



Platfform yr  
Amgylchedd Cymru



Environment  
Platform Wales

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*Terms of reference 2018 - 2021*

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Darparu tystiolaeth  
Cyfeithu ymchwil  
Creu effaith

Providing evidence  
Translating research  
Generating impact

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Version	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1.0	First full draft for Board approval	J Geroni	14/11/2018
1.1	Incorporating 1 <sup>st</sup> round of comments from Board members	J Geroni	19/11/2018
2.0	Approved by Board for publication branding updated	J Geroni	07/02/2019

## 1 Preamble

Wales is considered a world leader in terms of its commitment to sustainable development. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was the first of its kind to make a strong legislative link to the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. In 2016 The Environment (Wales) Act put further legislation in place to plan and manage Wales' natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way.

In order to fulfill their ambition to provide a healthy, resilient Wales able to adapt and prosper in the face of climate change the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) need increased access to evidence across a broad range of issues relating to the environment and well-being goals. This Platform brings together universities, research centres and others with the aim of translating world class research into high quality evidence for Welsh Government and NRW.

Together, we have a national commitment to ensure that the development of policy and practice is well-grounded in evidence, exploiting the excellence and diversity of research talent in Wales. In this way we will ensure that academic research delivers greater impact within the wider community of evidence users and ultimately delivers tangible benefits for the people of Wales.

The Platform will meet its aims by:

1. Developing innovative approaches to identifying evidence gaps and understanding the needs of evidence users in Wales.
2. Facilitating interdisciplinary and cross sectoral collaboration to address identified evidence gaps and to ensure that evidence users have timely access to appropriate expertise.
3. Supporting exchange of expertise and skills between researchers, policy makers and practitioners within member organisations.

## 2 Roles

### 2.1 Platform Staff

Director – employed by Cardiff University on behalf of the Platform and hosted by Natural Resources Wales in Ty Cambria, Newport Road, Cardiff. The role of the Director is to support communication and collaboration between Platform members across a range of education, evidence gathering, research and knowledge exchange activities. The Director has oversight of all Platform activities.

Administrator - employed by Cardiff University on behalf of the Platform and hosted by Natural Resources Wales in Ty Cambria, Newport Road, Cardiff. The role of the Administrator is to support the Director in the delivery of Platform communications and activities.

### 2.2 Board Members

Each member organisation will nominate a representative to sit on the Platform Board. Board Members will represent the interests of their organisation in discussions about the strategic direction of, and priorities for, The Platform.

## 3 Responsibilities

### 3.1 Platform Director

With the support of the Administrator the Platform Director is responsible for:

- Managing communications between members relating to identified evidence gaps and policy development opportunities.
- Managing the communications strategy of the Platform for internal and external audiences including the public.
- Providing suitable workshop/sandpit/networking opportunities for members to facilitate collaborative working around identified challenges.
- Facilitating the development of collaborative research and education activities for e.g. MSc courses, doctoral training programmes, workplace exchanges and secondments where these support the aims of the Platform.
- Supporting and facilitating any other collaborative activities identified by The Board that contribute to the aims of Platform.

### 3.2 Board Members

Board Members will be responsible for:

- Taking decisions relating to strategic priorities for The Platform.
- Taking decisions relating to Platform membership and finances including the status of Associate Members.
- Taking decisions on priority activities or areas of activity.
- Supporting the Director in the development of high level operational plans.
- Supporting the Director by cascading the outcomes of Board meetings to colleagues within their own organisations.

## 4 Activities in scope

- Matching needs of NRW and Welsh Government to skills and opportunities with evidence providers.
- Activities that increase the quality of interactions between evidence providers and evidence users.
- Facilitating<sup>1</sup> concept development for >£1m research proposals.
- Facilitating education and knowledge exchange projects involving 2 or more platform members.
- Providing links to resources via Platform website.
- Identifying opportunities for Platform members to network and engage with external organisations such as the EU, UN and DEFRA.
- Facilitating multidisciplinary work that cannot be tackled by one partner alone.
- Co-ordinating public engagement activities to promote the aims of the Platform.

## 5 Activities out of scope

- Curating/owning/managing data/statistics/databases.
- Platform staff conducting research.
- Supporting projects for individual platform members.

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<sup>1</sup> This will include the organisation of e.g. workshops and/or sandpits on behalf of Platform members, workshop facilitation by the Director and dissemination of opportunities for collaboration. Participation in these activities will not be limited to Platform members or organisations based in Wales. Collaboration with external organisations will be encouraged where there are gaps in local expertise and this supports the aims of the Platform. It is anticipated that these activities will be organised in response to calls such as e.g. Strength In Places Fund or GCRF.

- Setting up/managing digital platform for collaboration.
- Co-ordinating the writing and submission of funding applications.
- Supporting work within one discipline.
- Supporting blue skies research unless this is driven by a clear need from NRW or Welsh Government.
- Platform staff directly providing policy advice.

## 6 Membership

Platform members comprise:

- Welsh Government
- Natural Resources Wales
- Centre For Ecology and Hydrology
- Aberystwyth University
- Bangor University
- Cardiff University
- Cardiff Metropolitan University
- Glyndwr University
- Swansea University
- University of South Wales
- University of Wales Trinity St David

## 7 Communication/relationship with other groups

A number of Associate Partners have been identified with whom the Platform will maintain regular contact and seek to involve closely in its activities.

- National Park Authorities
- British Geological Survey
- Open University
- National Museum of Wales
- National Botanic Garden of Wales
- Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

The Platform will also seek to maintain good working relationships and strong communications with a range of organisations working in the Environmental sector, for example<sup>2</sup>:

- Environmental consultants and private agencies
- DEFRA
- JNCC
- RSPB Science
- Wales Environment Link
- Wildlife Trusts Wales
- Canals and Rivers Trust
- WRAP Cymru
- Research funders

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<sup>2</sup> This list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive and is only intended to give an indication of the breadth of engagement anticipated at the time of writing.

## 8 Meeting administration/secretariat

Full secretarial support will be provided to The Board by the Platform Administrator and Director.

## 9 Review of Terms of Reference

Terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.