really good work only to be dismissed or disregarded by Welsh Government. We do not need to be duplicating or replicating work and we need to have the confidence in do this work.

Regarding Chris' comments, Rachel mentioned that she has been on the WLMF Sub Group since its inception. The group has done some root cause work and were able to reach a consensus in some areas but in other areas we did not. Some of us have been here since the start and are now being asked to join other groups, but there is a question around how effective it is to just keep going back to ground zero all the time.

51. Zoe suggested that a separate meeting could be arranged with her, Bronwen and Chris to follow up on this and propose something at the next meeting.

AP February 04: Bronwen Martin, NRW to arrange a meeting with Zoe Henderson, NRW and Chris Mills, WEL to discuss moving the group forward and linking the meeting agendas to the group's objectives.

52. Bernard reminded the group that there are two separate issues. The first is regarding the Terms of Reference of this group, how we set up the agenda and what we do within the group. The second issue is how other groups or forums work together and how they can avoid duplication. Chris agreed that they are two separate issues, but we probably need to consider both.

Item 8 Any Other Business

53. Einir said Farming Connect are updating their stakeholder communication list internally and she noticed there's quite a lot of people on this group not on the list. Einir requested e-mail addresses from interested parties and suggested that when she shares the statistics for the Farming Connect agricultural pollution events via Bronwen people could get back to her with their contact details to join the stakeholder list.
54. The next WLMF Sub Group meeting will be held on Monday 27th March 2023.
55. Bronwen is working on organising a site visit for the meeting in April. Ideas and suggestions are welcome, please sent them through to Bronwen.
56. No other business was raised.

Close meeting