



## Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

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### **Introduction**

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) (The WFG Act) provides a comprehensive approach to sustainable development that mirrors the Agenda 2030 framework. Wales was the first country to formally translate the SDGs into national law. The WFG Act establishes seven well-being goals for Wales. These align with the SDGs.

The WFG Act established the role of an independent and statutory Future Generations Commissioner for Wales as part of a broader **accountability architecture**, to provide advice and assistance to public institutions in Wales, and to monitor and assess progress and implementation.

In Wales, we are looking beyond 2030, and have set [2050 milestones](#) in relation to our [national indicators](#). To prepare for challenges beyond the 2030 agenda, we must foster **intergenerational dialogue** to allow for a broader perspective that considers the long-term consequences of actions and policies. By law, the improvement of the well-being of the population of Wales cannot compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

While this submission provides recommendations on the Chapeau and Chapter IV, there are examples of Wales' Well-Being Act acting across all chapters.

In relation to Chapter I: Sustainable Development and Financing for Development. Wales has committed to all spending of public funds to be aligned with the ambition of Wales' well-being goals. Wales also has a [circular economy strategy](#). The well-being economy is a key mission in the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' [strategy](#). Furthermore, Wales has raised the value of culture and creativity in sustainable development through the introduction of a well-being goal for cultural well-being.

In relation to Chapter II: International peace and security. Wales has established [Academi Heddwch Cymru](#) (Wales' Peace Institute). It is the first of its kind in the UK and its purpose is to build a better world through peace-rooted approaches to global challenges and has a [Nation of Sanctuary](#) Plan with the ambition of becoming the 'World's first nation of sanctuary'. Wales is also working towards being an [Anti-Racist](#)

[Wales by 2030](#) and the [most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe](#). Every year since 1922, our largest youth movement Urdd Gobaith Cymru, produce a [Peace and Goodwill Message](#) – which is translated into over 40 languages.

## **Submission**

### **Chapeau:**

Wales' 7 well-being goals set out a vision for the world we want to live in, now and in the future. They act as a framing for our collective action for the future reflecting SDGs. Wales' 'Ways of Working' help us deliver on that vision.

I would like to see much of the sentiment of the well-being goals and ways of working, which have inspired the suggested text below, reflected in the chapeau.

### **Suggested text: UN Member States commit to acting for:**

- **A Prosperous Future:** An innovative, productive and green world which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work.
- **A More Inclusive Future:** A world that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).
- **A Healthier Future:** A world in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
- **A Future of Cohesive Communities:** Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
- **A Future of Vibrant Cultures and Languages:** A world that promotes and protects culture, heritage language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
- **A Resilient Future:** A world which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change
- **Globally Responsible Future:** A world in which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of a Member State,

takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

**Suggested Text: UN Member States commit to using the following in all decision making:**

Long-term: The importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguarding the ability to also meet long-term needs

Integration: Considering how a Member State's work to meet the SDGs may impact upon each goal individually, or on the work of other Member States.

Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the SDGs, ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the Member State.

Collaboration: Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the Member State's internal infrastructure) that could help meet the SDGs.

Prevention: Acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help Member States meet their objectives.

**UN Actions required:**

- **Adopt the intergenerational approach and intergenerational solidarity required to secure well-being for current and future generations in all work:** Intergenerational collaboration is vital for reinvigorating the UN to effectively address current and future challenges. Serving as the central global platform for the 21st century, the UN relies on diverse voices to shape policies, ensuring relevance and responsiveness.
- **A re-balanced and diverse multilateral system:** A system that recognises and meaningfully involves indigenous voices and enables intergenerational diversity to lead and inform decision-making. This system should seek to avoid prescribing one method of the future and work with a variety of voices to ensure the UN is meaningfully representative including necessary changes of the UN Charter. Such an approach would seek to identify ways of strengthening the work of cities, nations and regions.
- **Establish a Future Generations Commission:** The key to a successful Pact for the Future is a successful implementation plan for Member States. A Commission would be dedicated to identifying choices and actions that Member States can take to institutionalise future generations into governance, policy and practice, drawing on established learning.

**Chapter IV: Youth and Future Generations**

My office has supported Member States and the UN to increase understanding of future generations and to embed futures capabilities.

- [2019 Wales' VNR Supplementary Report](#)
- [Future Generations Global Ambassadors](#):
  - [Future Generations Leadership Accelerator](#), which has had over 1,000 registrations and nearly 600 active enrolments. 83 countries are represented by the participants in this Accelerator, with the majority (more than 70%) being from the Global South. The Toolkit is available in Welsh, English, French and Spanish. Ambassadors presented the Youth Accelerator at One Young World in Belfast 2023 - mobilising a new generation of changemakers!
  - Developed the [Future Generations Policy Leader Toolkit](#) (available on [Spotify](#)), designed to support global policymakers and parliamentarians to understand and implement future generations thinking in policy.

#### Action required:

- **Adopting a common UN Definition of Future Generations and Youth:** There must be a distinction between future generations and young people. Although young people are closest in proximity to the future, both generations have different needs and deserve specific consideration. Conflating the two risks lumping responsibility for future generations solely on young people of today.

Suggested Text: Future generations: “all those generations that do not yet exist, are yet to come and who will eventually inherit this planet”.

Suggested Text: Young People: “all those under the age of 30”.

- **Communicate the importance of long-term thinking to the public and member states.**

Suggested Text: Member States are required to take account of “The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long-term effect.”

- **Financing for Youth:**

Suggested Text: Member States support accessible, flexible, and sustainable financing for young people aligned with the SDGs, focusing on the most promising solutions to demonstrate the power of youth-led innovation and intergenerational collaboration.

- **Establish meaningful intergenerational involvement at the UN:** We welcome the recently appointed ASG for Youth Affairs and look forward to a renewed focus on youth across the system.

Suggested Text: Member States commit to establishing and promoting meaningful intergenerational dialogues by selecting national UN Youth Delegates and appointing a youth representative to the UN Security Council.

Suggested Text: Member States commit to establishing an Intergenerational Commission to identify steps to strengthen the input received by civil society into the multilateral system.

- **A robust UN Declaration for Future Generations:**

Suggested Text: Member States commit to act as guardians for future generations and recognise their collective responsibility to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- **Create UN Futures:** Foster a positive culture and build capability around foresight within the UN, building on the established work of the UN Futures Lab.

Suggested Text: Member States invite the UN Secretary-General to:

- Appoint an Assistant Secretary General for Futures and Foresight
  - Publish foresight and futures guidance for risk, asset management, workforce planning, financial planning and procurement.
  - Establish a Foresight, Innovation, Research and Mobilisation Unit to build strategic foresight capability for Member States.
- **Guidance on ways to institutionalise intergenerational fairness across the multilateral system and within member states:**

Suggested Text: Member States support the production of a global future generations maturity matrix\* allowing Member States to track their own progress implementing future generations mechanisms.

\*See Wales's Maturity Matrix, [here](#).

- **Publish a Future Trends Report:** Looking to Member States for global examples, Wales publishes a 5 yearly [Future Trends Report](#) to highlight intergenerational challenges that they will need to respond to and the areas it can shape for a more sustainable future.

Suggested Text: Member States request the UN Secretary-General to produce a Future Generations Report every five years, highlighting the latest reliable future trends and innovations to aid policymaking.

Suggested Text: Member States commit to publish annually at the High-Level Political Forum, the national future trends for across policy themes, including demographics,

and how they will respond to these trends.

Suggested Text: Member States commit to the meaningful involvement of youth and children's voices in identifying and analysing trends, specifically those that impact youth and children.

- **Appoint a Special Envoy for Future Generations:** Establish a global representative for future generations within the UN system to advocate for their interests, facilitate collaboration and best practices sharing, and support member states in embedding long-term thinking in policymaking.

Suggested Text: Member States requests the UN Secretary-General to appoint a global representative for future generations within the UN system to advocate for their interests, facilitate collaboration and best practices sharing, and support member states in embedding long-term thinking in policymaking.

The following is proposed as the remit and functions for the UN Special Envoy for Future Generations:

1. Represent the rights, needs and interests of future generations at the UN and globally.
2. Stimulate and facilitate dialogue, actions and resource mobilisation to address the wide-ranging issues affecting future generations, and raise international awareness and attention to future generations issues;
3. Serve as a global advocate for UN multi-stakeholder partnerships on future generations and UN inter-agency initiatives on future generations;
4. Promote initiatives and policies to embed future generations at the national, regional, and global levels including through advocacy for meaningful youth participation in the work of the UN, with a special focus on the most marginalized and vulnerable youth;
5. Encourage relevant stakeholders to support the realization and full enjoyment by all young people of all human rights including through the identification and sharing of challenges, best practices and lessons learned;
6. Support the EOSG, especially the Deputy Secretary-General's efforts in UN system support to the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Reduction, with special focus on future generations issues.
7. Support the UN Secretary-General in mobilizing commitments to advance UN system initiatives for future generations, such as the implementation of the UN Declaration for Future Generations and the outcomes of the Summit for the Future.
8. Support Member States to take account of the long-term impact of the things that it does, and support increasing foresight and futures capacity.
9. Report on findings, assessments and progress to the General Assembly
10. Convene and resource the UN Future Generations Intergovernmental Forum.

11. Produce a UN Future Generations Report every five years.
12. Drive the rising of standards on reporting on SDG progress.

It is imperative that there is close collaboration between the UN Youth Office and the UN Special Envoy for Future Generations. The two UN bodies must work together to effectively utilize emerging opportunities and address challenges.