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.

**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.
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 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 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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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>GOVERNANCE AND LEGISLATION</th>
<th>Original Target Date</th>
<th>Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020</th>
<th>Responsible Authority(ies)</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>2012 &amp; Ongoing</td>
<td>Continue efforts to re-focus and improve the effectiveness of the National SEA Forum. EPA to facilitate and act as Secretariat for the Forum.</td>
<td>EPA, DHPLG, DCCAE, DCHG, DAFM</td>
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<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.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>a. Update and issue circular letter clarifying the role, key contacts and aspects of responsibility of each SEA environmental authority.</td>
<td>a. DHPLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D5</strong></td>
<td>Develop National SEA KPIs to evaluate SEA Effectiveness.</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Pilot, refine and publish the draft SEA KPIs produced as part of the EPA-funded SEA KPI research projec.</td>
<td>EPA</td>
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<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>Ongoing</td>
<td>Reflect the need for adequate resources, including specific Environmental Assessment post(s), in relevant future workforce planning.</td>
<td>DHPLG, DCCAE, DCHG, DAFM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>DATA COLLECTION, PROVISION AND SHARING</td>
<td>Original Target Date</td>
<td>Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020</td>
<td>Responsible Authority(ies)</td>
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| 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. | 2013–2016 | Progress the establishment of a national central SEA Portal. | EPA  
DHPLG  
DCCAE  
DCHG  
DAFM |
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>TRAINING AND AWARENESS</th>
<th>Original Target Date</th>
<th>Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020</th>
<th>Responsible Authority(ies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| B1/B2/ B3/D4 | Promote and support the development of SEA/AA Training Modules. Develop targeted SEA and AA training modules on:  
- Integration of SEA and AA (DCHG-NPWS)  
- Assessment of effects (DCCAE/EPA) | 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 |
| B4     | 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 | Consider organising SEA-related sessions/presentations as part of Ireland’s Environment 2018 Conference and/or a parallel training event. Organise a National SEA/AA Conference in 2020. | EPA |
| B5/D2  | 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 |
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>GUIDANCE</th>
<th>Original Target Date</th>
<th>Updated Action(s) for 2018-2020</th>
<th>Responsible Authority(ies)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Increase awareness of existing national EU and International SEA/AA and related guidance.</td>
<td>2012–2016</td>
<td>All environmental authorities to review their websites in 2018 as part increasing awareness of existing national EU and International SEA/AA and related guidance.</td>
<td>DHPLG, DCHG, DAFM, DCCAE, EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Updating existing National SEA Guidelines to reflect current best practice.</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Review and update 2004 Guidelines for Planning Authorities to reflect outcomes of EC REFIT review, national SEA effectiveness reviews and developments in case law.</td>
<td>DHPLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3/A5</td>
<td>Preparation of a series of concise SEA Best Practice Guidance Notes. Specific topics to be considered will include:</td>
<td>2013–2016</td>
<td>Progress the preparation of screening guidance (Note: this may be subject to conclusion of various ongoing CJEU SEA cases).</td>
<td>EPA, DHPLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Screening/Scoping including role of statutory environmental authorities (DHPLG/DAFM)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider this topic for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.</td>
<td>EPA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. Assessment of Significance Criteria for environmental topics (DCHG)</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. SEA Statement preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guidance on SEA Statements will be produced as part of Second SEA Effectiveness Review (commenced March 2018).</td>
<td>EPA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. SEA-related monitoring (DCHG-NPWS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guidance on SEA Monitoring will be produced as part of the Second SEA Effectiveness Review (commenced March 2018).</td>
<td>EPA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>f. Transboundary SEA/AA (DHPLG/DCHG-NPWS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review the requirement for guidance on Transboundary Consultation for sectoral plans.</td>
<td>DHPLG, DCCAE, DAHG, DAFM, EPA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h. The role of SEA in informing project level EIA (All)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider this topic for future EPA (or other) research calls in 2019/2020.</td>
<td>EPA</td>
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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)  
  Finalise & publish Forestry sector guidance.  
  Finalise & publish Energy sector guidance.  
  Finalise & publish Water sector guidance | EPA  
  DCCAE  
  EPA  
  DCCAE  
  EPA  
  DHPLG |
| A6     | 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Appropriate Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAFM</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCCAE</td>
<td>Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (formerly Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR))</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCHG</td>
<td>Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (formerly Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHPLG</td>
<td>Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (formerly Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG))</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPWS</td>
<td>National Parks and Wildlife Service</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
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AN GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIOL
Tá an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomshaoil a chaomhnú agus a cheannsú mar shóchánaí Luachmar dhúthadh ná hÉireann. Táimíodh tionscalas don dhoine agus don chomhshaoil agus a cheannsú ó éifeachtaiti diobhálacha na radioachaí agus an truathlaithe.

Is féidir obair na Ghníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhfréimhme: Rialú: Déanaimid córais éifeachtaí rialaithe agus comhlinta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun通风 maithe comhshaoil a sléacht agus chun diriú orthu siúd níos idireachtaí go maith, agus le chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.

Eolas: Solathraimid spoilte, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar dhalachadh, spriochthriú agus tráthnúil chun bonn eolas a chur go forbarthachtach ar gach leibhéal.

Tacalocht: Bimid ag teacht i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaoil atá glan, tárríuliúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le hiompaí a chur chomh-thriú chun leathnú.

Ár bhFheargráachtaí

Ceadúnú:
- Déanaimid na gníomhaireachtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionaíochta na dtaithne an phobail ná don chomhshaoil:
  - saoráid drámaíola (m.sh. láithearín liomta talún, lisceoirí, stásúisín aistireacht draíomaíola);
  - gníomhachtaí tionsclaíochta ar scála mór a thabhairt do chomhshaoil a thabhairt do thionscalú.
- an dhaonlaimhchathaoir (m.sh. muca, éanlaithe);
- úsáidí shaoráidí a bhainte ar chéad síce a chur ar fáil.

Tá an ghníomhaireacht á bainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a dtugtar Bord lánaimseartha, in mBord ar an raibh a chur agus a chur ina dhícheall.

Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- Ceadúnú na náisiúnta le comhshaoil atá glan, táirgíúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a bhraiseann d'fhiú an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil.

Bainistíocht Usice
- Monatóireacht agus tuairiscíocht a dhéanamh ar chathaoil thráthnúil, leis an seirbhísí agus an scrúdú a dhéanamh ar comhshaoil a thabhairt.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairiscíocht Nó Thionscalú
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a chur i bhfeidhm agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a chur i bhfeidhm agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú.

Bainistíocht a tharla sa chomhshaoil
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a chur i bhfeidhm agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a chur i bhfeidhm agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú.

Múscaíteacht Feasaicha agus Aithriú Iompraíochta
- Feasaichidh an Ghníomhaireacht feasaí a d'fhoghlaim an dli, agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú agus a thabhairt.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Bainistíocht a tharla sa chomhshaoil
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a chur i bhfeidhm agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chomhshaoil
Tá an gníomhaireacht á bainistiú ag Bord Lánaimseartha, ar a dtugtar Bord lánaimseartha, in mBord ar an raibh a chur agus a chur ina dhícheall.

Cosaint Raideolaíoch
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal an radaíocht, a dhéanamh ar an radaíocht a bhaineann leis na saoráidí agus leis na stáitseanna a bhaineann leis an radaíocht.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Cosaint Radaíochta agus Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta
- Feasaichidh an Ghníomhaireacht feasaí a d'fhoghlaim an dli, agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú agus a thabhairt.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.

Múscaíteacht Feasaicha agus Aithriú Iompraíochta
- Feasaichidh an Ghníomhaireacht feasaí a d'fhoghlaim an dli, agus do chur i leith freagrachtaí tionscalú agus a thabhairt.
- An dli a chur orthu siúd a thabhairt.