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## Welsh Government Sustainable Farming Scheme Outline proposals for 2025

Welsh Government (WG) has published outline proposals for the [Sustainable Farming Scheme](#) (SFS) which, they say, will be the main source of government support for farmers rewarding farmers for actions taken to respond to the 'climate and nature emergencies', alongside the sustainable production of food. The proposals will form the basis of the next phase of co-design where Welsh Government will be seeking the views of farmers and wider rural stakeholders ahead of consultation on the final proposals next year. The following is the NFU Cymru summary of the 71 page outline proposals. It does not set out NFU Cymru's views on these proposals at this stage.

### Sustainable Land Management (SLM)

The guiding principle of Welsh Government's future agricultural policy is Sustainable Land Management (SLM). WG identifies that SLM is a holistic approach that will ensure the economic, environmental and social outcomes from land management practice can be delivered for the long-term benefit of the nation.

The Agriculture (Wales) Bill, which will be introduced in the Senedd later this year, will ensure Welsh Ministers have the powers necessary to continue supporting farmers for adopting practices that contribute to SLM. WG wants to support farmers to produce food in a sustainable manner, building on the high standards already in place.

### Sustainable Land Management Objectives

The Scheme has been designed to deliver SLM objectives of:

- Producing food in a sustainable manner
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Maintaining and enhancing the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide
- Conserving and enhancing the countryside and cultural resources, promoting public access and engagement with them.

Welsh Government say these objectives must be delivered together, sometimes on the same land. The Scheme will do this by taking a 'land sharing' approach delivering environmental and social outcomes through the adoption of sustainable farming practices. Farmers will be supported both financially and with knowledge transfer and advice to adopt these practices.

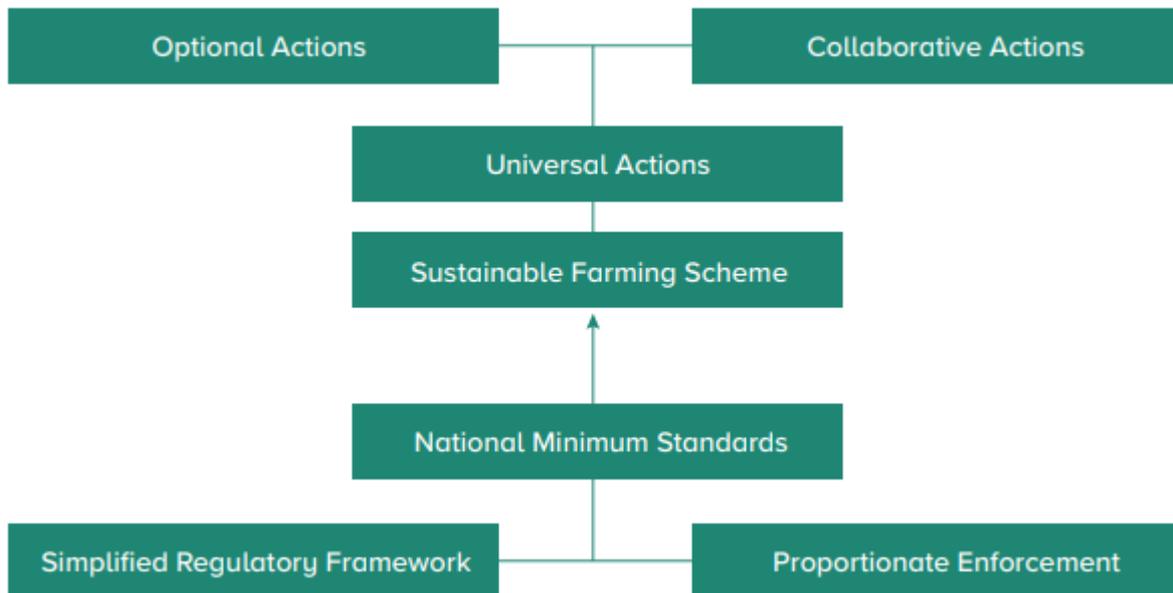
### Sustainable Land Management Outcomes

The Scheme sets out a range of actions farmers can undertake, connected to the following outcomes Welsh Government is seeking to deliver:

Clean air	Mitigate flood and drought risk
Clean water	Protected natural landscapes and historic environment
Enhanced access and engagement	Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
High animal health and welfare	Resilient ecosystems
Maximise carbon storage	Resource efficiency

## Scheme Structure

### Scheme Structure



The proposed SFS has three distinct layers, each supporting farmers to achieve SLM outcomes and rewarding farmers who choose to do more.

- Universal Actions - applicable to all farmers, a baseline payment will be made to farmers for undertaking the Universal Actions which should be within reach of most farmers and integrated into current farming practice. Welsh Government recognise that some farms may not be able to deliver all of the Universal Actions from the outset so exemptions may be in place. Capital payments, advice and guidance will be made available to support farmers.
- Optional Actions – a second layer involving more complex, targeted actions relating to specific land or landscape feature issues which a farmer may choose to deliver in return for revenue and/or capital payment (additional to payment for undertaking the Universal Actions).
- Collaborative Actions - carried out in a co-ordinated way by multiple farmers or land managers at a landscape, catchment or national scale. Examples of collaboration include creating interconnected habitats across landscapes, developing supply chain opportunities, sharing knowledge and innovation. Collaborative actions will often require farmers, land managers and other individuals who are not part of the Scheme to be involved in joint projects - at least two farmers will need to be part of the Scheme to form a collaboration.
- National Minimum Standards - the Scheme is underpinned by a legislative framework of National Minimum Standards (NMS) clarifying and consolidating agricultural regulations into one piece of legislation which will be in place in time for the Scheme's introduction. NMS will be based initially on the existing legislation that underpins cross compliance. Welsh Government state enforcement of NMS should be proportionate to the severity of the offence and avoid criminalisation of farmers for less serious offences.

Level/Layers	Description	Payment and support
1. National Minimum Standards	Legal requirements, applicable to all farms.	No payment Advice and guidance Future civil sanctions with the potential for Scheme penalties
2. Universal	All Universal Actions have to be carried out by farmers who join the Scheme. These actions help farms become more sustainable and are the building blocks for them to do more. All applicable actions must be delivered to enter the scheme.	Baseline Payment Capital Payments Technical Support Access to tools Advice and guidance
3. Optional	These higher-level actions build on those at the base level but may be more complex to deliver and need to be more tailored to each farm or specific areas.	Revenue and/or Capital Payments Technical Support Access to tools Advice and guidance
4. Collaboration	Aimed at more specific priorities, which need more flexibility in how they are delivered and need a combination of actions to deliver the most benefits. These need the greatest input from the farmer.	Revenue and/or Capital Payments Technical Support Advice and guidance

### Scheme Framework

The Scheme will support sustainable farming practices. Welsh Government want to work in partnership with farmers by paying them for carrying out actions which deliver outcomes. These outcomes deliver benefits to the farm business as well as the environment, animal health and welfare and wider society.

Given that there is evidence that the actions will deliver SLM outcomes, farmers will be paid for delivering the actions as long as they are consistently carrying them out. Many actions are already being carried out on many farms across Wales and are designed to help farmers make the best use of resources and work well within their environment. In many cases, consistently undertaking the action will help reduce farm business costs.

The Scheme is designed so all farm types can access it, including tenants and every farm should have the opportunity to choose how they undertaken the actions. Farmers will be responsible for making sure they have management control, and any landowner's permission, if it is needed.

Welsh Government state this is an outline of the Scheme. This is not an exhaustive list of actions or a complete picture of each layer. Welsh Government want to explore the actions with farmers so they can make sure the Scheme works on the ground. The detail included here is provisional and Welsh Government may change some of the actions based on feedback and they may include additional actions in the future.

The actions in the Scheme (described below) are set out under five characteristics. These show the variety of ways Welsh Government want to support farmers to deliver a wide range of outcomes alongside the sustainable production of food:

- Resilient and productive
- Reduce, reuse and recycle inputs, nutrients and waste
- Reduce on farm emissions and maximise carbon sequestration
- Protect and enhance the farm ecosystem
- Benefit people, animals and place

Support through training and farmer to farmer knowledge sharing and innovation will be provided through a new Farming Connect including a redesigned advisory service. Future support will offer advice and guidance on how farmers can access the Scheme; support through the entry process; and guidance on performing each of the actions. Farming Connect will also include a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programme, Demonstration Network Farms and a Research, Development and Innovation Programme.

### Proposed Actions - Resilient and productive farms

Welsh Government will work with farmers to help them adapt to changes in the environment or market. Through the following actions they will provide support to help farmers improve the resilience of their farm businesses, providing opportunities for the wider rural economy and reliable long-term employment where skills and experience are valued.

- Managing and optimising farm performance through measuring and managing - basic benchmarking using simple Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to understand how the business is performing, both financially and sustainably. There will be one set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each farming sector and wider KPIs for the whole industry. The KPIs will focus on business, production and environmental factors and use data which is familiar and easily accessible to farmers.

Universal Action – All farmers will complete a self-assessment once a year against a minimum of the sector and industry KPIs (two per sector or three in total, whichever is higher).

- Diversify, differentiate, specialise for added value – support to farm businesses to diversify into additional sustainable farming practices.

Optional Action – Farmers will be supported to grow crops which lower the amount of feed they buy-in

Optional Action – Welsh Government will offer support to start-up horticultural businesses or new horticultural enterprises within established farmer businesses.

Optional Action – Welsh Government will offer support for innovation projects which trial new techniques and technologies at a practical level focusing on sustainability, market diversification and increased farm resilience.

Collaboration Action – support will be available to help farmers work together to sell more directly to the consumer and add value.

- Minimise the risk of catching and spreading disease – a proactive approach to disease prevention and control setting biosecurity standards and supporting farmers to achieve them.

Universal Action – All farms need to have the necessary biosecurity measures in place including:

- wash stations and disinfectant available for people to clean their clothing;
- equipment and vehicles as they enter/exit the farm and any livestock areas;
- all enclosed land boundaries secure;
- dedicated secure store for deadstock which can be cleaned and disinfected;
- secure feed stores to keep out wildlife and vermin; and
- a pest control/management programme in place that include the responsible use of biocides.

Optional Action – Farmers will be rewarded for having a 3 metre wide fence and hedge along the farm boundary (where appropriate)

Optional Action – All incoming animals are isolated for at least six days before mixing with existing stock.

Collaboration Action – Welsh Government will work with the industry to explore how the Scheme would introduce a procedure that demonstrates animals which come onto the farm from other units are safe, minimising the risk of introducing disease.

### Proposed Actions - Reduce, reuse and recycle inputs, nutrients and waste

Through the following actions, Welsh Government will help farms use minimal inputs and make the best use of their resources to have fewer losses to the environment, improving air and water quality and making them more efficient and profitable.

- Make best use of artificial fertiliser through nutrient management and soil testing

Universal Action – All farmers will be required to carry out professional and farmer soil testing at Scheme entry and in time for contract renewal to include:

- N, P, K, Carbon (C) and pH;
- a biological measure e.g. eDNA, respiration counting 'proxy' species (earthworms); and
- a physical assessment e.g. infiltration rate, bulk density or Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure

Universal Action – Submit nutrient accounts and evidence covering N, P, K, C and pH

Optional Actions – including:

- supplementing applied nitrogen with nitrogen fixing plants (establishing mixed swards, planning rotations and cover cropping);
- establishing leys and crops with varied rooting profiles; and
- improving soil biology (diverse planting, graze and rest practices, minimum or no till, use of anthelmintic plants to reduce wormer usage, habitat management).

Collaboration Action – support for farmers to work together in a catchment to improve water quality.

- Prioritising the use of manure and fertility building - support for mixed arable rotations

Optional Actions – Farmers will be rewarded for using a crop rotation. The crop rotation must:

- balance fertility building and exploitative crops;
- include legumes to fix nitrogen for following crops;
- have crops with a mix of differing root systems;
- make sure plants with pest and disease susceptibilities are separated by an appropriate amount of time.

- Minimise use of pesticides and herbicide through integrated pest management (IPM)

Universal Action – farmers will be supported to collect, record and report data on Plant Protection Products use

Universal Action - complete an IPM assessment

- Make best use of grassland through alternative approaches to grazing, introducing multispecies leys and mixed grazing

Optional Action – Use a ‘graze and rest’ approach, for at least five months of the year by dividing fields to allow the regular movement of livestock and grazing grass for short periods

Optional Action - Establish and/or maintain a mixed sward of grasses, legumes and herbs (or native wildflowers) with two options available including:

- swards containing at least five species of grass, three species of legumes and three species of herbs or wildflowers;
- or swarding containing at least three species of grass, two species of legumes and two species of herbs or wildflowers.

Optional Action – Capital support for ‘graze and rest’ infrastructure and/or to expand into other agricultural enterprises which enhance pasture management and livestock production

- Lowering the environmental impact of ammonia emissions

Optional Actions – to lower emissions including adaptations to:

- housing e.g. frequent slurry scraping and drying poultry manure;
- slurry storage e.g. covering slurry stores and acidifying slurry;
- and precision slurry spreading e.g. trailing shoe and injection targeted at areas where pollution is an issue such as sensitive habitats.

Collaboration Action – support for farmers to work together to deliver actions to lower ammonia emissions.

### Proposed Actions - Reduce on farm emissions and maximise carbon sequestration

Through the following actions Welsh Government will help farms become more efficient, lower their greenhouse gas emissions and enhance existing carbon stocks through sequestration. Welsh Government will also help farms make use of renewable energy and produce food with a low carbon footprint.

- Adopting energy efficiency practices and producing renewable energy on-farm

Optional Action – capital support available for various energy efficient actions to decarbonise their machinery use and farm practices, based on the carbon assessment in the Sustainability Review.

- Efficient animals: Animal Health Improvement Cycle (AHIC) – rewarding farmers for carrying out actions identified by farmers working closely with their vet

Universal Action – farmers will need to:

- carry out actions, identified by working with their vet, through the Animal Health Improvement Cycle; and
- calculate and report the average amount of antibiotic used on the farm

- Restore semi-natural peatland

Universal Action – Where peatland exists, farmers will need to management it appropriately

Optional Action – Farms will have the opportunity to take actions which restore and manage peatland such as grip and ditch blocking, installation of leaky dams, peat hag re-profiling and vegetation establishment.

Collaboration Action – Support for projects to restore and manage peatland shared by multiple farmers.

- Create new and manage existing agro-forestry and woodland – supporting farmers with a woodland plan for creation and management to bring existing trees and farm woodlands into management and plant more hedges, shelter belts and trees in field corners as well as field scale

Universal Action – Farmers will:

- have at least 10% tree cover on their farm managed in line with the UK Forestry Standard;
- will manage new and existing hedgerows in line with the hedgerow management cycle.

Optional Action – Manage existing trees and woodland, including ancient woodland, in line with the UK Forestry Standard (beyond the 10% Universal Action)

Optional Action – support to plant more trees (individual trees, hedges, groups of trees, shelterbelts and riparian strips) than the minimum 10% coverage

Optional Action – farmers will be supported to increase the width of hedgerows on boundaries between farms to 3 metres (unless separated by woodlands, roads, wall etc)

Collaboration Action – Support to manage and create joined up woodlands at a larger scale than the individual farm.

### Proposed Actions - Protect and enhance the farm ecosystem

Welsh Government, through the following actions, will support farms to work well with their ecosystems, using nature-based solutions for healthy living soils and rich farm and nature diversity.

- Protect soils from erosion and degradation

Universal Action – To protect soil from erosion, farmers will need to establish a multi-species cover crop on all land which is uncropped over winter

Optional Action – Establishing crops by using minimum tillage or no tillage cultivation methods

- Rich on-farm diversity: preserving native breeds

Optional Action – registered pedigree animals from a native breed, as defined on the UK approved list of native breeds at risk.

Collaboration Action – support will be available for farmers to consistently produce from native breeds including direct selling, working together to promote genetic health and collaborative support available for farmers to come together and use native breeds to develop and maintain natural habitats and increase biodiversity.

- Manage habitats and species - Actions supporting the management of habitat and species are split into three sections to reflect semi-natural habitat, improved land and designated

sites. The requirement for 10% of land can be split across these three areas and actions will vary depending on habitat and condition.

**Universal Action** – Farmers will need to actively manage at least 10% of their land to maintain and enhance semi-natural habitats. Where there is insufficient semi-natural habitat available farmers will need to select actions to create permanent or temporary habitat features on other agricultural land including fallow crop margins, unfertilised/unsprayed cereal headlands, skylark plots (fallow plots within a winter cereal crop), fixed rough grass margin on arable land and rotational rough grass marking on arable land, flower-rich margins, beetle banks, wet features, traditional wildflower rich hay meadow management.

**Note** – We understand from Welsh Government that proposals are for 10% habitat, and a separate requirement for 10% tree cover. Existing areas of broadleaf trees are the overlap, so the proposal is that these trees could contribute towards both actions. WG propose that conifers and newly planted broadleaves will contribute to 10% trees, but not contribute to 10% habitat. By asking all farmers to create new and manage existing woodland through the Scheme the load will be spread across Wales. This should help avoid large scale land use change and keep farmers on the land. Some farmers may not be able to meet the 10% due to the type of land or restrictions on it. These issues will be explored in co-design to ensure those farmers can access the scheme.

**Optional Action** – Managing or enhancing habitats above the 10% minimum including more bespoke site-specific actions.

**Collaboration Action** – support for collaboration to create interconnected habitats across landscapes through joining up habitat, taking into account any local or national species recovery priorities.

- Management habitats and species: Designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation

**Universal Action** – Have a fully developed and agreed management plan in place ready for implementation for protected sites under the farmer's sole control (where there is no current active section 15/16 management agreement in place). Appropriate management of a designated site can be counted towards the 10% minimum of the farm required to be managed as habitat. Where a funded Section 15/16 Management Agreement is running alongside the Scheme, payment rates may need to be adjusted to avoid double funding.

**Collaboration Action** – Support for collaborative management of protected sites to deliver SLM outcomes

- Water is protected from pollution: Lowering the risk of diffuse pollution

**Optional Action** – farmers will be supported to develop a bespoke approach to lower the risk from diffuse pollution delivering actions based on risk mapping data including infrastructure improvements for clean and dirty water separation and slurry and manure storage, informed decisions on the best time to spread muck and fertiliser, buffer strip establishment, hydrological mapping to inform targeted manure and nutrient management, limiting stock access to watercourses, planting trees to intercept overland water flow.

**Collaboration Action** – supporting collaborative action to improve water quality in catchments bringing together farmers, landowners, interested parties and water companies to ensure actions undertaken on farm are part of a wider package dealing with all sources of water pollution

- Water is protected from pollution: Protected watercourse banks

Optional Action – farmers will be supported to establish a buffer strip alongside watercourses. This must be at least 6 metres wide and can include a mix of grasses, shrubs and trees.

- Conserve and retain water: Ponds and scrapes

Universal Action – Farmers will have to restore and manage existing permanent wildlife ponds and/or create a number of temporary ponds (scrapes) with at least two water features no less than 0.01ha and up to 0.1ha in total of the enclosed area. Farms larger than 80ha will need a minimum total area of 0.2ha not including features where the main function is water storage, for example, irrigation ponds, storage reservoirs and hydro tanks.

Optional Action – Farmers wishing to do more will be rewarded for introducing additional ponds and scrapes where it is appropriate to do so.

- Conserve and retain water: Water harvesting and storage

Optional Action – Farmers will be supported to create new reservoirs and irrigation ponds, install water harvesting reuse equipment and install clean and dirty water separation infrastructure.

- Natural flood management

Optional Action – Natural flood management actions such as water harvesting

Collaboration Action – Farmers will be encouraged to collaborate across a catchment to lower the risk of flooding taking actions collaboratively including practices such as introducing leaky barriers, offline storage areas or floodplain woodland.

### Proposed Actions - Benefit people, animals and places

Welsh Government will help farmers to proactively promote and improve their own wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of their families, workforce, the wider community and their livestock. Welsh Government will support farms to enhance the beauty of the natural environment and provide opportunities for people to interact with rural culture, landscapes and heritage.

- Maintain and enhance the historic environment, heritage and beauty

Universal Action – Farms with historical environment features identified on their land will need to follow general guidance on how to manage them.

Optional Action – Farmers will be supported for reporting on the condition of historic features and how they are managed. Where appropriate, they will be supported to repair or conserve a historic feature with professional guidance.

Optional Action – Farmers will be supported to deliver more for protected landscapes. These actions will be bespoke to the farm and surrounding area and align with the special qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Park.

Collaboration Action – The Scheme will support landscape-based collaborative projects which enhance the historic environment and designated landscapes across multiple farms.

- Enabling people to engage with and access the natural environment including inland waters for recreation where appropriate

Optional Action – Farmers will be able to choose options which help people engage with and access the natural environment including:

- upgrading footpaths to multi-use paths;
- enhancing existing paths to make them more accessible;
- establishing joined-up and new access routes and trails;
- establishing new access; and
- hosting educational and care farm visits

Collaboration Action – support for projects to improve access for local communities and support national priorities.

- Livestock have a good quality of life

Optional Action – Farmers will be supported to use a higher animal welfare standard. This could include adopting the Good Life Welfare approach or similar initiative.

- Be proficient to practice safely and efficiently

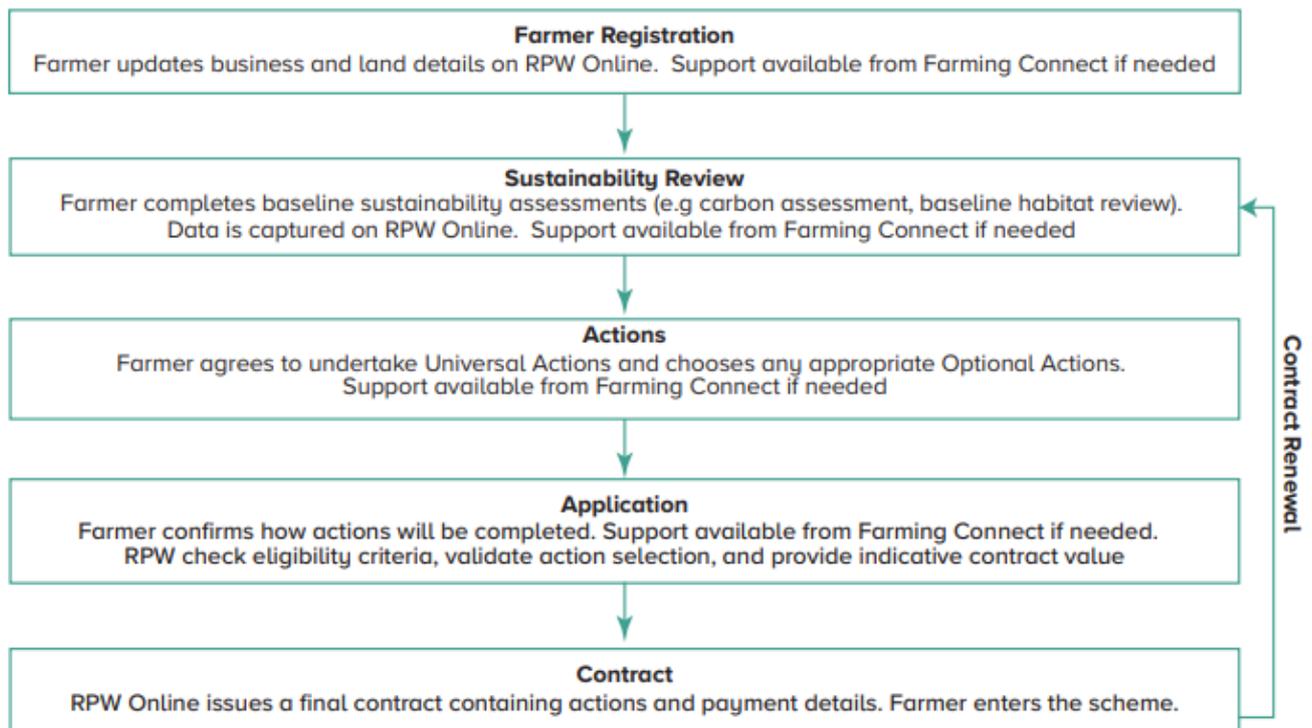
Universal Action – Farmers will be required to complete a minimum level of learning, including on Health and Safety

Optional Action – Support for completing more complex or higher level CPD and rewards for supporting transferring knowledge to other farmers.

## Sustainable Farming Scheme Process

Welsh Government propose a five-stage application process as follows:

### Registration and contract preparation



Welsh Government propose the following eligibility criteria will be applied:

- Must be a farmer undertaking agricultural activities
- Must be able to actively perform, at least, the applicable Universal Actions throughout the duration of the contract
- The agricultural land must be in Wales
- Must farm a minimum of 3 hectares of eligible agricultural land

Farmers will need to maintain and reconfirm their eligibility periodically through the duration of the Scheme contract. There will be separate eligibility criteria for the Collaboration layer. WG want to explore the proposed eligibility criteria further through co-design to ensure that they are not unfairly restricting entry to the scheme to those farmers who could actively perform, at least, the applicable Universal Actions.

Sustainability Review - this will need to be completed prior to entering the Scheme, providing a whole farm assessment of the economic, environmental and social aspects of the farm establishing a baseline for entering the Scheme. The Sustainability Review has been developed with the intention of being of benefit to the farmer, only collecting the data needed, building on current systems and industry tools, being completed with minimal support, minimising bureaucracy for the farmer, aiding the farmer's understanding of Sustainable Land Management and being 'digital as a default' to minimise cost. WG suggests that some aspects of the Sustainability Review may need more expertise e.g. the Habitat Baseline Review. Data captured as part of the Sustainability Review will be used by WG to provide collective data on the industry's sustainability credentials as well as a baseline to enable the monitoring progress with SLM outcomes. The Sustainability Review will be repeated at the end of each contract to understand progress and evidence achievements.

Action Selection - the findings of the Sustainability Review will inform the farmer's decision on which actions (Universal, Optional and/Collaborative) are suitable and appropriate. Universal Actions are required to be completed but there will be some flexibility in how they can be met. At this stage farmers will understand what payment they will receive. The availability of Optional Actions will be dependent on budget and may become available at different times of the contract period.

Contract – the contract will outline the Universal and Optional Actions the farmer has agreed to undertake and the payments Welsh Government will provide in return. It will include the monitoring activity the farmer will be required to undertake and what evidence with will need to submit in order to receive payments. Contracts will be up to five years in length, some amendments to the contract may be permitted to allow for unforeseen circumstances or to allow additional Optional Actions to be undertaken. Welsh Government recognise that tenancies can vary in length and will seek to allow flexibility for any tenancy that ends earlier during a contract period.

Scheme rules – there will be a set of Scheme Rules which will outline how the Scheme will work. Farmers will need to comply with the Scheme Rules in order to receive payment and support. The Rules will cover a broad range of areas that will require monitoring, checking and enforcement including setting the eligibility criteria, what happens when land is bought or sold during the contract period, monitoring delivery of actions for compliance, compliance with the regulatory baseline and non-compliance, the contract period and change of contract arrangements as well as which agricultural activities will be supported and what will be exempt.

Payment – payment rates will consider factors beyond a cost incurred and income foregone model recognising the social value provided by the outcomes being delivered. The payment will give farmers a fair and stable income for the work they do alongside the sustainable production of food. Welsh Government is not able to provide information on potential payment rates at this stage. Payment rates are being informed by modelling and economic analysis which is still being undertaken. To develop a baseline payment, Welsh Government will take account of a range of

factors including the outcomes delivered by the actions, the cost to the farmer plus any necessary incentive to encourage uptake. Payments for Optional Actions may vary and could be in the form of capital grants or more specific action-oriented revenue payments. Consideration will also be given to capping payments. Funding available for the Optional Actions will be dependent on overall budget for future agricultural support. Payment rates will be presented in the consultation on the final scheme in 2023.

Monitoring and checking – Welsh Government will use different ways to monitor farms and check compliance including self-monitoring, re-using data already being captured by farmers, encouraging new technology like mobile phone apps, satellite data and remote sensing. They plan to share data (anonymously) where it adds value.

Inspection regime – inspections will be risk and evidence based to target those farms and activities that represent a higher risk, supported by some random selection auditing. Welsh Government will also explore how farmers can use earned recognition through positive past performance or through membership of assurance and certification schemes.

Penalties – for failure to deliver Scheme actions as laid out in the contract, Welsh Government will give farmers advice and guidance on how to correct minor problems allowing them time to put right any actions following inspection. In circumstances where it is felt that financial penalties are required, penalties will be proportionate to the failure to deliver Scheme actions, any potential damage caused or a breach of the Scheme Rules. There will be an independent appeal process in place for farmers to challenge decisions taken by Rural Payments Wales.

Reporting and evaluating the SFS – information gathered as part of monitoring will help Welsh Government to determine how well the Scheme is working from an operational perspective.

### Scheme Transition

The Prepare and Pilot Phase 2022-2024 – Welsh Government have already put in place measures to provide stability until the end of 2023 with the continuation of BPS and Glastir, also announcing a framework of funding to support the rural economy and the transition to the Scheme over the next three financial years. Welsh Government want to prepare farmers to be in the best position to enter the Scheme, piloting elements of the Scheme, testing the feasibility of actions and informing the proposed process. This includes the co-design process and work is also underway to design a series of projects to support farmers' entry into the Scheme including a refocused Farming Connect service. WG want to test some elements of the Scheme with farmers as soon as possible, in particular, processes such as the Habitat Baseline Review.

The Transition Period (2025-2029) – WG state it is essential that they provide farmers with much needed stability and avoid any cliff edge in funding recognising the delivery of environmental and social outcomes depends on farm businesses being economically sustainable. Whilst there is not budget certainty beyond the financial year 2024-25 and transition planning will be subject to future funding settlements, WG will continue to support farmers throughout the transition period and as they phase out BPS. The transition will start on 1 April 2025 and end on 31 March 2029 so no farmer will face a cliff edge in their funding support even if they chose not to participate in the Scheme. Welsh Government want to encourage farmer participation in the Scheme during this period to increase the delivery of SLM outcomes and they will ensure that farmers joining the Scheme will receive at least the level of funding that they would have received had they chosen not to participate in the Scheme.

NFU Cymru will now take some time to study the document in detail, speaking with our membership, to consider how the framework matches up to our own vision of a policy based around three cornerstones of stability, productivity and the environment. More information on getting involved with Welsh Government's co-design process can be accessed [here](#). More information on NFU Cymru's position can be accessed [here](#)