



Cynulliad Hinsawdd
Climate Assembly

Expert Witness Template

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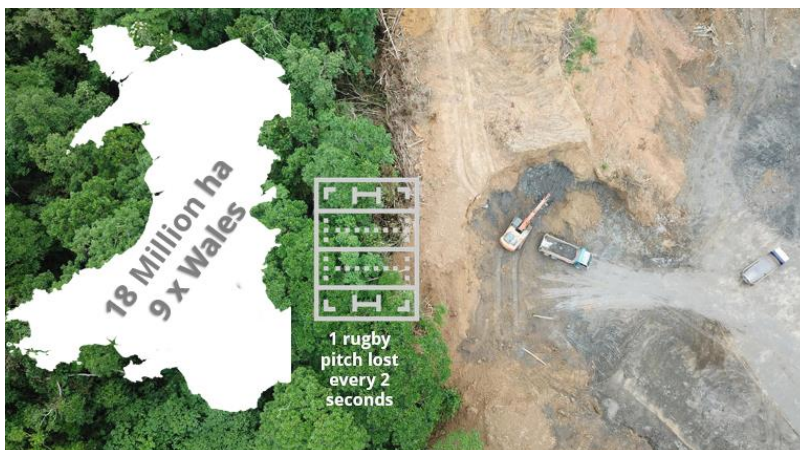
What is your passion / specialism / position on solutions to the climate crisis?

Who are Size of Wales?

Size of Wales is a Welsh charity that is promoting a deforestation free economy for Wales as part of our solution to climate change and to ensure Wales is a globally responsible nation. We are experts on the causes of tropical deforestation and its links to climate change. We are advocating for local deforestation free pledges in order that we can combat our forest footprints.

Context

We are facing a climate and nature crisis. Fast and deep cuts to global emissions are needed, and trees and forests are an essential part of the solution.



Nevertheless, an estimated 18 million hectares of forest are being lost globally every year. Roughly nine times the size of Wales 10-15 per cent of global manmade greenhouse gas emissions. Stopping and reversing global deforestation is a critical component of

limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

However, time is running out if we want to protect tropical forests such as the Amazon.

Therefore, in order for Blaenau Gwent to truly become carbon neutral, it will need to look at its own global deforestation footprint.

Causes of Deforestation

There are just a handful of commodities that are causing deforestation of tropical forests, namely beef from South America, soy (used in animal feed here in Wales), palm oil, cacao (for chocolate) and coffee. For more information on this watch our video <https://youtu.be/E1RRNmMPHU> or see here <https://sizeofwales.org.uk/how-welsh-diets-drive-deforestation/>)

Unfortunately, these commodities are imported into Wales and are found in the food and drink that we consume on a daily basis. We want to inspire public sector bodies, businesses and the public to make a deforestation free pledge and take into account the impact our diets, farming, and purchasing practices can have on our precious forests. This means looking at the food and drink served by catering companies in schools, hospitals and care homes.

<p>BEEF Eat local grass fed</p>	<p>SOY Buy organic and reduce meat consumption</p>	<p>PALM OIL Buy RSPO certified</p>	<p>COFFEE AND CACAO Buy Fairtrade</p>
			
			

By becoming deforestation free in what we buy both as individuals and collectively through public sector purchasing, we can reduce deforestation levels, enabling a natural carbon store to offset global emissions and protect vital habitats at the same time. By adopting this approach, we can also support local economies by promoting more locally sourced sustainable food and bring about a healthier Wales. Public sector bodies should also support food and farming producers to introduce these changes to become deforestation free.

Size of Wales believes strongly in natural solutions to climate change that are enabled through collective power and behaviour change.

Thinking about critics and/or alternative views to that which you have put forward above – what would others say about your perspective and idea?

- Wales is too small to make a difference to global deforestation levels.
- Wales has already cut down a lot of our forests. We should not be telling other countries what to do with their forests.
- Changing food products is expensive and only affordable for the middle classes
- UK emission targets do not need to count imported emissions and there are no targets for them.
- Are you just calling for people to be vegetarian?

Use this final part of your presentation to help Assembly members better understand your position in relation to others and what that means for addressing the question that they have been set.

Size of Wales supports calls for decarbonisation of our economy as part of our efforts to reduce emissions and tackle climate change. However, we go further by highlighting our overseas footprint and puts a spotlight on our carbon footprint that is hidden in the food and drink that we buy. We call for action on not just the emissions we generate here in Wales but also overseas, specifically those generated through deforestation caused by our demand for key commodities. Often environmental charities focus on either animals or climate. By focusing on deforestation Size of Wales and its campaign aims to address both the biodiversity crisis we are facing and climate crisis. We believe that we cannot claim to be net zero when it comes to emissions without also reducing our overseas carbon footprints.