

# SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland

ACTION PLAN 2018–2020



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An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil  
Department of Housing,  
Planning and Local Government



Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe  
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil  
Department of Communications,  
Climate Action & Environment



An Roinn  
Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta  
Department of  
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



Department of  
**Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine**  
An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara**



## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

### The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

**Regulation:** *We implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.*

**Knowledge:** *We provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.*

**Advocacy:** *We work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.*

## Our Responsibilities

### Licensing

We regulate the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (*e.g. landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations*);
- large scale industrial activities (*e.g. pharmaceutical, cement manufacturing, power plants*);
- intensive agriculture (*e.g. pigs, poultry*);
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (*GMOs*);
- sources of ionising radiation (*e.g. x-ray and radiotherapy equipment, industrial sources*);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges;
- dumping at sea activities.

## National Environmental Enforcement

- Conducting an annual programme of audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities.
- Supervising the supply of drinking water by public water suppliers.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by coordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

## Water Management

- Monitoring and reporting on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters of Ireland and groundwaters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- National coordination and oversight of the Water Framework Directive.
- Monitoring and reporting on Bathing Water Quality.

## Monitoring, Analysing and Reporting on the Environment

- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government (*e.g. periodic reporting on the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports*).

## Regulating Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Preparing Ireland's greenhouse gas inventories and projections.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, for over 100 of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

## Environmental Research and Development

- Funding environmental research to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

- Assessing the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment (*e.g. major development plans*).

## Radiological Protection

- Monitoring radiation levels, assessing exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation.
- Assisting in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents.
- Monitoring developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety.
- Providing, or overseeing the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

## Guidance, Accessible Information and Education

- Providing advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (*e.g. My Local Environment, Radon Maps*).
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

## Awareness Raising and Behavioural Change

- Generating greater environmental awareness and influencing positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to become more resource efficient.
- Promoting radon testing in homes and workplaces and encouraging remediation where necessary.

## Management and Structure of the EPA

The EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Evidence and Assessment
- Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.

# SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland

**Action Plan 2018–2020**

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

PO Box 3000, Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford, Ireland

Telephone: +353 53 916 0600 Fax: +353 53 916 0699

Email: [info@epa.ie](mailto:info@epa.ie) Website: [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie) LoCall: 1890 33 55 99

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## Introduction

In 2012, the EPA published the first *Review of Effectiveness of SEA in Ireland*<sup>1</sup>. While broadly positive, the review identified several challenges and barriers to effective implementation of SEA in Ireland, similar to those experienced in other EU Member States.

The review put forward recommendations and actions in the areas of governance, provision of guidance, training and awareness raising and data management, aimed at improving SEA effectiveness in Ireland.

To progress the implementation of the key findings and recommendations of the review, an SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland Action Plan 2012–2016<sup>2</sup> was formulated jointly by the five designated statutory environmental authorities for SEA in Ireland:

- ▲ the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) (formerly the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- ▲ the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) (formerly the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)
- ▲ the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM),
- ▲ the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (formerly Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)
- ▲ the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The SEA Action Plan assigned responsibility for implementing individual actions to particular environmental authorities and also set target dates for the delivery of the action. The reference numbers assigned to individual actions in the SEA Action Plan reflected the reference numbers associated with the recommendations in the *Review of Effectiveness of SEA in Ireland* report.

In 2017, the EPA, in association with the other four environmental authorities, initiated a review of the progress made to date in the delivery of the various actions and recommendations in the *SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland Action Plan 2012–2016*. On foot of this, the updated and extended SEA Action Plan has been prepared with a view to progressing the implementation of those actions which are still outstanding or only partially delivered. An SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland Action Plan 2012–2016 – Progress Update (June 2018) has been published alongside this updated SEA Action Plan. Both reports are available on [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie).

The EPA is funding a second review of SEA effectiveness in Ireland, which commenced in March 2018. The 18-month project is being led by UCD, in collaboration with RPS and Levett-Therivel consultants (project code 2017-NC-MS-8). This review will inform the preparation of a new SEA Action Plan in 2020/2021.

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<sup>1</sup> Review of Effectiveness of SEA in Ireland <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/reviewofeffectivenessofseainireland-mainreport.html>

<sup>2</sup> SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland Action Plan 2012–2016 <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/ea/seaeffectivenessreviewinireland-actionplan2012-16.html>

Action	GOVERNANCE AND LEGISLATION	Original Target Date	Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020	Responsible Authority(ies)
<b>D1/D4</b>	Establish a National SEA Environmental Authority Technical Forum comprising members of each of the statutory environmental authorities.	2012 & Ongoing	Continue efforts to re-focus and improve the effectiveness of the National SEA Forum. EPA to facilitate and act as Secretariat for the Forum.	EPA, DHPLG DCCAE DCHG DAFM
<b>D3</b>	a. Issue a Circular Note to clarify the role, key contacts and aspects of responsibility of each SEA environmental authority.	2013	a. Update and issue circular letter clarifying the role, key contacts and aspects of responsibility of each SEA environmental authority.	a. DHPLG
<b>D5</b>	Develop National SEA KPIs to evaluate SEA Effectiveness.	2015	Pilot, refine and publish the draft SEA KPIs produced as part of the EPA-funded SEA KPI research projec.	EPA
<b>D6</b>	Ensure adequate resources are allocated within each statutory environmental authority to sufficiently discharge their statutory SEA/AA-related responsibilities.	Ongoing	Reflect the need for adequate resources, including specific Environmental Assessment post(s), in relevant future work force planning.	DHPLG DCCAE DCHG DAFM

Action	DATA COLLECTION, PROVISION AND SHARING	Original Target Date	Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020	Responsible Authority(ies)
<b>C1</b>	<p>Establish a technical work group to explore the potential for a national central SEA Portal with access to relevant data, documents and information. This will include access to items such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. All SEA Environmental Reports/Plans/Programmes ongoing and completed and associated Appropriate Assessments;</li> <li>b. Appropriate Assessments completed;</li> <li>c. Legislation, circulars and guidance;</li> <li>d. Best practice SEA examples;</li> <li>e. National set of Environmental objectives, targets and indicators;</li> <li>f. SEA-related monitoring;</li> <li>g. Baseline information and data; and,</li> <li>h. Application of GIS.</li> </ul>	2013–2016	Progress the establishment of a national central SEA Portal.	EPA DHPLG DCCAIE DCHG DAFM

Action	TRAINING AND AWARENESS	Original Target Date	Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020	Responsible Authority(ies)
<b>B1/B2/ B3/D4</b>	<p>Promote and support the development of SEA/AA Training Modules.</p> <p>Develop targeted SEA and AA training modules on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Integration of SEA and AA (DCHG-NPWS)</li> <li>▲ Assessment of effects (DCCAE/EPA)</li> </ul>	2013-2016	Examine possibilities for organising targeted SEA and AA training modules, particularly for Departmental Officials and Local Authority Officers, via the IPA or an equivalent CPD delivery organisation.	DCCAE DHPLG DCHG
<b>B4</b>	Convene a national SEA/AA Conference every 3 years to exchange and promote best practice, with first to be held in 2014.	2014 & Ongoing Every 3 Years	<p>Consider organising SEA-related sessions/ presentations as part of Ireland's Environment 2018 Conference and/or a parallel training event.</p> <p>Organise a National SEA/AA Conference in 2020.</p>	EPA
<b>B5/D2</b>	Convene annual Regional SEA/AA Fora for Land Use Plans in association with the Regional Authorities (RAs).	2012 & Ongoing Annually	Re-establish the Regional Fora in Q2 2019, in conjunction with Regional Assemblies.	DHPLG EPA

Action	GUIDANCE	Original Target Date	Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020	Responsible Authority(ies)
<b>A1</b>	Increase awareness of existing national EU and International SEA/AA and related guidance.	2012–2016	All environmental authorities to review their websites in 2018 as part increasing awareness of existing national EU and International SEA/AA and related guidance.	DHPLG DCHG DAFM DCCAIE EPA
<b>A2</b>	Updating existing National SEA Guidelines to reflect current best practice.	2014	Review and update 2004 Guidelines for Planning Authorities to reflect outcomes of EC REFIT review, national SEA effectiveness reviews and developments in case law.	DHPLG
<b>A3/A5</b>	Preparation of a series of concise SEA Best Practice Guidance Notes. Specific topics to be considered will include:	2013–2016		
	a. Screening/Scoping including role of statutory environmental authorities (DHPLG/DAFM)		Progress the preparation of screening guidance (Note: this may be subject to conclusion of various ongoing CJEU SEA cases).	EPA DHPLG
	c. Assessment of Significance Criteria for environmental topics (DCHG)		Consider this topic for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.	EPA
	d. SEA Statement preparation		Guidance on SEA Statements will be produced as part of Second SEA Effectiveness Review (commenced March 2018).	EPA
	e. SEA-related monitoring (DCHG-NPWS)		Guidance on SEA Monitoring will be produced as part of the Second SEA Effectiveness Review (commenced March 2018).	EPA
	f. Transboundary SEA/AA (DHPLG/DCHG-NPWS)		Review the requirement for guidance on Transboundary Consultation for sectoral plans.	DHPLG DCCAIE DAHG DAFM EPA
h. The role of SEA in informing project level EIA (All)	Consider this topic for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.	EPA		

Action	GUIDANCE	Original Target Date	Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020	Responsible Authority(ies)
<b>A4</b>	Preparing SEA Best Practice Guidance for priority Sectors in association with the relevant sectors initially including: a. Waste (DHPLG)	2014–2016	Finalise & publish Waste sector guidance.	EPA DCCAE
	b. Forestry (DAFM)		Finalise & publish Forestry sector guidance.	EPA DAFM
	c. Energy (DCCAE)		Finalise & publish Energy sector guidance.	EPA DCCAE
	d. Water related plans (EPA)		Finalise & publish Water sector guidance	EPA DHPLG
<b>A6</b>	Preparing detailed guidance on Cumulative Effect Assessment/In-Combination Effects Assessment in SEA/ AA.	2013	Finalise and publish guidance on Cumulative / In-Combination Effects Assessment (for SEA).	EPA

## Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DCCAE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (formerly Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR))
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (formerly Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG))
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (formerly Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG))
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency

# AN GHNÍOMHAIREACTH UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIL

Tá an Gníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomhshaol a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaol a chosaint ó éifeachtaí díobhálacha na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

## Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

**Rialú:** *Déanaimid córais éifeachtacha rialaithe agus comhlíonta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun torthaí maithe comhshaoil a sholáthar agus chun díriú orthu siúd nach gcloíonn leis na córais sin.*

**Eolas:** *Soláthraimid sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar ardchaighdeán, spríodchírítithe agus tráthúil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.*

**Tacaíocht:** *Bímid ag saothrú i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaol atá glan, táirgiúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le hiompar a chuirfidh le comhshaol inbhuanaithe.*

## Ár bhFreagrachtaí

### Ceadúnú

- Déanaimid na gníomhaíochtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionas nach ndéanann siad dochar do shláinte an phobail ná don chomhshaol:
- saoráidí dramhaíola (*m.sh. láithreáin líonta talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistrithe dramhaíola*);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíocha ar scála mór (*m.sh. déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta*);
- an diantalmhaíocht (*m.sh. muca, éanlaith*);
- úsáid shrianta agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaithe (*OGM*);
- foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin (*m.sh. trealamh x-gha agus radaiteiripe, foinsí tionsclaíocha*);
- áiseanna móra stórála peitрил;
- scardadh dramhuisce;
- gníomhaíochtaí dumpála ar farraige.

### Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Clár náisiúnta iniúchtaí agus cigireachtaí a dhéanamh gach bliain ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht acu.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil na n-údarás áitiúil.

- Caighdeán an uisce óil, arna sholáthar ag soláthraithe uisce phoiblí, a mhaoirsiú.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus le gníomhaireachtaí eile chun dul i ngleic le coireanna comhshaoil trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmiúcháin náisiúnta, trí dhírú ar chiontóirí, agus trí mhaoirsiú a dhéanamh ar leasúchán.
- Cur i bhfeidhm rialachán ar nós na Rialachán um Dhramhthrealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach (DTLL), um Shrian ar Shubstaintí Guaiseacha agus na Rialachán um rialú ar shubstaintí a idíonn an ciseal ózóin.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaol.

### Bainistíocht Uisce

- Monatóireacht agus tuairiscíú a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht aibhneacha, lochanna, uiscí idirchriosacha agus cósta na hÉireann, agus screamhuisc; leibhéal uisce agus sruthanna aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Comhordú náisiúnta agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar an gCreat-Treoir Uisce.
- Monatóireacht agus tuairiscíú a dhéanamh ar Cháilíocht an Uisce Snámha.

### Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairiscíú ar an gComhshaol

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an aeir agus Treoir an AE maidir le hAer Glan don Eoraip (CAFÉ) a chur chun feidhme.
- Tuairiscíú neamhspleách le cabhrú le cinnteoireacht an rialtais náisiúnta agus na n-údarás áitiúil (*m.sh. tuairiscíú tréimhsiúil ar staid Chomhshaol na hÉireann agus Tuarascálacha ar Tháscairí*).

### Rialú Astaíochtaí na nGás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn

- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gáis cheaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i gcomhair breis agus 100 de na táirgeoirí dé-ocsaíde carbóin is mó in Éirinn

### Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil

- Taighde comhshaoil a chistiú chun brúnna a shainaithint, bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartais, agus réitigh a sholáthar i réimsí na haeráide, an uisce agus na hinbhuanaitheachta.

### Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar an gcomhshaol in Éirinn (*m.sh. mórfhleananna forbartha*).

### Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar nochtadh mhuintir na hÉireann don radaíocht ianúcháin.
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as taismí núicléacha.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Sainseirbhísí cosanta ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

### Treoir, Faisnéis Inrochtana agus Oideachas

- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnáil na tionsclaíochta agus don phobal maidir le hábhair a bhaineann le caomhnú an chomhshaoil agus leis an gcosaint raideolaíoch.
- Faisnéis thráthúil ar an gcomhshaol ar a bhfuil fáil éasca a chur ar fáil chun rannpháirtíocht an phobail a spreagadh sa chinnteoireacht i ndáil leis an gcomhshaol (*m.sh. Timpeall an Tí, léarscáileanna radóin*).
- Comhairle a chur ar fáil don Rialtas maidir le hábhair a bhaineann leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíoch agus le cúrsaí práinnfhreagartha.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta Dramhaíola Guaisí a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a chosc agus a bhainistiú.

### Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta

- Feasacht comhshaoil níos fearr a ghiniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar athrú iompraíochta dearfach trí thacú le gnóthais, le pobail agus le teaghlai gh a bheith níos éifeachtúla ar acmhainní.
- Tástáil le haghaidh radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre, agus gníomhartha leasúcháin a spreagadh nuair is gá.

### Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an ghníomhaíocht á bainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóirí. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inmharthanacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmithe i leith cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fianaise is Measúnú
- Oifig um Chosaint Radaíochta agus Monatóireachta Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag comhaltáí air agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair inmí agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord.



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

An Ghníomhaireacht Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

PO Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Estate, County Wexford, Ireland

T: +353 53 916 0600 F: +353 53 916 0699

E: [info@epa.ie](mailto:info@epa.ie) W: [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)

LoCall: 1890 33 55 99

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