

SL(6)750 – The Beavers (Wales) Order 2026

Background and Purpose

This Order amends Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (“the 1981 Act”) and Schedule 2 to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 Regulations”).

Article 2 inserts the Eurasian Beaver into Part 1A (native animals) of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act and omits the Eurasian Beaver from Part 1B (animals no longer normally present) of that Schedule.

Article 3 inserts the Eurasian Beaver into Schedule 2 to the 2017 Regulations, which lists European Protected Species of animals.

Article 4 revokes the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (Wales) Order 2015, which inserted the Eurasian Beaver into Part 1B of Schedule 9 to the 1981 Act.

Procedure

Senedd annulment procedure.

The Order was made by the Welsh Ministers before it was laid before the Senedd. The Senedd can annul the Order within 40 days (excluding any days when the Senedd is: (i) dissolved, or (ii) in recess for more than four days) of the date it was laid before the Senedd.

Technical Scrutiny

No points are identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.2 in respect of this instrument.

Merits Scrutiny

The following point is identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.3 in respect of this instrument.

1. Standing Order 21.3(ii) – that it is of political or legal importance or gives rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the Senedd

We note the following paragraphs of the written statement issued on 3 February 2026:

“This Order amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to recognise Eurasian beaver as a native species in Wales and to grant European Protected Species of animal status. The legislation will come into force on the 4 March 2026.”



These legislative changes will allow us to establish a clear legal framework for licensing and management, ensuring that any future releases are regulated and that Eurasian beavers are afforded appropriate protections in Wales.”

Welsh Government response

A Welsh Government response is not required.

Committee Consideration

The Committee considered the instrument at its meeting on 23 February 2026 and reports to the Senedd in line with the reporting point above.

