SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland
Action Plan 2012 - 2016

PROGRESS UPDATE — 2018

An Roinn Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
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.
- 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

PROGRESS UPDATE - June 2018
Introduction

In 2012, the EPA published the first *Review of Effectiveness of SEA in Ireland*. 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 report is available on the EPA website.

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* 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 Action Plan assigned responsibility for implementing individual actions to particular environmental authorities (with lead authorities indicated in bold) and also set target dates for the delivery of the actions. The reference numbers assigned to individual actions in the 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*. The purpose of this Progress Update is to summarise the findings of this review. Summary details are provided on the progress made with respect to each of the actions and, based on this, the current status of each action is recorded as either Completed, Not Progressed or Ongoing.

To drive progress in the implementation of those actions which are not progressed or only partially delivered, an updated and extended SEA Action Plan for the time period 2018-2020 (SEA Effectiveness Review Action Plan 2018-2018) is being published alongside this Progress Update. Both reports are available on 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.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>GOVERNANCE AND LEGISLATION</th>
<th>Responsible Authority(ies)</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Progress Update – 2018</th>
<th>Action Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D1/D4</strong></td>
<td>Establish a National SEA Environmental Authority Technical Forum comprising members of each of the statutory environmental authorities.</td>
<td>DHPLG DCHG DAFM DCCAE EPA</td>
<td>2012 &amp; Ongoing</td>
<td>The National SEA Forum was established in 2012 and has met two to three times a year since then. The Terms of Reference and membership of the Forum were revised in February 2018 with a view to improving the Forum’s influence and effectiveness. EPA is now facilitating and providing Secretariat support for the Forum.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D3</strong></td>
<td>a. Issue a Circular Note to clarify the role, key contacts and aspects of responsibility of each SEA environmental authority. b. Issue a Circular Note highlighting requirements of Article 8 of the SEA Directive (on decision making) and associated parts of the SEA Regulations, i.e. “shall be taken into account...”.</td>
<td>DHPLG</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>a. Draft circular letter is currently being prepared by DHPLG. b. Circular Letter (PL 9/2013) issued by DHPLG on 19/06/13.</td>
<td>a. Ongoing b. Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D5</strong></td>
<td>Develop National SEA KPIs to evaluate SEA Effectiveness.</td>
<td>EPA DHPLG DCHG DAFM DCCAE</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>EPA-funded project (2012-SL-FS-5) ‘Development and Testing of Key Performance Indicators for the Evaluation of SEA Effectiveness in Ireland’ was completed in 2016; further pilot application is to be explored with a view to refining and publishing National KPIs for SEA.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D6</strong></td>
<td>Ensure adequate resources are allocated within each statutory environmental authority to sufficiently discharge their statutory SEA/AA-related responsibilities.</td>
<td>DHPLG DCHG DAFM DCCAE EPA</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Lack of resources is still a significant issue within Departments.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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### Action C1

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:

- a. All SEA Environmental Reports/Plans/Programmes ongoing and completed and associated Appropriate Assessments;
- b. Appropriate Assessments completed;
- c. Legislation, circulars and guidance;
- d. Best practice SEA examples;
- e. National set of Environmental objectives, targets and indicators;
- f. SEA-related monitoring;
- g. Baseline information and data; and,
- h. Application of GIS.

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<tr>
<td>DHPLG, DCHG, EPA, DAFM, DCCAE</td>
<td>2013–2016</td>
<td>A DHPLG/ EPA Working Paper on the development of a national central SEA Portal was issued to the National SEA Forum in 2013; however, no further progress has been made on the development of a portal. It should be noted, however, that significant progress has been made in the development of key standalone resources, including: EPA SEA WebGIS Search and Reporting tool, available via EDEN (<a href="https://www.edenireland.ie/">https://www.edenireland.ie/</a>) DHPLG web map portal MyPlan.ie, which provides spatial information relevant to planning (<a href="http://myplan.ie/">http://myplan.ie/</a>) EPA Inventory of Spatial Information Sources relevant to SEA (available on <a href="http://www.epa.ie">www.epa.ie</a>) EPA-funded SEA Environmental Sensitivity Mapping webtool (<a href="http://airo.maynoothuniversity.ie/mapping-resources/airo-research-maps/environmental-research-projects/environmental-sensitivity">http://airo.maynoothuniversity.ie/mapping-resources/airo-research-maps/environmental-research-projects/environmental-sensitivity</a>)</td>
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**Action Status**: Ongoing
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>TRAINING AND AWARENESS</th>
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<td><strong>B4</strong></td>
<td>Convene a national SEA/AA Conference every 3 years to exchange and promote best practice, with first to be held in 2014.</td>
<td>DHPLG  DCHG-NPWS  DAFM  DCCAE  EPA</td>
<td>2014 &amp; Ongoing Every 3 Years</td>
<td>As part of the Ireland’s Environment 2013 conference, a breakout session on SEA/AA was held and an SEA training event for key sectors was also convened. A similar event will be considered as part of Ireland’s Environment 2018 Conference. A National SEA Conference is to be organised for 2020.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B5/D2</strong></td>
<td>Convene annual Regional SEA/AA Fora for Land Use Plans in association with the Regional Authorities (RAs).</td>
<td>DHPLG  DCHG-NPWS  DAFM  DCCAE  EPA</td>
<td>2012 &amp; Ongoing Annually</td>
<td>All Regional Fora were convened 2012 and one Regional Forum (Greater Dublin Area) was convened in 2014. The Regional Fora were well received and covered aspects of AA, GIS and flood-risk assessment as well as SEA. The Fora lapsed in 2014 with the reconfiguration of the regional assemblies. The DHPLG, EPA and Regional Assemblies have agreed to reconvene the Regional Fora in 2019 following the publication of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Increase awareness of existing national, EU and International SEA/AA and related guidance.</td>
<td>DHPLG DCHG-NPWS DAFM DCCAE EPA</td>
<td>2012–2016</td>
<td>This action is ongoing through publishing on statutory environmental authorities’ websites and via the National SEA Forum which serves as an information-sharing network. All environmental authorities have committed to reviewing their websites in 2018 as part of efforts to increase awareness of national, EU and International SEA/AA related guidance.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Updating existing National SEA Guidelines to reflect current best practice.</td>
<td>DHPLG DCHG-NPWS EPA DAFM DCCAE</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>The <a href="https://www.housing.ie">SEA Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities</a> (available on <a href="http://www.housing.ie">www.housing.ie</a>) which were published by the DHPLG in 2004, have not yet been updated.</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
</tr>
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<td>b. Development and assessment of alternatives/ scenarios (DHPLG/EPA)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>c. No progress to date. This topic may be considered for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Assessment of Significance Criteria for environmental topics (DCHG)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>d. Guidance on SEA Statement Preparation will be produced as part of the second SEA Effectiveness Review in 2018-2019.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. SEA Statement preparation (EPA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Guidance on SEA Monitoring will be produced as part of the second SEA Effectiveness Review in 2018-2019.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. SEA-related monitoring (DCHG-NPWS)</td>
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<td>f. DHPLG published Circular Letter PSSP5/2010 and accompanying Best Practice Guidance Note on Transboundary Consultation and Land Use Plans in 2010.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>g. Tiering of assessments in SEA and AA</td>
<td></td>
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<td>h. No progress to date. This topic may be considered for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.</td>
<td>Not progressed</td>
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<td>h. The role of SEA in informing project level EIA (All)</td>
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## SEA Effectiveness Review in Ireland - Action Plan 2012 - 2016 - Progress Update 2018

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| **A4** | Preparing SEA Best Practice Guidance for priority Sectors in association with the relevant sectors initially including:  
  a. Waste (DHPLG)  
  b. Forestry (DAFM)  
  c. Energy (DCCAE)  
  d. Water related plans (EPA) | DHPLG  
  DCHG  
  DAFM  
  DCCAE  
  d. Working Draft prepared. Further work needed to finalise and publish guidance document. | Ongoing |
| **A6** | Preparing detailed guidance on Cumulative Effect Assessment/In-Combination Effects Assessment in SEA/AA. | EPA  
  DCHG-NPWS | 2013 | Working Draft prepared. Further work needed to finalise and publish guidance document. | Ongoing |

### 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 GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHÚN COMHSHAOL

Tá an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhún Comhshaol (GCC) freagrach ar an gcormhais a chaomhú agus a fheabhsú mar shócháin i luchadh do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaol agus chosaint do é féachtaí diobháilchá na radaloicha agus ar an truaillithe.

Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a rinnt ina trí phróimhreímsé:

Rialú: Déanaimid cáirís éifeachtaí rialaithe agus comhlianta comhshaolaí a charú i bhfeidhm chun toradh maithe comhshaolaí agus a sholáthraíocht agus aon duine a chuig an tsúil leis an t-áirme sin.

Eolas: Soláthraítear sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaool atá ar ardaighdeán, spriciúchán agus tráthnúil chun bonn eolais a thabhaltú.

Eolas a thabhaltú:
- Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta
- Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil
- Rialú Astaíochtaí na n-Gás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár haeráide, an uisce agus na inbhuanaitheachta.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i cheaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gáis agus don gáis, agus san teaghlach a bhaintear leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéil radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar nochtadh mhuintir don radaíocht.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar leasúcháin.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal na radaíochta.

Ceadúnú:
- Déanaimid níos fearr a giniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar fhorbairt, leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Fasáinte ar fhorbairt, leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.

An Chláiteanna Comhshaoil:
- Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil
- Rialú Astaíochtaí na n-Gás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn
- Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

An t-Éireannacht um Chláiteanna Comhshaoil:
- Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil
- Rialú Astaíochtaí na n-Gás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn
- Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

Cosaint Raideolaioch:
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal raideolaiochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal raideolaiochta.
- Fasáinte ar fhorbairt, leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.

Treoir, Faisnéis Inorthchanta agus Oideachas:
- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnaí na tionscailtocha agus don phobal maidir le haghaidh a bhaintear leis an gcéanna.
- Faisnéis threithúil a dhéanamh ar gcomhshaol agus don phobal maidir le haghaidh a bhaintear leis an gcéanna.
- Saineirbhísí cosantí a chur ar fáil do dhaoine leis an gcéanna.

Bainistíocht Uisce:
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar tuairiscí a dhéanamh ar chláiteanna ar fhorbairt amharach.
- Comhordú a dhéanamh ar an fhairseacht atá leis an gcéanna.
- An Gníomhaireacht um Céadúnú Náisiúnta a dhéanamh.

Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta:
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.

Ár bhFreagrachaí:

Ceadaím:
- Déanaimid níos fearr a giniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar fhorbairt, leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta.
- Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil.
- Rialú Astaíochtaí na n-Gás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn.

Na hInbhuanaithe:
- Na hInbhuanaithe.
- Na hInbhuanaithe.
- Na hInbhuanaithe.

Bainistíocht Uisce:
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.

Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta:
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.
- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar Chláiteanna Comhshaoil.

Inmharthanacht Comhshaoil:
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Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhún Comhshaol:
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- Cosaint Raideolaioch.

Casbantúil Feasachta agus Athrú Imporáichte:
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Músaileacht Feasachta agus Athrú Imporáichte:
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Faisnéis Inorthchanta agus Oideachas:
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Cosaint Raideolaioch:
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