

## Cors Caron Euro Energy Project

[Home Page](#) > [About CCW](#) > [Newsroom](#) > Press releases

Cors Caron National Nature Reserve near Tregaron is taking part in a pioneering project, which promises to bring benefits to the reserve's wildlife whilst also finding sustainable material to generate green energy.

### Cors Caron Euro Energy Project



Cors Caron ©CCW

The potential win-win project is being undertaken on five other wildlife sites in Wales as well as Cors Caron, and links up with similar work in Estonia and Germany. Experts will explore if waste vegetation from managing internationally important habitats can be used as bio-fuel.

The project, developed by the University of Kassel in Germany in collaboration with the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS) at Aberystwyth University, aims to produce bio-energy using waste material from mature grasslands. With less cattle and ponies grazing the reserve's grasslands, they have become overgrown and need to be cleared so that wildlife – from barn owls to butterfly orchids – can thrive here once again.

The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) Senior Reserve Manager Paul Culyer said "This project could be a winner on two fronts – it will clear the rank vegetation from the grasslands while using the waste material to produce clean energy. It's really exciting to be part of this trial and I'm proud that Cors Caron has been selected. We are always looking for innovative ways to manage the reserve and this is a great idea to explore."

"Managing species- rich grasslands is a challenge to many European countries, so it makes sense to team up with international colleagues so that anything we learn or works well can be shared as widely as possible."

Dr Mariecia Fraser of IBERS said: "This project is at the cutting edge of exploring the potential for an alternative management strategy to generate bio-energy using waste from protected sites in Europe. As Wales has an abundance of different habitats it is the ideal place for testing the technology."

Work testing herbage that was harvested in the autumn from Cors Caron in the pilot processing plant has begun this week. The reserve is one of six experimental sites across Wales that represent different vegetation communities typical of the region. They include Rhos lawr Cwrt and Claerwen NNR which are part of the Elan Valley Trust Estate, together with sites at ADAS Pwllpeiran.

Roger Thomas, CCW Chief Executive said: "CCW supports the Government's aim of generating 15% of energy from renewable resources by 2020. If this trial is successful, it will be good to play our small part directly by contributing biofuel from the land we manage."

### END

For further information, please contact CCW Press Officer Brân Devey on 02920 772403 / 07747767443 or [bran.devey@ccw.gov.uk](mailto:bran.devey@ccw.gov.uk) or Helen Evans on 01248 387377 or 07717225589.

### Notes to Editors:

- **PROGRASS is a 3.5 year LIFE+ project exploring the potential of an alternative management strategy of extensive management for bio-energy, and is focussed on grasslands within the EU-wide NATURA 2000 network of protected sites.**
- **Field trials assessing the effects on botanical diversity and subsequent yield of harvesting a range of semi-natural pasture types began in summer 2009. Six experimental sites per country featuring different vegetation communities typical of the region have been selected.**
- **Cors Caron Nature Reserve is situated just to the north of Tregaron, between Lampeter and Aberystwyth. The main access to the reserve is from the new car park on the B4343. The reserve boasts excellent facilities that include a three-and-a-half kilometres boardwalk over the south-east bog, that also includes an accessible bird hide on the route.**
- **At just over two thousand acres, Cors Caron fills the valley of the upper Teifi river between Tregaron and Pontrhydfendigaid. It's hard to miss this magnificent reserve in this part of Wales. The reserve boasts three raised bogs - areas of deep peat that have built up over the last 12000 years – and these in turn are surrounded by a complex and unique mix of habitats, which make the reserve a fantastic place for wildlife.**

- **Cors Caron is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a wetland of international importance (Ramsar site).**

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