

Paper Title:	Plan for the second State of Natural Resource Report (SoNaRR2)
Paper Reference:	Paper NRW B 19.11
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Purpose of Paper:	Scrutiny
Recommendation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide feedback on the plan to produce the second State of Natural Resources report (SoNaRR2). 2. To agree the Board's involvement, governance arrangements and sign-off. 3. To nominate a point of contact from the Board to liaise with the SoNaRR team and keep the Board up to date. 4. Comments on the engagement plan to be provided outside the meeting via email to sonarr@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Impact:	<p>Looking at the <u>long term</u>: SoNaRR is an evidence report and informs the WG Natural Resource Policy</p> <p>Taking an <u>integrated</u> approach: SoNaRR is an assessment of the sustainable management of natural resources and so must present evidence in an integrated way.</p> <p>Involving a <u>diversity</u> of the population: SoNaRR is an all Wales report, incorporating priorities for the population of Wales</p> <p>Working in a <u>collaborative</u> way: The plan is to collaborate with relevant stakeholders at all stages in the process</p> <p><u>Preventing</u> issues from occurring: Giving early sight of plans and allowing time for consideration</p>
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Issue

1. The NRW Board is asked to comment on the plans for the production of SoNaRR2 and to consider the governance and sign-off route for the report.

Background

2. Wales is in an enviable position, with two far reaching and ambitious Acts aimed at changing the way we manage our natural resources. This offers an unprecedented opportunity to improve the contribution that our natural resources make to the well-being of the people of Wales.
3. The Environment Act compels NRW to produce a State of Natural Resource Report (SoNaRR) every five years, in the year prior to Assembly elections. A key outcome is to inform the production of the Welsh Government's Natural Resources Policy (NRP), and the first SoNaRR (produced September 2016) strongly influenced the NRP of 2017.
4. SoNaRR is NRW's most important evidence product. It not only influences the NRP, but also provides the evidence base for all other bodies in Wales to fulfil their new obligations under the Environment Act. It provides an assessment of biodiversity in Wales as well as the state of our natural resources and the degree to which we are achieving sustainable management of those resources.
5. SoNaRR also contributes to the evidence base for the production of our Area Statements. It also guides our objective to embed the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) in all of our activities.
6. [Our first SoNaRR](#) looked at the state of our resources and ecosystems, along with the pressures and threats to them and past and predicted future trends. We assessed the resilience of Wales' ecosystems and the contributions that they made to our well-being, thus allowing us to produce a risk assessment for their future contribution to well-being in Wales.
7. We concluded with key messages for each broad habitat as well as a series of broad priorities for the management of our natural resources.
8. Our first report was produced to very tight timescales due to the delay in the legislation but no change to the deadlines for production. This gave us limited opportunity for wider engagement. We have already produced an engagement plan for SoNaRR2, with a series of workshops and events planned.
9. We have learned a lot from the production of SoNaRR1 and have built these lessons into our plans for the production of SoNaRR2. We will ensure that our Board is kept up to date with the delivery plans and is able to sign-off the report at the appropriate stage.

Key dates

10. Interim report (known as Draft Report in Environment Act) Final Report	December 2019 December 2020
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Interim report

- Specifically, for Welsh Government, a “heads up” to assist with the development of the next Natural Resources Policy
- Describes new and emerging issues since the last SoNaRR
- Describes newly identified evidence gaps and any update to previously identified evidence gaps; how filling the gaps is being prioritised and includes any work being initiated to address them
- Includes proposed indicators of SMNR
- Includes an update on the look and feel of the next report

Final Report

This is the National evidence base to include the following:

- Current state and trends
- Assessment of the extent to which SMNR is being achieved
- Future scenarios
- Priorities and opportunities for action at the national level
- An assessment of Biodiversity

Outcome indicators for SMNR at a national level

Summary

Proposed Role of NRW Board

11. Following engagement throughout 2019 and 2020, approval of the main products; the interim and final reports. Comments are expected on the key messages and overview of the final product and not on the technical content.

Timing and Milestones

Phase	Timing	Activity	Product and milestone
Phase 1	April 2017 to Dec 2018	Developing the Delivery Plan and process	A fully resourced Delivery Plan by February 2019
Phase 2	Jan 2019 to Dec 2020	Production of report	
Phase 2a	Jan 2019 to April 2020	Call for evidence (internal and external), Collation of evidence, Assessments of SMNR	State and Trends; Final assessments of SMNR by April 2020
Phase 2b	June 2019 to Dec 2019	Production of Interim report	Proposed SMNR indicators, Emerging issues, plan for filling evidence gaps, description of format of SoNaRR2. December 2019
Phase 2c	Jan 2020 to June 2020	Design and Write up	Future scenarios; Priorities and opportunities for action; Assessment of Biodiversity; Outcome indicators for SMNR. June 2020
Phase 2d	June 2020 to Dec 2020	QA / Review / Sign-off	Report available for review June 2020
Phase 3	December 2020	Launch of SoNaRR2	SoNaRR2 published December 2020
Phase 4	Jan 2021 onwards	Post launch publicity / use of report	

Approach

12. The NRW SoNaRR Steering Group, the Evidence Business Board and Executive Team were consulted on the proposal. The Executive Team have asked for the NRW Board and themselves to be kept informed of progress through an active engagement plan. Effective engagement is key to a successful report so we have included the full engagement plan in Annex 1. If you have any comments on this plan please provide them by email to sonarr@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk.
13. The production of SoNaRR does not involve the use of personal data so a Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.
14. The Steering Group will report progress to the NRW/WG Strategic Evidence Group, Executive team and the NRW Board regularly throughout 2019 and 2020.
15. The Evidence Business board will be responsible for signing off the technical content, format and structure of the report.

16. Executive team will be responsible for challenging the process followed to produce SoNaRR in relation to the principles of SMNR.

17. The NRW Board will be asked to approve the interim report and the final report.

18. It is suggested that the NRW Board nominate a lead to act as the point of contact for the SoNaRR team and to keep the Board updated with developments. Any proposal for an Evidence Advisory Committee or similar arrangement may wish to consider having such a role in due course.

Key Risks

19. In terms of the governance of SoNaRR, appropriate input at the identified time is required to prevent the work from stalling. The intention is to involve ET and the NRW Board at the most appropriate time so there are no surprises.

As our resources shrink and new duties increase, it will be difficult for our skilled staff to spend sufficient time on the production of the report. We will manage this risk through the project steering group and the evidence business board. Where appropriate we will seek innovative means to secure additional technical and financial support.

There is likely to be a large reputational impact if we get this wrong.

Next Steps

Dates for engagement and scrutiny will be agreed and built into the SoNaRR project plan.

Financial Implications

20. SoNaRR2 is resourced by the Grant in Aid funded work. The main financial implication is on resources within NRW.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

21. Not required. The governance of SoNaRR is not a process that impacts on individuals or groups.

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Annex 1 Current Engagement and communications plan

