



As part of its scrutiny of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee of Senedd Cymru (the Welsh Parliament) sought views on the general principles of the Bill. Much of the content of the Bill is beyond FSC UK's remit, but we felt able to support those sections which were clearly aligned with our mission and Principles. Our response was as follows:

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL® (FSC®) UK SUBMISSION TO THE SENEDD CYMRU ECONOMY, TRADE AND RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CONSULTATION ON THE AGRICULTURE (WALES) BILL

Introduction to FSC UK

1. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a global, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. Our 2050 vision is that a new forest paradigm is realised, where the true value of forests is recognised and fully incorporated into society worldwide, and our mission is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.
2. FSC operates an independent, third-party forest management and chain of custody certification scheme, to enable businesses and consumers to make informed choices about the forest products they buy, and create positive change by engaging the power of market dynamics. The detail of FSC's vision of responsible forest management is expressed through our international Principles and Criteria, which form the basis for nationally adapted forest stewardship standards.
3. FSC UK is the national office of the Forest Stewardship Council in the United Kingdom. FSC UK is independent of FSC international. It sets forest management standards for the UK by inputting into the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS), promotes the FSC system, and provides an information service. FSC UK (Ephesea UK) is a charity registered in England and Wales (No. 1130203) and a non-profit making company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (No. 06792524).

The sustainable land management objectives

4. FSC UK supports the sustainable land management objectives set out in section 1 of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, on the basis that they take into account economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainability, in line with FSC's mission, and also consider mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Conditions of tree felling licences

5. FSC UK supports the provisions of section 35 of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, which allow for conditions to be applied to felling licences for the purpose of conserving or enhancing natural beauty, or conserving flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features, or natural habitats. We believe these provisions to be consistent with FSC Principle 6 (Environmental Values and Impacts) and Principle 9 (High Conservation Values).

6. In implementing these provisions, we trust that Natural Resources Wales will recognise the need to maintain or enhance areas and features which FSC considers to be of High Conservation Value, including statutory nature conservation sites, ancient semi-natural woodland, plantations on ancient woodland sites, other priority habitats, critical ecosystem services, and cultural values.