



IFI ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER

**Assessing the Effects of Certain Plans and
Programmes on the
Environment**

1. Introduction

1.1 General Introductory Comment

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is the statutory authority tasked under section 7(1) of the Inland Fisheries Act 2010 (No. 10 of 2010) with responsibility for the conservation, protection and development of the inland fisheries resource and recreational sea angling. “Fisheries” includes all inland fisheries recreational and commercial, sea angling and certain mollusc fisheries stipulated under the Fisheries Acts, the physical habitat upon which the fishery relies, the facilities and access, the quantity and quality of the water and the plant and animal life on which fish depend for shelter and food and the spawning areas where in fish deposit their eggs.

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is charged with the following functions and responsibilities under the 2010 Inland Fisheries Act – Section 7:

Functions
of IFI.

7.— (1) The principal function of IFI is the protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries resource.

(2) Without prejudice to *subsection (1)* the general functions of IFI are to—

- (a) promote, support, facilitate and advise the Minister on the conservation, protection, management, marketing, development and improvement of inland fisheries, including sea angling,
- (b) develop and advise the Minister on policy and national strategies relating to inland fisheries including sea angling, and
- (c) ensure implementation and delivery of policy and strategies developed under *subsection (b)* as agreed with the Minister.

1.2 Purpose of the IFI Environmental Charter

This charter is intended to assist in the design, development and preparation process when undertaking work programmes related to the role, functions and responsibilities of IFI that may have an effect on the environment. The general approach followed is to deal with the various statutory and non-statutory stages in chronological order, i.e. as they correspond to the relevant stages in the plan-making process which is described in this document.

1.3 IFI Environmental Policy

Inland Fisheries Ireland is a key agency in the development, monitoring and enforcement of environmental legislation where it concerns the inland fisheries and marine recreational angling resource (IFI is the responsible agency in respect of the licensing and management of commercial and recreational fishing for salmon, with protection responsibilities at sea out to 12 miles from baselines). IFI aims to be an enabling environmental organisation which works with other agencies, sectors and stakeholders to ensure the fisheries agenda is promoted and key objectives achieved. IFI works with relevant partners, both in State Agencies and other organisations to focus on fish habitat (including riparian zone) development and restoration. Developing and maintaining a range of good quality habitats which cater for all stages of the fish's life cycle is critical in ensuring that fish populations increase, and that these increases are sustainable. This goal is also aligned to Ireland's requirements as outlined in the EU Water Framework and Habitats Directives. IFI will promote an environment which maintains existing habitat quality or remediates damaged habitat and empowers its stakeholders to assist in the delivery of improved fish habitat. This will involve balancing stakeholders' needs as well as ecological and legislative requirements. IFI policy is aimed at maintaining a sustainable fisheries resource through preserving the productive capacity of fish habitat by avoiding habitat loss, and by mitigating harmful alteration to habitat. Construction or other invasive works, particularly those entailing the installation of new in-stream or riparian structures, have the potential to significantly impact both in the short and long term on the fisheries resources if they are not carried out in an environmentally sensitive manner.

1.4 Legislative Context – Environmental Considerations

In developing environmental plans and programmes, IFI is focused on delivery on all its legislative obligations including national fisheries legislation, and the fisheries elements of European Directives and regulations. Notwithstanding this focus on fisheries legislation, IFI must also ensure, through consultation with appropriate bodies, State Agencies, stakeholders and other interest groups that any development works undertaken in delivery of IFI's remit are compliant with all relevant legislation.

2. Planning an IFI project or programme

2.1 Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Environmental Effects

Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended by S.I. No. 201/2011) sets out two main types of criteria for determining whether a plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects:

(1) Characteristics of the Plan: for example, the scale of development likely to take place over the life of the plan, or the degree to which it promotes sustainable development. Does the plan set out environmentally-friendly objectives? What environmental problems are of particular relevance to the plan?

(2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected: for example, the magnitude, cumulative nature and reversibility of the effects, or the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by implementation of the plan. How many people are likely to be affected by the plan? Are there areas of conservation sensitivity (such as natural habitats) within or adjacent to the area covered by the plan?

2.2 IFI Plans and Programmes

Broadly speaking plans and programmes designed and implemented by IFI will not have a significant negative impact on the environment; rather IFI aims to have a significant positive impact on the environment through implementation of measures under fisheries and related legislation. Notwithstanding this fact, it remains incumbent on IFI to undergo due process in this regard and a series of criteria are listed in the checklist in Appendix 1 with the aid of relevant GIS mapping resources which is designed to ensure comprehensive consideration of all relevant matters when planning an IFI programme or project where an environmental impact is a possible outcome.

2.3 Project or programme scale

When considering the scale of a planned project the following checklist can be activated to help IFI decide whether there is a possibility that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required based on the characteristics of the likely impacts of a project i.e. to decide whether the effects of a project are likely to be significant:

Questions to be considered*

-
1. Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?
 2. Will new features be out-of-scale with the existing environment?
 3. Will the effect be particularly complex?
 4. Will the effect extend over a large area?
 5. Will there be any potential for transfrontier impact?
 6. Will many people be affected?
 7. Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?
 8. Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?
 9. Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?
 10. Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?
 11. Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?
 12. Will the effect continue for a long time?
 13. Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?
 14. Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?
 15. If it is intermittent will it be frequent rather than rare?
 16. Will the impact be irreversible?
 17. Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?
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* Extract from Guidance on EIA – Screening; June 2001; prepared for the European Commission by ERM (UK).

2.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The requirement to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment and or Appropriate Assessment on individual plans or programmes will be considered at the earliest possible opportunity in the development of each plan and subject to the requirements of relevant legislation.

Subject to certain exclusions, the SEA Directive [Article 3 (2)], as transposed by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 435 of 2004), as amended, requires that SEA is carried out for all plans and programmes (Ref¹)

(a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended,

or (b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) i.e. a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) – see below.

The obligation to undertake AA derives from Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Part 5). Regulation 42 of Part 5 requires that a screening for AA of a plan or project - for which an application for consent is received, or which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt (and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site) - is carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the European site.

Subsequent Articles set out the requirements for Stage 2 AA etc. The meaning of ‘a Plan’ is set out in Regulation 2 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 which relates to AA: *“Plan, subject to the exclusion, except where the contrary intention appears, of any plan that is a land use plan within the meaning of the Planning Acts 2000 to 2011, includes: (a) any plan, programme or scheme, statutory or non-statutory, that establishes public policy in relation to land use and infrastructural development in one or more specified locations or regions, including any development of land or on land, the extraction or exploitation of mineral resources or of renewable energy resources and the carrying out of land use activities, that is to be considered for adoption or authorisation or approval or for the grant of a licence, consent, permission, permit,*

derogation or other authorisation by a public authority, or (b) a proposal to amend or extend a plan or scheme referred to in subparagraph (a)” (Ref.⁷)

Recent legislative changes (SI No. 477 Of 2011) have made provision for IFI via the Minister for Communications Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) to become the competent authority with additional responsibilities as part of Ireland’s implementation of the Habitats Directive. These include responsibility for the conservation of wild salmon, pollan, shad, smelt and lamprey.

Both SEA and AA processes are considered in Appendices 1 and 2 of this document.

2.5 Some additional issues for consideration

2.5.1 Protection of fisheries during third party construction works in and adjacent to waters

Where works such as road construction, installation of culverts and bridges, the crossing of river and streams with pipelines, and works on and in the environs of waters are planned which are likely to impact on the fisheries resource, contact should be made with IFI at the earliest possible stage in the planning and design process. Such consultation will enable those concerned to comply with the provisions of the Fisheries Acts and Habitats Regulations. The current document is aimed to complement existing procedures and guidance that IFI have produced in this regard.

2.5.2 Invasive Species

As a lead agency, IFI will lead the protection of the aquatic environment from the introduction and spread of invasive species. Measures to achieve this will include the development and implementation of the EU Directive on Invasive Species, national policies, supporting legislation, education applied research and eradication programmes. IFI is committed to working with other stakeholders and agencies in delivering a consistent national approach to tackling this serious threat.

2.5.3 Fish Stocking

IFI recognises the requirement to stock fish into wild fisheries in certain restricted situations to improve fish populations. Conservation, legislative and scientific advice and stakeholder consultation will aid IFI in the development and implementation of a national fish stocking policy.

2.5.4 Fisheries Management

IFI will balance the need for conserving fish populations with the desire of recreational and commercial fishers to take fish. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of a range of appropriate technical measures and the management of fisheries on an individual or catchment basis as appropriate.

Appendix 1.
IFI Environmental Charter Checklists
for Projects / Plans /
Development(s)

IFI Environmental Charter Checklists for Projects / Plans / Development(s)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| River Basin District: _____ | Fishery District: _____ | IFI Officer: _____ |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|

| Section 1 | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Information about the project / plan / development | Yes/No or Not Applicable | Detail / Notes |
| Name and full characteristics of the project / plan / development (p/p/d) which may affect the site (can be attached*) including any project reference number or code. | | *Should be included as a separate attachment where possible |
| Funding Source (i.e. if not IFI it is important to consider what external source is funding the works as there may be procedural implications) | | |
| Location: Townland/address | | |
| Location: Grid References / Latitude, Longitude (Preferably ITM or Irish Grid) | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Watercourse Name | | |
| Nature of watercourse: River, Stream, Lake, Canal, Estuary, Coast, (including stream order if possible) | | |
| Fisheries status of watercourse (salmonid or non-salmonid) | | |
| Fish species present (where known) | | |
| Have relevant landowner permissions been granted? | | |
| <p>Non-fish Natura 2000 species present that may be impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reptiles • Amphibians • Birds • Mammals | | |
| <p>Alien / invasive species present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fauna • Flora | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Description of riparian zone (e.g. developed, undeveloped, vegetation, disturbed etc.)</p> | | |
| <p>Details of possible impacts on riparian zone</p> | | |
| <p>Can any negative impacts on riparian zones be mitigated? If so, how?</p> | | |
| <p>Proposed timing of works (instream works should adhere to 'open season' for works)</p> | | |
| <p>Local Authority (ies) area(s)</p> | | |
| <p>Other RBD/Section of IFI or stakeholders involved in P/P/D?</p> | | |
| <p>The total range or area the P / P / D will cover (linear meters, kilometres, hectares)</p> | | |
| <p>Size and other specifications of the P / P / D</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>The characteristics of existing, proposed or other approved P / P / D (s) which may cause interactive or cumulative impacts with the project being assessed and which may affect the site</p> | | |
| <p>Is P / P/ D subject to EIA as required by SI No. 349 of 1989 (as amended)</p> | | |
| <p>Does P / P/ D require an Appropriate Assessment as required by S.I. No. 94 of 1997 (as amended)?</p> <p>If works are part of a plan or project has an AA pre-screening or screening exercise been carried out as per NPWS Guidelines (Available at http://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/guidance-appropriate-assessment-planning-authorities if relevant)</p> | | |
| <p>Does the P / P/ D require an SEA as required by S.I. No. 435 of 2004(as amended)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If works are part of a plan or project has an SEA pre-screening or screening exercise been carried out as per Appendix 2. | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Does the P / P/ D meet the requirements of the Wildlife Act (1976) if e.g. hedge-cutting is involved.</p> | | |
| <p>Does the P / P/ D involve the use of herbicides? If so, do the use of these meet with environmental legal requirements?</p> | | |
| <p>Does or may the P / P/ D require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning permission • An Article 5 Declaration <p>If not, why not?</p> | | |
| <p>Does or may the P / P/ D require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Notifiable Action as required by the Natural Habitats Regulations 1997 (Regulation 14) and/or Wildlife Amendment Act 2000 (Regulation 19) <p>If not, why not? If Yes go to Section 2.....</p> | | |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>What other stakeholders have been consulted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other IFI personnel _____ • Landowner _____ • Riparian Owner _____ • Angling Club _____ • Local Authority(ies) _____ • NPWS _____ • OPW _____ • EPA _____ • Irish Water _____ • <u>Another</u> | | <p>Please detail who outside of IFI has been consulted and if this has been documented elsewhere.</p> |
| <p>The relationship (e.g. key distances etc.) between the project or plan and the proximal (20km) Natura 2000 site (if relevant)</p> | | |
| <p>Any impact between the project or plan and any Natura 2000 site?</p> <p>If Yes go to Section 2.....</p> | | |
| <p>Has the site any other possible designations e.g. under E.U. Law (Sveso site etc.)</p> | | |

| Section 2 - Section 2(a) Information about any Natura 2000 site | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Information about the project / plan / development | Yes/No or Not Applicable | Detail / Notes |
| The reasons for the designation of the Natura 2000 site. The conservation objectives / qualifying interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of the site. | | |
| The conservation status of the site (favourable or otherwise) | | |
| The existing baseline condition of the site (where available) | | |
| The key attributes of any Annex I habitats or Annex II species on the site | | |
| The physical and chemical composition of the site | | |

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| The dynamics of the habitats, species and their ecology | | |
| Those aspects of the site that is sensitive to change | | |
| The key structural and functional relationships that create and maintain the site's integrity | | |
| The seasonal influences on the key Annex I habitats or Annex II species on the site | | |
| Other conservation issues relevant to the site, including likely future natural changes taking place | | |
| <p>Section 2(b) Integrity of Site Checklist Conservation objectives: does the project or plan have the potential to:</p> | | |
| Information about the project / plan / development | Yes/No or Not Applicable | Detail / Notes |
| | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Cause delays in progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site? | | |
| Interrupt progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site? | | |
| Disrupt those factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site? | | |
| Interfere with the balance, distribution and density of key species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site? | | |
| Other objectives: does the project or plan have the potential to: | | |
| Cause changes to the vital defining aspects (e.g. nutrient balance) that determine how the site functions as a habitat or ecosystem? | | |
| Change the dynamics of the relationships (between, for example, soil and water or plants and animals) that define the structure and/or function of the site? | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Interfere with predicted or expected natural changes to the site (such as water dynamics or chemical composition)?</p> | | |
| <p>Reduce the area of key habitats?</p> | | |
| <p>Reduce the population of key species?</p> | | |
| <p>Change the balance between key species?</p> | | |
| <p>Reduce biological diversity of the site?</p> | | |
| <p>Result in disturbance that could affect population size or density or the balance between key species?</p> | | |
| <p>Result in fragmentation?</p> | | |
| <p>Result in loss or reduction of key features (e.g. tree cover, tidal exposure, annual flooding, etc.)?</p> | | |

Appendix 2

IFI – Environmental Management Charter (EMC) – Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Procedure

IFI – Environmental Management Charter (EMC) - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Procedure

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Background

Directive 2001/41/EC which provides for the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (“SEA Directive”) came into force in Ireland on 21st July 2004. The Directive applies to plans and programmes for which the first formal preparatory action is taken on or after 21 July 2004. The Directive has been transposed into Irish Law through two sets of Regulations:

- European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004) (as amended in 2011); and
- Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004) (as amended in 2011).

The main objective of the SEA Directive is to “provide for a high level of protection for the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. The authority responsible for preparing the plan or programme is usually responsible for undertaking the SEA.

Decision to Undertake SEA

Arising from Article 9 of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended, there is a requirement to carry out environmental assessment of certain types of plans. This includes plans and programmes for the fisheries sector which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

Legislative Context for SEA

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or variation to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it. The SEA Directive requires, inter alia, that SEA is undertaken for certain plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including **fisheries**. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory

Instrument Number (SI No.435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004). Both sets of Regulations became operational on 21 July 2004. SI No. 435 of 2004 relates to sectors including fisheries and was amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011) (Ref ⁸).

The Stages of SEA are:

- **Stage 1** Screening (and pre-screening) of Plans and Programmes
- **Stage 2** Scoping the SEA
- **Stage 3** Identification, Prediction, Evaluation and Mitigation of Potential Impacts
- **Stage 4** Consultation, Revision and Post-Adoption Activities

This document specific to IFI needs proposes to deal with Stage 1 and part of Stage 2 (see Figure 1).

SEA screening (and pre-Screening) (DCENR, 2008)

Screening is the first stage in the SEA process and is the term given to the process where the need for an SEA of a given plan or programme is determined. There are various guidance documents which assist the SEA screening process, but the key to deciding if full SEA is required is whether the plan or programme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

If SEA is deemed necessary (i.e. significant effects on the environment are likely), the full SEA process must be completed. This requires:

- The preparation of an Environmental Report, where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated;
- Consultation with the public, environmental authorities, and any EU Member State affected, on the environmental report and draft plan or programme;
- Consideration of the findings in the Environmental Report and the outcome of the consultations in deciding whether to adopt or modify the draft plan or programme; and
- Publicising the decision on adoption of the plan or programme and how the SEA influenced the outcome.

However, if the SEA screening process concludes that SEA is not required (i.e. significant effects on the environment are unlikely), then the preparation of an Environmental Report (and the other actions listed above) are not required. (Ref.³)

P. Scott & P. Marsden., 2001-EEP/DS-2/5

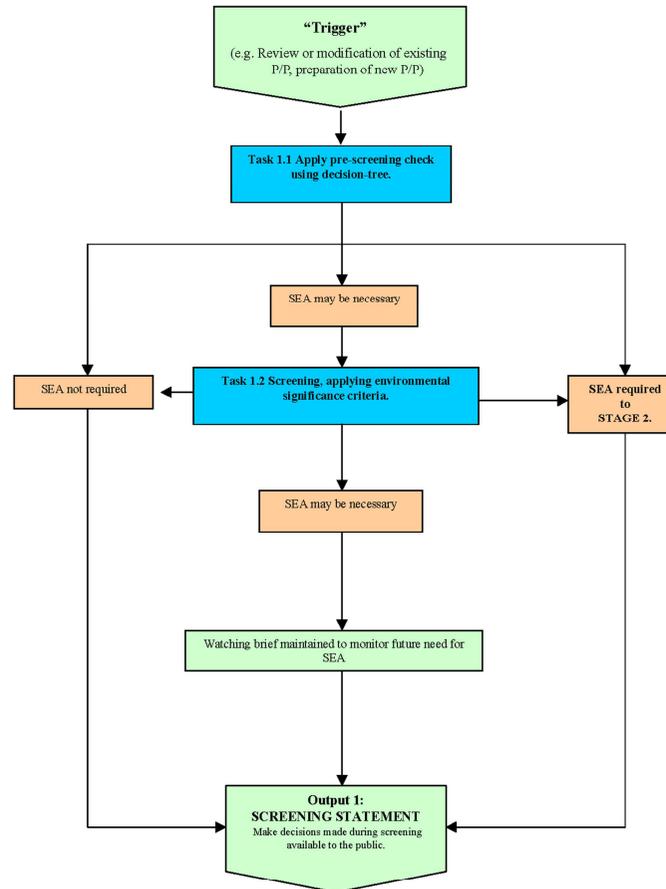


Figure 1. Stage 1 – screening of plans and programmes.

In all cases, the authority preparing the Plan or Programme is required to make a copy of the SEA Screening Report available for public viewing and also notify the designated environmental authorities of the intention to prepare an SEA Screening Report, thus giving the designated environmental authorities an opportunity to comment on whether or not they consider significant effects on the environment likely to arise.

Stage 1: Pre-Screening

The pre-screening check is applied using the decision-tree from *Development of SEA methodologies for plans and programmes in Ireland* P. Scott & P.Marsden, 2003, amended slightly to account for changes due to the SEA Regulations 2011. The pre-screening check is based on questions of an administrative nature, which can be rapidly checked by the authority to determine whether the P/P should be taken to the second screening stage. It allows rapid screening-out of those P/Ps that are clearly not going to have any environmental impact and screening-in of those that definitely do require SEA.

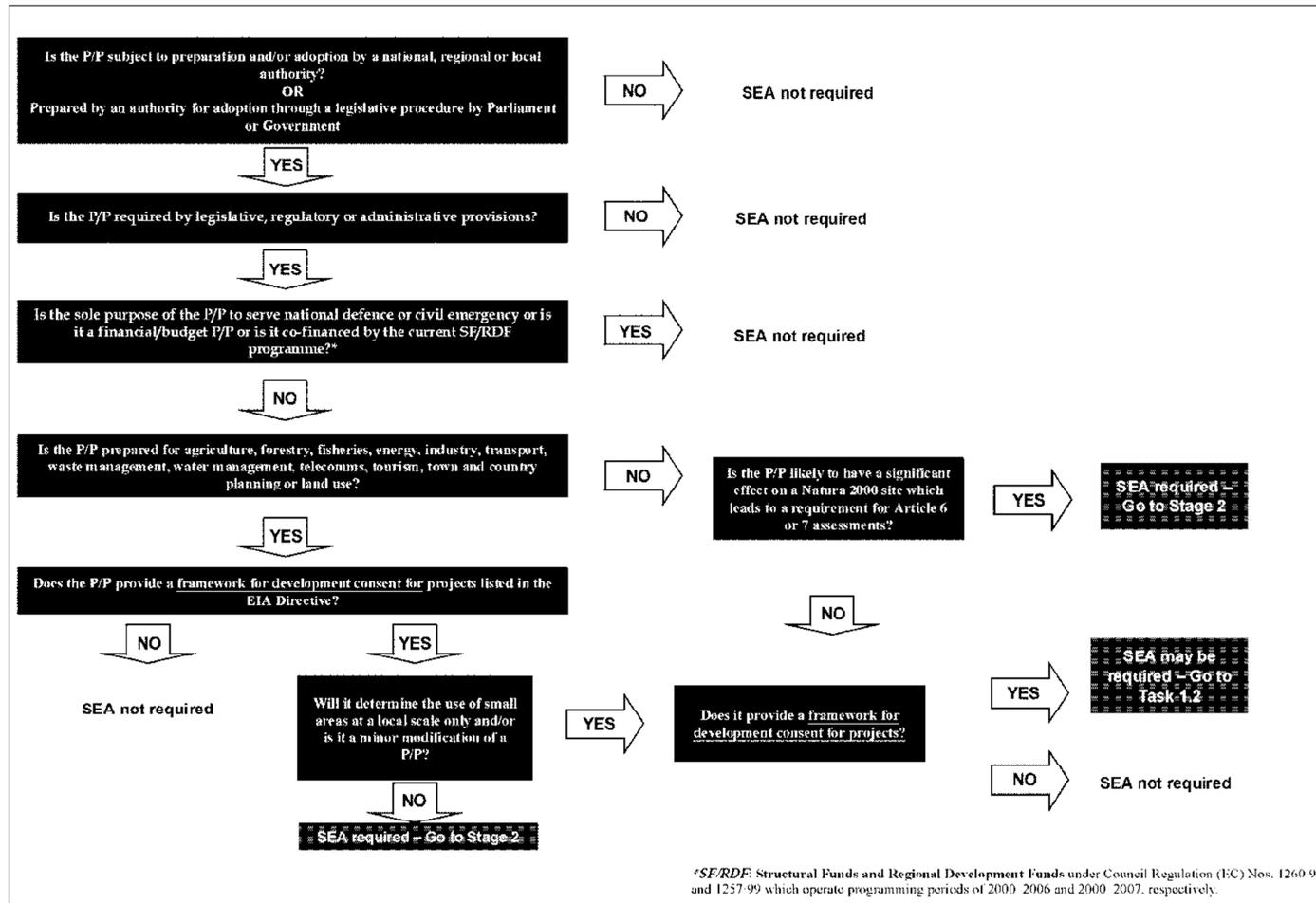
Stage 1 establishes whether the relevant P/P must undergo an SEA. It uses a series of procedural tasks, firstly to consider the overall characteristics of the P/P to see if it falls within the requirements of the SEA Directive. The second task requires the potential environmental significance of implementing the proposed P/P to be gauged according to a series of significance criteria.

Task - Apply pre-screening check using decision-tree

The pre-screening check is based on questions of an administrative nature, which can be rapidly checked by the authority to determine whether the P/P should be taken to the second screening stage.

A “decision-tree” or flowchart is provided which simplifies the complex wording of the SEA Directive into a systematic and logical series of questions. This is shown in Fig. 2.

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P. Scott & P. Marsden, 2001-EEP/DS-2/5

Figure 2. SEA decision-tree to be used in Task 1.1.

The decision-tree uses the criteria set out in the SEA Directive to decide if SEA is required or not. Unlike the environmental significance screening criteria, which are used in Task 1.2, the questions in the decision-tree are more “administrative” in nature and are based upon the status of the P/P in question.

As a result of this Task, the following possible outcomes could arise:

1. P/P applies to one or more of the 11 sectors quoted in the SEA Directive and provides a framework for development consent of projects requiring EIA. It should, therefore, be taken forward to **Stage 2 – SEA required**.
2. P/P will significantly affect a Natura 2000 site and, therefore, requires an assessment under the Habitats Directive. It can be moved forward to **Stage 2 - SEA required**
3. The P/P does not fall into any of the sectors covered by the Directive, it will not significantly affect a Natura 2000 site nor does it provide a framework for development consent¹. It is, therefore, screened-out by the pre-screening check and no further consideration of its possible impacts is required. Under such circumstances, a note, highlighting the screening criteria applied and the decisions taken, would be kept on all relevant files. **No SEA required**.
4. The P/P is not screened-out and may require more detailed checks to be undertaken (this will apply to a small-scale P/P or minor modifications of a P/P). This may involve the application of “Environmental Significance Screening Criteria” as described below.

*NB May apply for some IFI projects such as Angling Development Plan(ADP). May even be more complex if the ADP actions are not developed yet. In this case the need for an SEA will have to be continually reviewed depending on the decided actions – **note** Failte Ireland Wild Atlantic Way SEA process.(Ref 6)*

¹ A “framework for development consent” could be interpreted when the P/P would lead to, or give guidance for, the consent of development projects. This may be observed as the demarcation of areas zoned for specific types of development, measures that identify circumstances under which development will be encouraged or allowed, criteria which may be applied to decisions on development consent or forward programmes that identify certain types of development to be pursued in a particular sector (e.g. wind energy within an Energy P/P). (Ref.³)

Worked Example

METHODOLOGY FOR SCREENING AS PER EPA GUIDELINES (2003) – (PRE-SCREENING ELEMENT) ADAPTED FOR IFI REQUIREMENTS

Unclear if 'fit for purpose' for IFI needs at this time.

Is the P/P subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR Prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government OR Prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?

Answer here for IFI is YES as IFI are a *national authority*

Is the P/P required by legislative regulatory or administrative provisions?

Answer here maybe YES or NO depending on the requirement of the P/P.

If answer is YES then we ask 'is the sole purpose of the P/P to serve national defence or civil emergency or is it a financial/budget P/P or is it co-financed by SF/RDF'. **If NO then SEA not required.**

If answer is NO then we ask 'Is the P/P prepared for agriculture, forestry, **fisheries**, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecomms, tourism, town and country planning or land use'?

Answer here for IFI is YES because IFI prepare plans for '*fisheries use*'.

Does the P/P provide a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive?

Answer here for IFI is more than likely NO.

The Stage 1 Pre-Screening checks have concluded that 'EXAMPLE' IFI Plan are screened out but it is recognised that the pre-screening questions are more administrative in nature and are based upon the status of the P/P in question. In light of the fact that there is no P/P which is truly applicable to the SEA process and as stated in Stage 1 above, in the interest of clarification and to assist stakeholders understand the application of SEA, the steps in Stage 2 Screening are also carried out. Stage 2 screening is to assess if the P/P is likely to have significant effects on the environment and consists of a series of criteria to be considered as follows:

Stage 1: Screening

METHODOLOGY 2 FOR SCREENING AS PER S.I. NO. 435 OF 2004 (as amended) – (SCREENING ELEMENT) (Ref.⁵)

9. (1) Subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes

(a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications and tourism, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or

(b) which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

(2) A plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) which determines the use of a small area at local level or a minor modification to a plan or programme referred to in sub-article (1) shall require an environmental assessment only where the competent authority determines that it is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, for this purpose, the competent authority shall make any necessary determination.

(3) A competent authority shall determine whether plans and programmes other than those referred to in sub-article (1), which set the framework for future development consent of projects, are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

(4) A competent authority shall, in determining on a case by-case basis under sub-article (2) or (3) whether a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, take account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1 and any submission or observation received in response to a notice under sub-article (5).

(5) Prior to making a decision under sub-article (2) or (3), a competent authority shall give notice in accordance with sub-article (6) to the following environmental authorities—

(a) the Environmental Protection Agency,

(b) where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, might have significant effects in relation to the architectural or archaeological heritage or to nature conservation, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government,

(c) where it appears to the competent authority that the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, might have significant effects on fisheries or the marine environment, the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. **Also Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine** (as per 2011 amendment).

(6) A notice under sub-article (5) shall—

(a) state that the competent authority proposes to prepare a plan or programme, or to modify a plan or programme,

(b) state that the competent authority must decide whether the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that, in so doing, it must take account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1, and

(c) indicate that a submission or observation in relation to whether the proposed plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment may be made to the authority within a specified period which shall be not less than 4

weeks from the date of the notice.

(7) As soon as practicable after making a determination under sub-article (2) or (3), the competent authority shall—

(a) make a copy of its decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection at the offices of the competent authority during office hours, and

(b) notify its decision to any environmental authority which was notified under subarticle (5).

(8) In the case of—

(a) a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, which requires an environmental assessment pursuant to sub-article (1),

(b) a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, which a competent authority has determined, under sub-article (2) or (3), would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, or

(c) a review of a master plan for the Dublin Docklands Area under section 20(1)(a) of [the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act 1997](#) ,

An environmental assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, in accordance with the requirements of these Regulations.

(9) Subject to sub-article (10), the requirement to carry out an environmental assessment under this article applies to a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, the first formal preparatory act of which occurs on or after 21 July 2004.

(10) Subject to sub-article (11), where the first formal preparatory act occurs before 21 July 2004 and the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, is unlikely to be adopted before 20 July 2006, an environmental assessment shall be carried out of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, in accordance with the requirements of these Regulations.

(11) The requirement to carry out an environmental assessment under sub-article (10) shall not apply where the competent authority decides that the carrying out of an environmental assessment would not be feasible and notice of any such decision shall be published in at least one newspaper with a sufficiently large circulation in the area covered by the plan or programme or modification to a plan or programme.

Schedule 1 – ‘EXAMPLE’ IFI Plan on - Environmental Significance Criteria (Worked Example Used) (Ref.⁴)

1) Characteristics of the Plan – [IFI Angling Stand Maintenance Schemes \(Maintenance Activities\)](#)

| Consideration | Comment |
|---|---|
| Degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities (with regards to either location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources) | The Maintenance Activities consist of site specific works repairing existing infrastructure. These Activities have no dependent projects and have no role in setting a framework for other projects. Activities are highly localised and confined to the length of the existing watercourses, do not set operating conditions for any other P/P and have very limited resources allocated just materials and workmanship for the Maintenance Activity itself. |
| Degree to which plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy | The Angling Stand Schemes were historically carried out under the Fisheries Acts and with a statutory Maintenance responsibility remaining. There is no historical hierarchy P/P for the works carried out under the Inland Fisheries Act 2010. The Maintenance Activities are site specific works and have no role in influencing other plans. |
| Relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view of promoting sustainable development | The Maintenance Activities are for repairs to the existing fisheries infrastructure. The angling benefit or any contribution to sustainable development from this infrastructure is already achieved with the Maintenance Activities function to maintain this status quo. Maintenance Activities have no new or direct contribution to promoting sustainable development. |
| Environmental problems relevant to the plan | With the Maintenance Activities consisting of site specific works repairing existing infrastructural Schemes, there is no new works, |

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| | hence limited potential for environmental problems. There are no significant natural resources applied for Maintenance Activities, limited waste management considerations, very confined carbon footprint and no on-going emission or effluent discharge. |
| Relevance of the Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment | Maintenance Activities are site specific with no true strategic aspect to bring about more widespread implementation of EU environmental legislation. Similar to any project, each individual Maintenance Activity will comply with relevant EU environmental legislation within the scope of the actual works. |

2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected

| Consideration | Comment |
|---|---|
| Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects | In accordance with the Fisheries Acts, maintenance is carried out on the basis of the requirement to maintain the sixty Maintenance Schemes in “proper repair and effective condition”. Some of the Schemes have had little or no Maintenance in the past decades with some Schemes having some minor repair works every number of years. Maintenance Activities are confined to the original Scheme and typically a few days to a few weeks work. Maintenance Activities will have little influence on the reversibility of any effects. Any effects of the Angling Stand Scheme are now historical and would have occurred with the construction of the original Schemes. |
| Cumulative nature of the effects | Ireland has over 74,000 kilometres of rivers and streams and 128,000 hectares of lakes all of which fall under the jurisdiction of IFI. The total length of riverbank and lakeshore maintained by IFI of the sixty Angling Stand Schemes is approximately 20km, spread nationally. There is no potential for a cumulative effect between the |

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| | <p>Maintenance of the Schemes. Where new Angling Structure Schemes were to adjoin existing Schemes, cumulative effects would have to be considered on a site specific basis as part of the proposals of the new Maintenance Scheme. Maintenance Activities will not alter this requirement.</p> |
| <p>Transboundary nature of the effects</p> | <p>All Angling Stand Schemes are located within the Republic Of Ireland and no Scheme is in close proximity to an international territory. Maintenance Activities have no pathway to create transboundary effects.</p> |
| <p>Risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</p> | <p>The Angling Stand Schemes are historically completed infrastructural projects and any risks to human health or the environment due to accidents or other once off incidents are in respect of a historical structure. Maintenance Activities will not change the presence of the structure and will not alter risks to human health or the environment. Similar to any project at works stage, each individual Maintenance Activity will have due regard to health and safety requirements and environmental good practice for construction type works.</p> |
| <p>Magnitude and spatial extent of effects</p> | <p>Ireland has over 74,000 kilometres of rivers and streams and 128,000 hectares of lakes all of which fall under the jurisdiction of IFI. The total length of riverbank and lakeshore maintained by the Maintenance Schemes is approximately 20km, spread nationally. On a national spatial scale, the works are extremely confined. Individual Angling Stand Schemes typically promote an adjoining watercourse as an amenity for local and visiting anglers.</p> |
| <p>Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, (b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, (c) intensive land-use,</p> | <p>Maintenance Activities consist of site specific works repairing existing infrastructural Schemes. There are no new works, hence little potential for impacts on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. With Maintenance Activities being of a very site specific</p> |

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| | <p>scale, little natural resources are required, they do not create any form of an on-going emission or effluent, and there is little potential for exceeding environmental quality standards. In terms of intensive land-use, any changes to land use would have resulted from the original Angling Stand Scheme; hence Maintenance Activities will not cause an alteration in the reliant land-use.</p> |
| <p>Effects on areas or landscapes with recognised national European Union or international protection status</p> | <p>Activities can be located within scenic river corridors and lakeshores but there is limited landscape and visual effects as the main changes are in existence with the construction of the original Angling Stand Schemes. Activities can also be in close proximity to international protection areas such as Natura Sites. The potential effect on Natura Sites are considered in more detail in Section 4 Appropriate Assessment Screening, which concludes that an Appropriate Assessment is not required as there are unlikely to be significant effects on any Natura Sites.</p> |

SEA Output 1: Screening Statement

The SEA Directive (Ref.⁸) requires that the results of the screening process, as required by Article 3(5) and including the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment are made available to the public.

It is suggested that the Screening Statement, which presents the results of the tasks described above, includes:

1. Introduction.
2. Purpose of the Plan or Programme.
3. Results of pre-screening check and results of environmental significance screening if required.
4. Proposed timetable and approach for the SEA process (if an SEA is deemed to be applicable).
5. Contact point for stakeholder comment

Stage 2 Screening Conclusion

In accordance with Stage 2 Screening, the Angling Stand Maintenance Activities are not likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore, an **SEA is not required**.

STAGE 2 - SCOPING

If SEA is ‘screened in’ and therefor required – **UNLIKELY**

Environmental Sensitivities

A preliminary list of sensitivities for each environmental component (biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, material assets, air and climatic factors, cultural heritage and landscape) is provided in Table below. Sensitivities are grouped under those which are ‘most relevant’ and those which are ‘less relevant’. Environmental sensitivities which are most relevant are, if unmitigated, most likely to have the greatest positive or potentially negative, interaction with the implementation of the PLAN. Those which are ‘less relevant’ are, if unmitigated, less likely to have the greatest positive or potentially negative, interaction with the implementation of the PLAN.

The SEA will consider interrelationships between the various environmental components and, in addition to being identified under each environmental topic in the SEA Environmental Report, interrelationships will be given a specific sub-section and an interrelationship matrix will be included (Ref.⁷)

| Environmental Component | Most Relevant Sensitivities |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Biodiversity and flora and fauna | Designated sites including Natura 2000 Sites, National Parks, Ramsar Sites, Salmonid Waters, Shellfish Waters, Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments and Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas), all relevant protected habitats and/or species including those listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive, on the Annexes of the Birds Directive, in the Wildlife Act 1976 as amended, on the Flora Protection Order, those defined in the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) and European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008 and Water Framework Directive |

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|--------------------------------|---|
| | <p>entries to the Register of Protected Areas and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological connectivity; stepping stones and ecological corridors • Non-designated biodiversity |
| Population and human health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Interaction between human health and provision of water services through environmental vectors |
| Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status and quality of rivers, lakes, transitional, coastal, ground and bathing waters • Entries to the Registers of Protected Areas |
| Air and climatic factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy usage • Emissions to air |
| Material Assets | |
| Environmental Component | Less Relevant Sensitivities |
| Soil | Hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource |
| Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage designations and contexts • Unknown archaeology |
| Landscape | <p>Landscape • Visual sensitivities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of Special Amenity |

(Ref.⁷)

Selection of Strategic Environmental Objectives, Indicators and (Ref.⁷)

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level e.g. the environmental protection objectives of various European Directives which have been transposed into Irish law and which are required to be implemented.

The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft PLAN and the alternatives are evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if – in the case of adverse effects – unmitigated (Ref.²)

The SEOs are linked to ‘indicators’ which can, where relevant, facilitate monitoring of any environmental effects of the implementing the WSSP. Also linked to the SEOs are ‘targets’ – these are relevant to the environmental legislation from which the SEOs and indicators have been developed though these are not necessarily targets of Inland Fisheries Ireland or the PLAN.

Draft SEOs, indicators and targets for the SEA are shown on Table 4.2. These have been adapted from the current River Basin Management Plans in Ireland/Northern Ireland. The further development and final selection of SEOs, indicators and targets throughout the SEA process should:

- Ensure that indicators and targets are consistent with those used by the SEA and AA for the River Basin Management Plans (taking into account any emerging changes to these on foot of the upcoming reviews of River Basin Management Plans) ;
- Ensure that indicators and targets are consistent with emerging European advice on indicators for River Basin Management Plans (Irish Water expect to be in contact with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in order to learn of such emerging advice);
- Focus on the Key Scoping Issues and
- Seek to utilise existing environmental monitoring sources by selecting indicators which are already monitored

Selection of Draft Strategic Environmental Objectives adapted from those used in the SEA of River Basin Management Plans in Ireland (Ref.⁷)

| Environmental Component | Draft Strategic Environmental Objectives | Draft Targets | Draft Indicators | Draft Data Source |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Biodiversity and flora and fauna | Prevent damage to terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species | Halt spread of Alien Species and their associated impact to the aquatic environment. Halt deterioration of habitats or their associated species due to water quality related issues, in line with the Water Framework Directive. | Interim Indicators: Geographical spread of Alien Species. (NI and Ire) Number of Margaritifera Plans put in place. (Ire) Status of Northern Ireland Priority Species as reported in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (every 3 years). (NI) Status of Northern Ireland Priority Habitats listed under the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy (every 3 years). (NI) Long term Indicators: The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (reports due every 6 years, first report in 2007). (Ire) Report by the UK under Article 17 on the | (NPWS/NIEA) NPWS NIEA NIEA NPWS JNCC Not currently compiled NIEA |

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|-----------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| | | | <p>implementation of the Habitats Directive (reports due every 6 years, second report in 2007). (NI) Condition of Selection Features in sites designated for nature conservation (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar and NHAs). (Ire) Condition of Selection Features in sites designated for nature conservation (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar, ASSIs) (reports every six years). (NI)</p> | |
| Population and human health | Protect and reduce risk to human health in undertaking water management activities | | | |
| Water | Prevent deterioration of the status of water bodies with regard to quality and quantity and improve water body status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters and groundwater's to at least good status, as | <p>No deterioration in status of waters currently with high or good status (WFD Objective).</p> <p>Restoration to good status of waters currently at moderate, poor or bad status (WFD Objective).</p> | <p>Interim Indicators: Interim Water status in 2011 report. (Ire) Environmental Quality Statistics relating to water quality published in the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report (to be published</p> | <p>EPA NISRA NIEA / EPA</p> |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|-----|
| | appropriate to the WFD. | Progressively reduce chemical pollution in waters (WFD). Limit pollution inputs to groundwater's and prevent deterioration (WFD Objective). | annually). (NI) Long Term Indicator: Water status in 2015 (and subsequent years) report. (NI and Ire) | |
| | Minimise increases in flood risk | No increase in the amount of infrastructure at risk from flooding as a result of IFI activities | Percentage of new developments accompanied by Flood Risk Assessments to the appropriate level of detail | IFI |
| Air and climatic factors | Minimise to contribution to climate change and emissions to air (including greenhouse gas emissions) as a result of IFI activities. | | | |
| Material Assets | Provide new, and upgrade existing, fisheries infrastructure to promote fisheries and to protect ecological status of water bodies. | IFI investment expenditure per annum. | | IFI |
| | Achieve sustainable use of fisheries in the context of maximising its economic | Change in economic value | | |

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|-------------------|---|--|---|---|
| | benefit. | | | |
| Soil | Avoid conflicts with, and contribute towards, where possible, the appropriate management of soils | | | |
| Cultural Heritage | Avoid damage to cultural heritage resources | No unauthorised physical damage or alteration of the context of cultural heritage features due to IFI activities. (NI and Ire) | Changes in the condition of monuments on the RMP (Ireland) and SMR (Northern Ireland) due to unauthorised IFI activities. Number of listed structures at risk due to WSSP implementation. (NI and Ire) | Condition & Management Survey of Archaeological Resource NI Archaeological Survey monitoring programme Built Heritage at Risk NI Register. Buildings at Risk Register, Heritage Council Ireland. |
| Landscape | Avoid damage to designated landscapes. | No damage to designated landscapes as a result of WSSP Implementation. (NI and Ire) | Number of IFI structures sited in landscapes with a high sensitivity to change. | IFI |

Legislation and Guidelines issues with regard to SEA and AA scoping (Ref.⁷):

The SEA (and AA) will ensure compliance with the following legislation:

- The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directives (79/409/EEC);
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004);
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011);
- The Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2011; and
- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

In addition to complying with the legislation, the processes should be undertaken taking into account the following guidance and associated documents:

- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2004;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009;
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological
- guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European
- Commission Environment DG, 2000;
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC: European Commission, 2000;
- Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental
- Assessment, European Commission, 2013;
- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment – Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes:
- Practitioner’s Manual, Environment Protection Agency, 201313;
- EPA GISEA Manual: Current Practice and Potential on the Application of Geographical Information
- Systems as a Support Tool in Strategic Environmental Assessment of Irish Land Use Plans,(Ref.⁷)
- Environment Protection Agency, 200914;

- Emerging Guidance on Alternatives, Environment Protection Agency, ongoing¹⁵; and
- Relevant European Court of Justice Judgements.

SEA Output 2: Scoping Report

This is not a formal requirement of the SEA Directive but is recommended as good practice. The Scoping Report should be issued early in the P/P process, for example together with the first P/P consultation document. The purpose of the Scoping Report is to inform stakeholders about the key environmental issues, the key elements of the P/P and alternatives within the P/P. It also aims to generate comment from stakeholders on the scope and approach to the SEA and on the P/P and, to this end; it should be made freely available alongside any parallel documents such as Issues Papers or Discussion Papers that describe the P/P.

A possible list of information that should be included in a Scoping Report is presented below. Note that the Report should be clear and concise and should concentrate on the key issues to cater for a broad readership. More complex details and data should be saved for publication in the SEA Report. Authors of the Scoping Report will have to adapt the structure and content of the Report to reflect the nature of the P/P and the readership.

1. Introduction (includes brief introduction to the P/P and the P/P preparation process, the purpose of the Scoping Report).
2. Proposed SEA methodology (includes a time frame and list of consultees).
3. Maps of area to be covered.
4. Key purpose of the P/P (or cross-reference to Issues Paper).
5. Preliminary list of alternatives within the P/P.
6. Key environmental baseline issues.
7. Environmental objectives, indicators and targets.
8. Interaction with other P/Ps.
9. Environmental constraints.
10. Conclusions on proposed scope of the SEA.
11. Sources of data.
12. Contact point for comments

SEA Output 3: SEA Report

This is the main output of the SEA process and will be the document that most stakeholders will review. The SEA Directive requires that specific information be provided in the “environmental report”.

The information required to be contained in the SEA Report is identified in Annex I of the SEA Directive. Note that this information is subject to conditions in Article 5 (2) of the Directive, which states that information compiled in the SEA Report should take into account:

- The current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail in the plan or programme;
- The stage in the decision-making process where the SEA has taken place; and
- The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment (i.e. some matters are better dealt with during a project EIA).

A possible format for this information is suggested below. Those aspects that are required under the SEA Directive are marked with an asterisk:

1. Non-technical summary (may be provided separately)*
2. Introduction
3. SEA Methodology (including timescale, authors, methods used, technical limitations).
4. List of Consultees and Stakeholders
5. Summary of the elements of the P/P measures and any alternatives*
6. Outcomes that may result from the P/P
7. Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes*
8. Description of the baseline environment including the evolution of the environment under the “do-nothing” or “do-minimum” scenarios*
9. Environmental objectives, indicators and targets*
10. Prediction and evaluation of impacts of the P/P (including alternatives)*
11. Incorporation of mitigation measures and assessment results into the P/P*
12. Proposals for monitoring of implementation of the plan*
13. Summary of findings and recommendations (including linking the SEA to other P/Ps and EIAs)
14. Contact point for receiving comments on the SEA Report

The qualities of a good SEA Report will, therefore, include:

- Clear descriptions of the P/P, its outcomes and impacts, avoiding unnecessary use of jargon;
- A logical, coherent structure;
- Effective use of graphics – maps, diagrams, etc. – summary presentation formats such as tables, matrices;
- Consistent style in terms of editorial approach and level of detail.

However, SEA practitioners are encouraged to create a format that not only contains this information but also conveys it in a useful manner to its audience, decision-makers and environmental authorities, and the public in an effective manner. Practitioners should understand the importance of adopting a consistent “house style” for their SEA Report and should avoid turning the report into a public relations document. Using independent consultants to undertake the SEA and prepare the report can help to solve problems of bias. However, impartial reporting is only made possible by clarity, explanation, thoroughness, careful use of language and a commitment to fair reporting. Experience in other SEA systems has shown that the optimum SEA team is composed primarily of in-house staff supported by external expertise.

There are many techniques ranging from those employing graphic-intensive maps and matrices to text-based reports, each of which can be effective in different situations. The best reports tend to use a mixture of both graphical and text-based modes of information so that they communicate effectively with a diverse audience

Output 4: SEA Statement

The Directive requires certain information to be made available after the decision-making stage has been completed.

This information may be compiled into an SEA Statement that can be included in the adopted P/P. The statement, which does not have to be lengthy or complex in content, needs to include the following:

- 1. Summary of how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme**
This should include a flow-chart showing the stages of the SEA process and a commentary stating how the process was linked to the various stages of P/P preparation.
- 2. Summary of how the SEA Report and the submissions received from stakeholders have been taken into account**
This should summarise the key issues raised in the SEA Report and submissions, and state the reasons why the P/P has been developed or modified to reduce its environmental impact.
- 3. Reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered**
The statement should identify the other alternatives considered, comment on their potential impacts and explain why the P/P was selected, including any environmental reasons. Reference to the do-nothing scenario should be made.
- 4. Measures decided concerning monitoring**
A proposed monitoring programme should be described, specifying frequency of monitoring, reporting and responsibilities. This will reflect the decisions made in Stage 3, but there may have been revisions made as a result of new information since the publication of the SEA Report.

(Ref.⁹)

References

1. Development of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Methodologies for Plans and Programmes in Ireland – EPA (2003)
2. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 – DLRCOCO, (2010)
3. National Broadband Scheme SEA Screening Report. Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (2008)
4. Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement – Maintenance Activities of Coastal Protection Schemes – OPW (2012)
5. Pre-Screening Statement and Determination - Strategic Environmental Assessment and Ireland's National Implementation Plan on Persistent Organic Pollutants – EPA (2012)
6. Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report for the Wild Atlantic Way Signature Tourism Experience – Fáilte Ireland (2014)
7. Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report for the Draft Water Services Strategic Plan – Irish Water (2015) available at <http://www.water.ie/docs/SEA-Scoping-Report.pdf>
8. SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC) European Communities (Environmental Assessment of certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations, (2004)
9. P. Scott & P. Marsden, 2003. Development of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Methodologies for Plans and Programmes in Ireland. Synthesis Report Published by the EPA.

