

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

**CORE MANAGEMENT PLAN
INCLUDING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES**

FOR

**MYNYDD EPYNT SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)
INCLUDING
MYNYDD EPYNT SPECIAL AREA FOR CONSERVATION (SAC)**

Version: 1

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Approved by:

A Welsh version of all or part of this document can be made available on request.



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PREFACE

This document provides the main elements of CCW's management plan for the sites named. It sets out what needs to be achieved on the sites, the results of monitoring and advice on the action required. This document is made available through CCW's web site and may be revised in response to changing circumstances or new information. This is a technical document that supplements summary information on the web site.

One of the key functions of this document is to provide CCW's statement of the Conservation Objectives for the relevant Natura 2000 sites. This is required to implement the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended (Section 4). As a matter of Welsh Assembly Government Policy, the provisions of those regulations are also to be applied to Ramsar sites in Wales.

1. VISION FOR THE SITE

This is a descriptive overview of what needs to be achieved for conservation on the site. It brings together and summarises the Conservation Objectives (part 4) into a single, integrated statement about the site.

Sufficient wetland habitat to support a viable population of varnished hook-moss, Hamatocaulis vernicosus is being maintained at this site. Suitable habitat for the moss of mildly base-rich spring-fed flushes where the water table is at or close to the surface for most of the year, occurs at all six locations at Mynydd Epynt. The flushes can be recognised within the six locations by the short sward of small sedges such as carnation sedge, star sedge and common sedge growing amongst the 'brown moss' carpets where rushes or bog mosses Sphagnum spp. are not dominant. The flushes are well grazed by sheep so that they retain their open nature and there are no woody shrubs present as these would shade out the moss.

Factors, which could affect the hydrology and water chemistry of the flushes, are under control.

In addition, at least 2.5 ha of suitable dry acid grassland habitat dominated by sheep's fescue and common bent grasses with heath bedstraw scattered through is maintained at Disgwylfa, which supports a rich variety of grassland fungi, including fairy clubs, earth-tongues and at least twenty types of waxcap. The sward is kept short throughout the year by sheep grazing and the grassland is managed without the addition of fertilisers.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Area and Designations Covered by this Plan

Grid reference(s): SN858351, SN883401, SN920400, SN996437, SO009444 and SO015440

Unitary authority(ies): Powys County Council

Area (hectares): 43.4 ha

Designations covered: Mynydd Epynt SAC and Mynydd Epynt SSSI – latter includes land at Disgwylfa which is not SAC.

Detailed maps of the designated sites are available through CCW's web site:

<http://www.ccw.gov.uk/interactive-maps/protected-areas-map.aspx>

For a map showing the coverage of this document please see attached Unit Map.

2.2 Outline Description

Mynydd Epynt SAC/SSSI comprises 6 separate blocks of land situated within the Sennybridge MOD Ranges between Halfway Forest and Cwm Owen in the Brecknock District of Powys. All of the blocks include spring-fed flushes supporting the SAC Feature of Interest, with Disgwylfa also supporting the additional SSSI Feature, namely the assemblage of grassland fungi in particular, waxcap species.

2.3 Outline of Past and Current Management

The SAC/SSSI lies within a large area known as Mynydd Epynt, which is upland in character. It is bisected in the south by small river valleys, which have been the focal areas for past settlement, as evidenced by old field patterns and farmsteads. In the early 1940's 34,000 acres were taken over by the Ministry of Defence as Sennybridge Training Area and since then the grazing rights of tenants have been retained although the people who owned farms in the area before the 1940's were evicted from many of the farmsteads. This along with the needs of the Army to provide a robust accessible substrate on which to train, to provide an income and to support local communities has resulted in most of the area now being unfenced and grazed extensively by sheep.

The Gamrhiw section is subject to a short-term tenancy whilst all other areas form part of the main Range subject to annual grazing licence arrangements (currently 38,000 sheep per annum licensed). No foddering is permitted. Where it does occur it is discouraged. No information is available on grazing levels for any individual part of the open grazings of the range. Hefted flocks are present and changes in the licensed grazing numbers of individual grazers may well at least temporarily be reflected in the intensity of grazing of particular areas. In the past elsewhere on the Range open ditches have been dug to increase drainage and to improve grazing quality. No plans exist for further work. Bracken, thistles and gorse are kept in check by mowing and the use of herbicides. No proposals exist for such treatment within the SSSI except at Disgwylfa where bracken control is required.

Diverse forms of military training take place, zoned across the training area. The Blaen Talar section alone occurs within the impact area. The impact area of the range receives various types of armament projectiles. Blaen Talar, not being in line of sight from any of the existing observation posts is never actively targeted. Nor is it close enough to any small arms ranges to receive any significant shrapnel etc. There is little evidence of recent disturbance from munitions in this section of the valley.

The section north of Llyn Login has within it a defensive training position. Infantry movements occur frequently, though largely in an area remote from known sites for the golden feather moss. Small-scale plastic explosive charges have caused limited local damage to areas of peaty flush in part of this section. The position and intensity of current and recent past usage is considered sustainable but will require regular surveillance.

The Journey's End section lies to the west of a concentration of small arms ranges. A small night training assault course has developed to the north east of this area. If accessed via the SSSI, localized trampling may be damaging. This facility will be evaluated and probably shut down by the MOD. Otherwise this area sees little troop movement. The Offeriad and Gamrhiw sections also lie in the dry training area and show no signs of damage or disturbance from past military use. Current low-density troop movement on foot over these areas presents no significant threat.

The Disgwylfa section lies adjacent to the Range Conservation Centre and is traversed by a track forming part of a circular walk for the public. Military use is extensive but not of a nature likely to damage either the moss or fungal interest. Visitors are confined to the track.

2.4 Management Units

The plan area has been divided into management units to enable practical communication about features, objectives, and management. This will also allow us to differentiate between the different designations where necessary. In this plan the management units have been based on the separate land areas (as they are so far apart) but also taking account of the separate tenancies, which cover each separate parcel. It is assumed that there is a measure of hefting with different tenants' sheep mostly grazing the area around where they are released onto the open hill. Thus, all parcels have been allocated a separate Management Unit number except for Llyn Login/Blaen Offeriad, which has been placed in the same MU because they are closer geographically to each other than the others and share a common tenancy holder.

A map showing the management units referred to in this plan is attached separately.

The following table confirms the relationships between the management units and the designations covered:

Unit number	SAC	SSSI	CCW owned	Other
Mynydd Epynt				
1	✓	✓		
2	✓	✓		
3		✓		
4	✓	✓		
5	✓	✓		
6	✓	✓		

3. THE SPECIAL FEATURES

3.1 Confirmation of Special Features

<i>Designated feature</i>	<i>Relationships, nomenclature etc</i>	<i>Conservation Objective in part 4</i>
<i>SAC features</i>		
<i>Annex II species present as a qualifying feature and a primary reason for site selection:</i> 1. <i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>, varnished hook-moss	EU Habitat code: 1393 This site is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom for this species. It is also a qualifying SSSI feature of interest.	1
<i>SPA features</i>		
Not applicable		
<i>Ramsar features</i>		
Not applicable		
<i>SSSI features</i>		
2. Assemblage of grassland fungi including more than 20 waxcap species.	One of the best sites in Brecknock.	Not written

3.2 Special Features and Management Units

This section sets out the relationship between the special features and each management unit. This is intended to provide a clear statement about what each unit should be managed for, taking into account the varied needs of the different special features. All special features are allocated to one of seven classes in each management unit. These classes are:

Key Features

KH - a 'Key Habitat' in the management unit, i.e. the habitat that is the main focus of management and monitoring effort, perhaps because of the dependence of a key species (see KS below). There will rarely be more than one Key Habitat in a unit.

KS – a 'Key Species' in the management unit, often driving both the selection and management of a Key Habitat.

Geo – an earth science feature that is the main focus of management and monitoring effort in a unit.

Other Features

Sym - habitats, species and earth science features that are of importance in a unit but are not the main focus of management or monitoring. These features will benefit from management for the key feature(s) identified in the unit. These may be classed as 'Sym' features because:

- a) they are present in the unit but are of less conservation importance than the key feature; and/or
- b) they are present in the unit but in small areas/numbers, with the bulk of the feature in other units of the site; and/or
- c) their requirements are broader than and compatible with the management needs of the key feature(s).

Nm - an infrequently used category where features are at risk of decline within a unit as a result of meeting the management needs of the key feature(s), i.e. under Negative Management. These cases will usually be compensated for by management elsewhere in the

plan, and can be used where minor occurrences of a feature would otherwise lead to apparent conflict with another key feature in a unit.

Mn - Management units with no special feature present but which are of importance for management of features elsewhere on a site e.g. livestock over-wintering area included within designation boundaries.

x – Features not present in the management unit.

The table(s) below sets out the relationship between the special features and management units identified in this plan:

Mynydd Epynt SAC/SSSI	Management unit					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
SAC	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
SSSI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SAC features						
<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> varnished hook-moss	KS	KS	x	KS	KS	KS
SSSI features						
Assemblage of grassland fungi	x	x	KS	x	x	x

4. CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

Background to Conservation Objectives:

a. Outline of the legal context and purpose of conservation objectives.

Conservation objectives are required by the 1992 'Habitats' Directive (92/43/EEC). The aim of the Habitats Directives is the maintenance, or where appropriate the restoration of the 'favourable conservation status' of habitats and species features for which SACs and SPAs are designated (see Box 1).

In the broadest terms, 'favourable conservation status' means a feature is in satisfactory condition and all the things needed to keep it that way are in place for the foreseeable future. CCW considers that the concept of favourable conservation status provides a practical and legally robust basis for conservation objectives for Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites.

Box 1

Favourable conservation status as defined in Articles 1(e) and 1(i) of the Habitats Directive

“The conservation status of a natural habitat is the sum of the influences acting on it and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long term survival of its typical species. The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as favourable when:

- Its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The conservation status of a species is the sum of the influences acting on the species that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations. The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- population dynamics data on the species indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.”

Achieving these objectives requires appropriate management and the control of factors that may cause deterioration of habitats or significant disturbance to species.

As well as the overall function of communication, Conservation objectives have a number of specific roles:

- Conservation planning and management.

The conservation objectives guide management of sites, to maintain or restore the habitats and species in favourable condition.

- Assessing plans and projects.

Article 6(3) of the ‘Habitats’ Directive requires appropriate assessment of proposed plans and projects against a site's conservation objectives. Subject to certain exceptions, plans or projects may not proceed unless it is established that they will not adversely affect the integrity of sites. This role for testing plans and projects also applies to the review of existing decisions and consents.

- Monitoring and reporting.

The conservation objectives provide the basis for assessing the condition of a feature and the status of factors that affect it. CCW uses ‘performance indicators’ within the conservation objectives, as the basis for monitoring and reporting. Performance indicators are selected to provide useful information about the condition of a feature and the factors that affect it.

The conservation objectives in this document reflect CCW’s current information and understanding of the site and its features and their importance in an international context. The conservation objectives are subject to review by CCW in light of new knowledge.

b. Format of the conservation objectives

There is one conservation objective for each feature listed in part 3. Each conservation objective is a composite statement representing a site-specific description of what is considered to be the favourable conservation status of the feature. These statements apply to a whole feature as it occurs within the whole plan area, although section 3.2 sets out their relevance to individual management units.

Each conservation objective consists of the following two elements:

1. Vision for the feature
2. Performance indicators

As a result of the general practice developed and agreed within the UK Conservation Agencies, conservation objectives include performance indicators, the selection of which should be informed by JNCC guidance on Common Standards Monitoring¹.

There is a critical need for clarity over the role of performance indicators within the conservation objectives. **A conservation objective, because it includes the vision for the feature, has meaning and substance independently of the performance indicators, and is more than the sum of the performance indicators.** The performance indicators are simply what make the conservation objectives measurable, and are thus part of, not a substitute for, the conservation objectives. Any feature attribute identified in the performance indicators should be represented in the vision for the feature, but not all elements of the vision for the feature will necessarily have corresponding performance indicators.

As well as describing the aspirations for the condition of the feature, the Vision section of each conservation objective contains a statement that the factors necessary to maintain those desired conditions are under control. Subject to technical, practical and resource constraints, factors which have an important influence on the condition of the feature are identified in the performance indicators.

¹ Available through www.jncc.gov.uk and follow links to Protected Sites and Common Standards Monitoring.

4.1 Conservation Objective for Feature 1:

Varnished hook-moss *Hamatocaulis vernicosus* (EU Habitat Code: 1393)

Vision for feature 1

The vision for this feature is for it to be in a favourable conservation status, where all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- There is a thriving population of varnished hook-moss in the mildly base-rich flushes, at six different locations spread throughout the site.
- Around 1.5 ha of suitable flush vegetation will continue to occur at Mynydd Epynt at the six different locations and the moss will continue to be present and maintain its distribution throughout the suitable areas of flush in at least ten separate locations overall.
- The water table is maintained at or near to the surface for most of the year within the flushes.
- The flushes are open in character with no woody shrubs present.
- The flushes are not dominated by rushes, purple moor-grass or bog-mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.).
- The following plants are typically found in the flushes scattered amongst the moss carpet but not dominant: carnation sedge *Carex panicea*, star sedge *C. echinata*, common sedge *C. nigra*, purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and rushes *Juncus acutifolius* and *J. articulatus*.
- Species indicative of agricultural modification, such as perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* and white clover *Trifolium repens* are absent from the flushes and the surrounding areas of SSSI/SAC in the six locations.
- All six locations continue to be grazed by sheep at a level which maintains the short open sward of the flushes without poaching.
- All six locations are free from physical damage such as trampling/poaching caused by livestock, troop activity, passage of agricultural/other vehicles, or impact damage from weapons practice.
- The population of varnished hook-moss is stable and is sustainable in the long term with its range not contracting and all factors that may affect the species are under control.

Performance indicators for Feature 1

The performance indicators are part of the conservation objective, not a substitute for it. Assessment of plans and projects must be based on the entire conservation objective, not just the performance indicators.

<i>Performance indicators for feature condition</i>		
<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Attribute rationale and other comments</i>	<i>Specified limits</i>
A1. Distribution	Distribution is constrained by availability of suitable spring-fed flushes, which is linked to hydrological conditions and other factors (see below). Lower limit is based on distribution of suitable flushes in 2002. Unit 1 consists of 2 separate but close locations (Llyn Login & Blaen Offeriad).	<i>Upper limit:</i> N/A <i>Lower limit:</i> Present in suitable flushes spread over the six separate locations, in Units 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6 (see maps in Annex 1)
A2. Population size	Varnished hook-moss sometimes grows in clumps and sometimes as single strands scattered through other species. Little is currently known about population dynamics for each flush at this site, although there is some data recording % cover and/or DAFOR abundance scores.	<i>Upper limit:</i> Not specified but will be limited by extent of suitable flushes <i>Lower limit:</i> Further survey required to establish baseline for lower limit in each flush

A3. Extent of suitable habitat	The extent of suitable habitat will be constrained by the base status of the water in the flushes.	<i>Upper limit:</i> ? <i>Lower limit:</i> 1.5 ha of suitable flushes (see A4 below) within the site as a whole.
A4. Vegetation composition of flushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Typical higher plant associates in the flushes with varnished hook-moss are: Carnation sedge, star sedge, common sedge, sharp-flowered and jointed rush, purple moor-grass, lesser spearwort, fen bedstraw and greater bird's-foot-trefoil. Moss associates include: pointed spear-moss <i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>, marsh bryum <i>Bryum pseudotriquetrum</i>, & fountain apple-moss <i>Philonotis fontana</i>. ii. Plants indicating flushes where the conditions may be too acidic include flat-topped bog-moss <i>Sphagnum recurvum</i>, bog ashodel, and common cottongrass. iii. Flushes where conditions may be too base-rich support plants such as: hook-mosses <i>Cratoneuron spp.</i>, hooked scorpion moss <i>Scorpidium scorpioides</i>, flea sedge and marsh valerian. iv. Presence of springy turf-moss <i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i> indicates that the conditions are too dry for varnished hook-moss. 	<i>Upper limits:</i> all of the species in i. are present in the flush <i>AND:</i> A maximum of 2 of those mentioned in ii. and iii.? <i>Lower limits:</i> at least 5 of species in i. are present.
A.5 Vegetation structure in flushes (height & % cover of vascular plants)	Both purple moor-grass and tall rushes have the potential to dominate a sward and out-compete the niches available to varnished hook-moss. Should this happen it is likely to be related to a change in water levels in the flush, indicating drying out, and/or lowering of the grazing level. The vascular plant cover is important in relation to the 'open' nature of the flushes –varnished hook-moss has been shown to decline with increasing vascular plant cover (Ref.4) possible reasons include decrease in solar radiation and increase in nutrients from litter accumulation. Average cover of vascular plants at 28 varnished hook-moss sites in the Czech Republic recorded as 61.4% (range 50-80%) (Ref. 4).	<i>Upper limit:</i> Widely dispersed stems/leaves of purple moor-grass/tall rushes amongst low moss/small sedge sward; no tussocks; overall vegetation height not more than 20cm. Total vegetation cover of higher plants 60%? <i>Lower limit:</i> N/A

NB. The exact extent of each suitable flush or the extent of the *Hamatocaulis vernicosus* within the flushes has not yet been measured.

Performance indicators for factors affecting the feature

Factor	Factor rationale and other comments	Operational Limits
F1. sheep grazing Levels	The open nature of the flushes, which support varnished hook-moss is currently being maintained through the continued extensive sheep grazing over the Range. It may be possible to break the figures down for each of the Units to better reflect the hefting system and actual grazing levels but for the present purposes sheep figures have been taken from grazing licence figures for 2002 when grazing licences for 38,000 sheep were issued.	<i>Upper limit:</i> 40,000 sheep over the whole Range <i>Lower limit:</i> 36,000 sheep over whole Range A stocking rate of around 0.4 livestock units/ha/year may be the most appropriate.
F2. Water flow through flushes throughout year	Optimum range yet to be determined but flow throughout the year thought to be critical to survival of this species, associated with a combination of constant water level and water chemistry provided by the spring-fed conditions.	<i>Upper limit:</i> To be determined <i>Lower limit:</i> Flowing water present throughout the year
F3. Water level in flushes	Varnished hook-moss seems to require constant wet conditions with the water table at or just below the surface throughout the year. It has been shown to colonise into areas where there is surface water of 1cm but not where the water is 8-9 cm deep (Ref.4). No measurement of water table has been taken so far for each of the flushes on this site or any detailed survey of the hydrological catchment for each flush.	<i>Upper limit:</i> ? <i>Lower limit:</i> No alteration of watercourses or springs located within the catchment area of the flushes within the site.
F4. Water quality	Water quality of springs feeding the flushes in relation to base status thought to be crucial to <i>Hamatocaulis</i> . Optimum pH thought to be around 6.0-7.2 (Ref. 1, 2 & 4 below). Ph measurements have been taken at some flushes (each flush?), but little is known about the range of pH tolerated. Little is known about tolerances of other elements though Hedenas (1989) describes it as a species of mineral-rich but not calcium-rich habitats and it seems to prefer iron-rich habitats (Ref. 2, 3) though this was not borne out by Stechova & Kucera (Ref. 4).	<i>Upper limit:</i> pH 7.2 (?) <i>Lower limit:</i> pH 6.0 (?)

<p>F4. Woody species/shrubs</p>	<p>As well as maintaining a short, open, unshaded sward free from potential dominants such as rushes and purple moor-grass it is important to ensure that the flushes are not invaded by trees and shrubs such as willow which would shade out the <i>Hamatocaulis</i> as well as have the potential to cause drying out of the flushes.</p>	<p><i>Upper limits:</i> No woody shrubs or trees present within the flushes supporting the moss AND: No trees close enough to cause significant shading of the flushes or reductions in the water table.</p>
<p>F5. Surface disturbance - bare ground/open water</p>	<p><i>Hamatocaulis</i> has been found to readily colonise bare surfaces where the water level was c.1cm deep but not where gaps were completely filled with water (8-9cm deep) (Ref.4). Therefore where the water table is high there is likely to be little tolerance of surface disturbance (as this will create a pooling effect). As there is likely to be an element of poaching from sheep wandering in to the flushes, there should be a presumption for no troop activity (troops walking through flushes or from ammunition/weapons use etc) in these areas since this is likely to cause excessive surface disturbance in such wet conditions at any time of year.</p>	<p><i>Upper limit:</i> No army activity & 5% (10%?) poaching from sheep in & around flushes <i>Lower limit:</i> 5%? Trampling by sheep to help maintain open sward?</p>

5. ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATION STATUS AND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

This part of the document provides:

- A summary of the assessment of the conservation status of each feature.
- A summary of the management issues that need to be addressed to maintain or restore each feature.

5.1 Conservation Status and Management Requirements of Feature 1: Varnished hook-moss *Hamatocaulis vernicosus* (EU Habitat Code: 1393)

Conservation Status of Feature 1:

Overall Conservation Status within the site: **Un-favourable** (January 2008), based on the following information:

Management Unit 1, Llyn Login & Blaen Offeriad

Feature condition: Favourable, maintained

This assessment is based on observations made on 31 January 2006 by RG Woods & D Parry, CCW when the moss was found to be locally frequent in the flushes at these two locations, sheep grazing seemed to be adequate (no poaching from stock but vegetation in flushes not overwhelmed by vascular plant cover) and the water level was at or near the surface (un-quantified observations only).

Management Unit 2, Disgwylfa, south

Feature condition: Favourable, maintained

Assessment has been made following discussion with R G Woods (on 29.1.08) who last saw the moss at this location in summer 2005 when it was occasional in the flush area where he and D Drewett had recorded it on July 2001 (also occasional). The management i.e. extensive sheep grazing did not appear to have changed and the flush looked very similar to 2001. He commented that the hydrology/water chemistry of this flush may mean that the moss is growing to its full potential at this site.

Management Unit 4, Blaen-talar

Feature condition: Favourable, unclassified

This site has not been visited since 2001 because it is within the Impact Zone and considered to be too dangerous. The flush area appears to be unchanged from aerial photograph evidence. The moss was recorded as 5-15% cover in 3, 2 x 2m quadrats in September 2001 (R G Woods).

Management Unit 5, Journey's End

Feature condition: Favourable, unclassified

Assessment is based on a visit on 31 January 2006 (RG Woods, D Parry, CCW) when the moss was found to be locally frequent in both areas of flush at the location.

Management Unit 6, Gam Rhiw

Feature condition: Un-favourable, unclassified

Conservation status of varnished hook-moss at this location is very uncertain – recorded during CCW Phase 2 Survey (M. Yeo, 1991) as Domin 2, in a 2 x 2m quadrat in ‘flushed rush-pasture’ and has never been noted to be abundant (pers. Comm. R G Woods January 2008). The flushes at Gam Rhiw are small and amongst abundant purple moor-grass and tall rushes and there is a tendency for these species to overwhelm the flushes since the area is being grazed solely by sheep.

Management Requirements of Feature 1 (2008)

Grazing

Maintain the current levels of extensive grazing by sheep throughout the year for Units 1, 2, 4 & 5. Review grazing levels for Unit 6, to ensure sufficient grazing of the purple moor-grass and rushes around the flush areas. Grazing levels should maintain the open nature of the flushes but not cause poaching.

Water levels

Protect all natural springs and the associated flushes at each location to maintain the high water table throughout the year.

Water Quality

Continue to manage the catchment areas for the flushes extensively with no nutrient run-off causing pollution e.g. from agricultural practices such as fertiliser application, run-off from feeding stations etc.

6. ACTION PLAN: SUMMARY

This section takes the management requirements outlined in Section 5 a stage further, assessing the specific management actions required on each management unit. This information is a summary of that held in CCW's Actions Database for sites, and the database will be used by CCW and partner organisations to plan future work to meet the Wales Environment Strategy targets for sites.

Site Name(s): Mynydd Epynt (SAC)

Unit Number	CCW Database Number	Unit Name	Summary of Conservation Management Issues	Action needed?
1	000324	Unit 1 Llyn Login & Blaen Offeriad	This unit is considered to be under appropriate conservation management.	No
2	000325	Unit 2 Southern Area of Disgwylfa	This unit is considered to be under appropriate conservation management.	No
4	000327	Unit 4 Blaen Talar	This unit is considered to be under appropriate conservation management.	No
5	000328	Unit 5 Journey's End	This unit is considered to be under appropriate conservation management.	No
6	000329	Unit 6 Gam Rhiw	This unit is considered to be under appropriate conservation management.	No

7. GLOSSARY

This glossary defines the some of the terms used in this **Core Management Plan**. Some of the definitions are based on definitions contained in other documents, including legislation and other publications of CCW and the UK nature conservation agencies. None of these definitions is legally definitive.

Action A recognisable and individually described act, undertaking or **project** of any kind, specified in section 6 of a **Core Management Plan** or **Management Plan**, as being required for the **conservation management** of a site.

Attribute A quantifiable and monitorable characteristic of a **feature** that, in combination with other such attributes, describes its **condition**.

Common Standards Monitoring A set of principles developed jointly by the UK conservation agencies to help ensure a consistent approach to **monitoring** and reporting on the **features** of sites designated for nature conservation, supported by guidance on identification of **attributes** and monitoring methodologies.

Condition A description of the state of a feature in terms of qualities or **attributes** that are relevant in a nature conservation context. For example the condition of a habitat usually includes its extent and species composition and might also include aspects of its ecological functioning, spatial distribution and so on. The

condition of a species population usually includes its total size and might also include its age structure, productivity, relationship to other populations and spatial distribution. Aspects of the habitat(s) on which a species population depends may also be considered as attributes of its condition.

Condition assessment The process of characterising the **condition** of a **feature** with particular reference to whether the aspirations for its condition, as expressed in its **conservation objective**, are being met.

Condition categories The **condition** of **feature** can be categorised, following **condition assessment** as one of the following²:

Favourable: maintained;
Favourable: recovered;
Favourable: un-classified
Unfavourable: recovering;
Unfavourable: no change;
Unfavourable: declining;
Unfavourable: un-classified
Partially destroyed;
Destroyed.

Conservation management Acts or undertaking of all kinds, including but not necessarily limited to **actions**, taken with the aim of achieving the **conservation objectives** of a site. Conservation management includes the taking of statutory and non-statutory measures, it can include the acts of any party and it may take place outside site boundaries as well as within sites. Conservation management may also be embedded within other frameworks for land/sea management carried out for purposes other than achieving the conservation objectives.

Conservation objective The expression of the desired **conservation status** of a **feature**, expressed as a **vision for the feature** and a series of **performance indicators**. The conservation objective for a feature is thus a composite statement, and each feature has one conservation objective.

Conservation status A description of the state of a **feature** that comprises both its **condition** and the state of the **factors** affecting or likely to affect it. Conservation status is thus a characterisation of both the current state of a feature and its future prospects.

Conservation status assessment The process of characterising the **conservation status** of a **feature** with particular reference to whether the aspirations for it, as expressed in its **conservation objective**, are being met. The results of conservation

² See JNCC guidance on Common Standards Monitoring <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2272>

status assessment can be summarised either as ‘favourable’ (i.e. conservation objectives are met) or unfavourable (i.e. conservation objectives are not met). However the value of conservation status assessment in terms of supporting decisions about **conservation management**, lies mainly in the details of the assessment of feature **condition, factors** and trend information derived from comparisons between current and previous conservation status assessments and condition assessments.

Core Management Plan A CCW document containing the conservation objectives for a site and a summary of other information contained in a full site **Management Plan**.

Factor Anything that has influenced, is influencing or may influence the **condition** of a **feature**. Factors can be natural processes, human activities or effects arising from natural process or human activities, They can be positive or negative in terms of their influence on features, and they can arise within a site or from outside the site. Physical, socio-economic or legal constraints on **conservation management** can also be considered as factors.

Favourable condition See **condition** and **condition assessment**

Favourable conservation status See **conservation status** and **conservation status assessment**.³

Feature **The species population, habitat type or other entity for which a site is designated. The ecological or geological interest which justifies the designation of a site and which is the focus of conservation management.**

Integrity See **site integrity**

Key Feature The habitat or species population within a **management unit** that is the primary focus of **conservation management** and **monitoring** in that unit.

Management Plan The full expression of a designated site’s legal status, **vision, features, conservation objectives, performance indicators** and management requirements. A complete management plan may not reside in a single document, but may be contained in a number of documents (including in particular **the Core Management Plan**) and sets of electronically stored information.

Management Unit An area within a site, defined according to one or more of a range of criteria, such as topography, location of **features**, tenure, patterns of land/sea use. The key characteristic of management units is to reflect the spatial scale at which **conservation management** and **monitoring** can be most effectively organised. They are used as the primary basis

³ A full definition of favourable conservation status is given in Section 4.

for differentiating priorities for conservation management and monitoring in different parts of a site, and for facilitating communication with those responsible for management of different parts of a site.

Monitoring An intermittent (regular or irregular) series of observations in time, carried out to show the extent of compliance with a formulated standard or degree of deviation from an expected norm. In **Common Standards Monitoring**, the formulated standard is the quantified expression of favourable **condition** based on **attributes**.

Operational limits The levels or values within which a **factor** is considered to be acceptable in terms of its influence on a **feature**. A factor may have both upper and lower operational limits, or only an upper limit or lower limit. For some factors an upper limit may be zero.

Performance indicators The **attributes** and their associated **specified limits**, together with **factors** and their associated **operational limits**, which provide the standard against which information from **monitoring** and other sources is used to determine the degree to which the **conservation objectives** for a **feature** are being met. Performance indicators are part of, not the same as, conservation objectives. See also **vision for the feature**.

Plan or project **Project:** Any form of construction work, installation, development or other intervention in the environment, the carrying out or continuance of which is subject to a decision by any public body or statutory undertaker.
Plan: a document prepared or adopted by a public body or statutory undertaker, intended to influence decisions on the carrying out of **projects**.
Decisions on plans and projects which affect Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites are subject to specific legal and policy procedures.

Site integrity The coherence of a site's ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it is designated.

Site Management Statement (SMS) The document containing CCW's views about the management of a site issued as part of the legal notification of an SSSI under section 28(4) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted.

Special Feature See **feature**.

Specified limit The levels or values for an **attribute** which define the degree to which the attribute can fluctuate without creating cause for concern about the **condition** of the **feature**. The range within the limits corresponds to favourable, the range outside the limits corresponds to unfavourable.

Attributes may have lower specified limits, upper specified limits, or both.

- Unit** See **management unit**.
- Vision for the feature** The expression, within a **conservation objective**, of the aspirations for the **feature** concerned. See also **performance indicators**.
- Vision Statement** The statement conveying an impression of the whole site in the state that is intended to be the product of its **conservation management**. A ‘pen portrait’ outlining the **conditions** that should prevail when all the **conservation objectives** are met. A description of the site as it would be when all the **features** are in **favourable condition**.

8. REFERENCES

References

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