

SECOND REVIEW OF SEA EFFECTIVENESS IN IRELAND

The second review of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) effectiveness in Ireland, funded by the EPA, has progressed significantly since its inception on the 31st of March 2018.

The project methodology has been defined, including the selection of case studies, and consultation with key stakeholders has been initiated.

Project Background and Objectives

The findings of the first review of SEA effectiveness in Ireland were published in 2012, and resulted in a SEA Action Plan. In the current review, **we aim to evaluate the on-going progress made in implementing SEA in Ireland and to identify areas or gaps where further improvements are required. We will make recommendations on the actions needed to address any identified issues and produce practical guidance on relevant aspects of SEA.** The review findings will also inform the EU REFIT of the SEA Directive.

Methodology

The identified 7 dimensions of SEA effectiveness present the backbone to the review, which contains 3 analytical parts:

Documented effectiveness – entailing the systematic review of reports for 10 recent or ‘new’ SEAs, using defined review criteria.

Perceived effectiveness – through semi-structured interviews with practitioners and stakeholders involved in 10 case studies included in the first review, or ‘old’ SEAs.

Analysis of costs and benefits – using data gathered through the documented and perceived effectiveness methods.

Dimensions of SEA Effectiveness

A review of the contemporary literature has revealed several dimensions of SEA effectiveness as follows:

1. **Context:** whether appropriate legislation and guidance exist, competent authorities are clearly identified and have adequate capacity to carry out SEA, etc.
2. **Procedural:** whether the stages of the SEA process are carried out well; for instance, whether good baseline data are collected or alternatives are considered well.
3. **Pluralist:** whether the SEA helps to achieve greater public participation, and helps to accommodate competing points of view.
4. **Substantive:** whether the SEA leads to good outcomes on the ground; for example, whether environmentally harmful impacts are avoided.
5. **Normative:** whether the SEA supports, for instance, achievement of sustainable development and mutually reinforcing gains and minimisation of trade-offs.
6. **Knowledge and learning:** whether the stakeholders involved in the SEA change their way of thinking as a result of the SEA, and whether monitoring of the plan's actual impacts helps to improve wider SEA practice.
7. **Transactive:** whether the SEA process is efficient; for example, whether it lengthens or shortens the plan approval process, how much it costs, and whether personnel with adequate skills are readily available.

Case Studies

10 New (recent SEAs)

Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023
Dublin Port Masterplan 2040 – Reviewed 2018
Eastern-Midlands RSES 2018-2030
Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023
Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan 2017
National Mitigation Plan
National Planning Framework 2040
National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021
Nitrates Action Programme 2017-2021
Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Ass. and Mgmt. 2011

10 Old (first review or *plan at implementation stage)

EirGrid Implementation Programme 2011-2016
Foodwise 2025*
Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2011-2030
Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2008-2012
National Forestry Programme 2014-2020*
Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan 2014
Shannon Integrated Framework Plan 2013-2020*
Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021*
Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme 2015-2019*
Water Supply Project – Dublin Region 2010

We are currently undertaking a **stakeholder consultation** and would appreciate your time in answering this **online questionnaire**:

<https://goo.gl/forms/L4yQsWJ2KjuRGcBF3>

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Project Partners



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