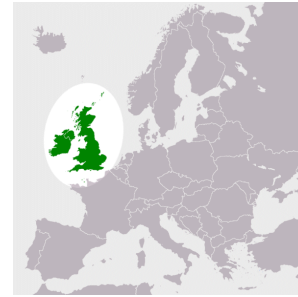


Branch of the

IAIA
International Association
for Impact Assessment



IMPACT ASSESSMENT UPDATE IRELAND-UK BRANCH OF IAIA:

**December 2010 / January 2011
Newsletter**

<http://www.iaia.org/affiliatesbranches/irelanduk-branch.aspx>

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

- 'Dear Members'
- IAIA Events
- IAIA Newsletters

2. BRANCH NEWS

- Chair and Election News
- IAIA Connect – a message from Fargo, USA
- Strong Ireland-UK presence at IAIA's Climate Change & IA Symposium in Aalborg
- Recent publications

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT NEWS

1. European Commission holds 25th Anniversary Conference on EIA Directive
2. Call for Papers: Spatial data and GIS
3. Call for papers: 25 years of EIA in the EU
4. HIA Gateway under threat
5. New Mental Well-being Impact Assessment Toolkit
6. EIA in the UK: survey of experiences and outlook
7. GIS-Supported Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Methodology
8. Scottish SEA Review
9. Consultation begins on new planning framework for England
10. EIA Regulations to be revised in England
11. EIA case law update
12. Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines to be revised

13. Northern Ireland guidance for wind energy developments
14. Scottish Natural Heritage's Habitats Regulations Assessment guidance
15. Guidance on assessing impacts of wind energy projects and plans on Natura 2000 sites
16. Offsetting the impacts of development on biodiversity
17. Ecosystem Services in EIA
18. Mainstreaming the economics of nature
19. IEMA's final Principles on Climate Change Adaptation and EIA
20. Environmental Impacts of Climate Change Adaptation in Scotland
21. Carbon Assessment of Scotland's 2011-12 Draft Budget
22. Recommended good practice SEA/SA and HRA reports
23. Europe drops EIA case against Ireland
24. SEA of Scotland's draft Land Use Strategy
25. SEA for English and Welsh marine energy
26. SEA and HRA of revised draft National Policy Statements for energy
27. SEA and HRA of Draft Waste Water National Policy Statement
28. Rapid environmental impact assessment research report and toolkit
29. IEMA Conference focuses on environmental assessment
30. Retail Impacts: Large Foodstores and Town Centres

4. OTHER EVENTS

- East of England Conference: Environmental Assessment: Updates in Theory and Practice
- Certificate Programme in Public Participation - International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)
- Advance Notice: Impact Assessments for Health and Equality
- IEMA Environmental Assessment Training
- Health Impact Assessment courses
- IEEM Workshops
- Oxford Brookes University CPD
- RTPI Masterclasses

Why Not Join the IAIA

The Ireland-UK Branch of IAIA.



1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Members,

Welcome to the IAIA Ireland-UK Branch Newsletter 'Impact Assessment Matters' for Winter 2010/11. This brings together recent news of legislation, guidance, consultations and events relating to impact assessment.

Since the July 2010 newsletter, emails have been sent to members on:

- Integrating Climate Change with EIA, SEA and Ecosystems Management (July 2010)
- Survey on ecosystem services and environmental assessment (July 2010)
- Incorporating enhancement of positive impacts into environmental assessment practice (August 2010)
- Survey results on ecosystem services and environmental assessment (October 2010)
- Symposium on Impact Assessment and Climate Change (October 2010)
- Branch Chair and election news (November 2010)
- Public Participation Training (August, September, and December 2010)
- Recommended SEA/SA and HRA Reports (January 2011)
- EIA in the UK: survey of experiences and outlook (January 2011)

For the next Branch newsletter, please email any contributions to ie_uk@iaia.org, with 'IAIA Branch news' in the subject line.

You can also always circulate any more urgent items to all IAIA Branch members on the listserv by sending an email to ie_ukbranch@iaia.org.

IAIA Events:

IAIA European Special Symposium: Climate Change and Impact Assessment: Aalborg, Denmark, October 2010

Presentations from the European Special Symposium on Climate Change and Impact Assessment are now available at:

<http://www.iaia.org/iaia-climate-symposium-denmark/proceedings.aspx>

See also below in **Branch News**, an account of the Ireland-UK's significant contributions.

IAIA Special Symposium: Climate Change and Impact Assessment: Washington D.C., USA, November 2010

Presentations from the IAIA special symposium are now available at:

<http://www.iaia.org/iaia-climate-symposium-dc/program.aspx>

IAIA Newsletters

The latest IAIA newsletter is available for members to login and download at www.iaia.org > login > Member Pages - Publications > Newsletters.



2. BRANCH NEWS

Chair and Election News

As notified to Branch members in November 2010, the Chair of the IAIA Ireland-UK Branch, Josh Fothergill, resigned from this responsibility in October to enjoy his new parental responsibilities. Congratulations to Josh and a big thank you, on behalf of all the members, for your invaluable contribution as Chair.

John Fry and Adam Boyden have therefore taken on the role of joint caretaker Chairperson of the Branch for a temporary period.

As the current committee has been in place for almost the full two-year term, we are now moving towards an election for a new committee in the next few weeks. A new Chair will then be elected from the new branch organising committee. Further details on the committee nomination process will be circulated shortly in 2011.

IAIA Connect – a message from Fargo, USA

In October 2010, IAIA launched its new online professional networking and collaboration site, **IAIAConnect**. Among other things, it will replace the existing Section and Branch listservs, including the Ireland-UK Branch listserv. If you haven't already logged in to **IAIAConnect**, we encourage you to do so and check out the group site for our Branch. You can link directly to it at <http://iaiaconnect.iaia.org/group/irelandukbranch>. (Note you will still need to log on using your IAIA username/email and password.)

IAIAConnect is an improvement on the previous listserv functionality, as it will allow you to do much more than just post messages and announcements. In addition, you can:

- view archived messages;
- see messages by discussion topic;
- add events to the Branch's calendar;
- upload working documents and public resources (two issues of the Branch newsletter (2009/10) are already posted);
- view all Branch group members;
- find Branch members and send individual messages directly within **IAIAConnect**.

All IAIA members in the database in October with Ireland or UK addresses were automatically added to the Branch's **IAIAConnect** group during the initial upload. Any new Branch members after that will simply need to log into **IAIAConnect** and "join" our Branch group.

If you would like more information about **IAIA Connect** in general, see <http://www.iaia.org/iaia-connect.aspx>, which contains some additional information, including FAQs and a quick reference link. Additionally, you can contact Shelli (info@iaia.org) or Bridget (bridget@iaia.org) with inquiries as well. We hope you will find the site intuitive and easy to use, and we anticipate that the more it is used, the greater the benefit to our Branch members.

Strong Ireland-UK presence at IAIA's Climate Change & IA Symposium in Aalborg

"On the 25th & 26th October 2010 a 2-day IAIA symposium on Climate Change and Impact Assessment was held in Aalborg, Denmark. Attendance at the symposium was lower than anticipated, but the 150 or so delegates made effective use of the time available to discuss many different aspects of how Impact Assessment (IA) is being used in both raising awareness of the consequences of climate change and in helping secure a lower carbon economy. Ireland & the UK had a strong input to the proceedings with involvement (in the organisation or as presenters) in over 50% of the parallel sessions.

However, the symposium recognised that IA needs to achieve more if it is to remain relevant and help move forward this area of practice. This issue was recognised in the opening key note speaker (Dr Ross Marshall, Manager of NEAS in the Environment Agency). Ross highlighted that IA has 3 key attributes that make it well placed to help lead developments in the consideration of climate change in both plan and project decision-making; these are IA's ability to challenge, convince and communicate during preparation and decision-making. Another key message was that IA needs to be more effective at bridging the 'knowledge gap' between the latest verified science on climate change and real world decision-making that practitioners are participating in.

The symposium continued with a video message from Lord Stern on his views of IA as a tool in the managing emissions and responding to the consequences of climate change (Lord Stern's video message will shortly be available online at www.iema.net/eia-cc). The conference then broke off into a number of workshops looking at more specific themes covering how climate change can or is fitting into more specific aspects of, including:

- Social Impact Assessment,
- Waste Management Strategies & Plans,
- Development Cooperation,
- Infrastructure,
- Carbon Calculators,
- Health Impact Assessment,
- Water,
- Landscape & Ecosystems,
- Decision Making & Governance,
- Scenarios,
- Urban Planning & Regional Strategies, and
- Embedding Climate Change into professional IA practice.

The Ireland & UK Branch had good representation in organising the above themes and good feedback was received from discussions generated by the sessions. I focussed on infrastructure and Embedding CC in professional practice and found the sessions informative with good examples. Particular highlights being: the 4 examples of how IA is currently considering climate from SEA in Scottish Government policy to project specific tools from Portugal; and the European Commission's workshop allowing delegates to provide their views on what should be included in the Commission's planned Climate Change & Biodiversity guidance for EIA and SEA, which is due out around October 2011.

The other conference keynotes brought further thought from a range of sources. This included Eric Barlow on the need for IA to reach to the other side of complexity to reach a more simple message when undertaking and communicating IA findings. The key message being that IA is involved in the complex interface of environment and society, but if we communicate in a complicated manner we will fail to achieve our potential to influence decisions; as such we must all learn to find the simplicity in message or relationship that IA identifies and communicate these nuggets of information from the

complexity within our assessments. Another keynote covered the need to understand our context a bit more in the sense of the broad and often uneasy relationship that exists between science and policy; this provided intellectual food for thought on how IA can best act within this bilateral relationship. Finally, Andre Jol of the European Environment Agency discussed European vulnerabilities to climate change and what action is being taken to start the adaptation process.

The symposium proceedings are available on the IAIA website at:
<http://www.iaia.org/iaia-climate-symposium-denmark/proceedings.aspx>

Josh Fothergill, Senior Adviser – Environmental Assessment, IEMA

Recent publications

The following recent publications have been authored or led by IAIA Ireland-UK Branch members, or are otherwise likely to be of particular interest to Branch members:

- Bond, A.J., A. Morrison-Saunders, 2011. **Re-evaluating Sustainability Assessment: Aligning the vision and the practice.** [EIA Review, Volume 31](#), January, pp. 1-7.
- Cand, M., 2010. **Environmental noise assessments.** The Environmentalist, issue 109, December, pp20-22. IEMA, Lincoln.
- Cashmore, M. Richardson, T., Hilding-Ryedvik, T., and L. Emmelin, 2010. **Evaluating the effectiveness of impact assessment instruments: Theorising the nature and implications of their political constitution.** [EIA Review, Volume 30](#), November, pp. 371-379.
- Cooper, L.M., 2010. **Network analysis in CEA, ecosystem services assessment and green space planning.** [Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal](#), Volume 28, Number 4, December 2010, pp. 269-278.
- Glasson, J., and P. Cozens, 2011. **Making communities safer from crime: An undervalued element in impact assessment.** [EIA Review, Volume 31](#), January, pp. 25-35.
- Stookes, P. 2010. **EIA – A Precautionary Tale.** The Environmentalist, issue 109, December, pp16-17. IEMA, Lincoln.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT NEWS

European Commission holds 25th Anniversary Conference on EIA Directive

"On the 18-19th November 2010 the European Commission, supported by the Belgian Presidency, held a conference looking at the Successes, Failures & Prospects for the EIA Directive, in Leuven, Belgium. The conference also acted as the final input into the EC's initial consultation on the future of the EIA Directive, which had included an online questionnaire run over summer 2010.

The conference opened with a video message from Commissioner Potocnik (European Commissioner for the Environment) highlighting the 3 principles that DG Environment will use to draft the revised EIA Directive, these are:

- i) The current level of environmental protection offered by the EIA Directive will not be reduced;
- ii) The current EIA Directive's major weakness is that it is too procedural and needs to also have a focus on quality;

- iii) There is a need for harmonisation and streamlining both between member states and with similar assessments – with a specific focus on clarifying the EIA screening procedure.

The conference moved on to an expert panel of presentations with representatives from the European Court of Justice, the Environment Minister for the Flemish Region of Belgium and the IAIA's own Julio Jesus. These presentations, as with all those from the conference, are available online at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/conference.htm>

Following the expert panel there was a healthy discussion about the future direction the EIA Directive could take and some discussion of how in a perfect world a single decision-making process and single environmental permit system would be ideal. Discussion did appear to recognise that this 'ideal' was somewhat beyond the scope of the conference; however, a more relevant message from this was that a revised EIA Directive should give effective consideration as to how EIA, Habitats Directive Assessment, Water Framework Directive Assessment, etc., can be more effectively integrated to streamline the environmental assessment processes required on a project.

The second day split the conference's ~200 delegates, invited by the Commission from across all the member states, into 3 groups to hold further discussions on:

- 1) The scope of the EIA Directive,
- 2) The Quality of the EIA process, and
- 3) Links between EIA and international conventions

Attending the 2nd workshop session I can report that there was interesting debate on a number of subjects, from how individual member states have set up systems to maintain quality in their own EIA processes, to how ineffective translation can cause EIA quality issues between member states. All delegates then reconvened to feed back on the sessions and conclude the conference. A summary of the feedback is set out below:

Workshop 1 – Scope of EIA Directive

- There is a need to recognise the environment is not static and that flexibility can be a key way of ensuring effective and efficient EIA. This may not be reflected sufficiently in the current EIA Directive.
- Screening needs more harmonisation between member states and more centralised guidance on thresholds and criteria.
- There are clear risks of, and examples of, the multiplicity of European environmental assessment (let alone additions within member states) that either duplicate work, or as a minimum duplicate reporting; greater co-ordination is needed.

Workshop 2 – Quality of EIA process

- Definition and agreement on key issues that each EIA will address is crucial: re-examine the Directive's approach to scoping?
- The quality of environmental information in EIA needs to ensure links between revised EIA Directive and the INSPIRE Directive.
- A need to re-examine the Directive's approach to alternatives and the relationship between EIA and SEA in this area, to ensure alternatives are appropriately examined without duplication.

Workshop 3 – Links between EIA and International Conventions

- Need to improve transboundary notifications / consultations particularly on boundaries between member states and non-member states.
- In a transboundary context, a single ES for the whole project may be preferable to an ES for the part of the development in each member state.
- Need to take account of ECJ case law in the revision of the EIA Directive.

The conference closed with a timetable for the next steps on the EIA Directive's revision process. This indicated that through 2011, DG Environment will undertake an Impact Assessment looking at different options for revising the Directive. This is likely to lead to a formal proposal for a revised EIA Directive in mid-2012. Such a proposal would then go through the usual discussions with the European Parliament and Member States and as such a revised EIA Directive is unlikely to be in place before mid-2014, after which it would need to be implemented with member states.

Whilst the conference was useful and highlighted that the Commission is truly interested in improving EIA both in terms of its efficiency and its effectiveness, it is clear that in the short term of the next 5 years, member states, practitioners and the courts will play the lead role in advancing EIA practice, whilst the wheels of the European legislative process revise the EIA Directive."

Josh Fothergill, Senior Adviser – Environmental Assessment, IEMA

Call for Papers: Spatial data and GIS

Papers are also sought for a special issue of the JEAPM focusing on spatial data and geographic information systems (GIS) as support tools for environmental assessment. For more information, see: <http://www.worldscinet.com/jeapm/mkt/callforpapers.shtml>. Please contact agonzal@tcd.ie by **21 January 2011** with intention to submit a paper, specifying author(s), affiliation, email, draft title and two hundred word summary of the paper. Full papers are due 31 March 2011.

Call for papers: 25 years of EIA in the EU

The Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management (JEAPM) has issued a call for papers for a Special Issue on 25 years of EIA in the European Union, focusing on national experiences with EIA. The journal is particularly interested in papers "in which shifts in governance through EIA are analysed and evaluated. The main criterion in the evaluation is the extent to which EIA has contributed to the original objective of EIA, namely to contribute, by means of a better environment, to the quality of life, to ensure maintenance of the diversity of species and to maintain the reproductive capacity of the ecosystem as a basic resource for life. A comparison in time and in place will allow us to get more insight into what works in EIA and what not, and why."

Please send your intention to submit a paper by **18 April 2011** - see http://www.worldscinet.com/jeapm/mkt/callforpapers_details.shtml#eia_eu

HIA Gateway under threat

It is understood that funding to update and maintain the HIA Gateway website, by the Department of Health, is proposed to end in March 2011. I will post details once I know more and would ask fellow impact assessors to support our cause as best they can, given these challenging times.

Debra Fox, Dept of Civic Design, University of Liverpool

Reports of completed Health Impact Assessments can currently be found at the HIA Gateway. See: www.hiagateway.org.uk

See also <http://www.publichealth.ie/news> for HIA news from Ireland.

New Mental Well-being Impact Assessment Toolkit

A new Mental Well-being Impact Assessment (MWIA) toolkit has been published by the National Mental Health Development Unit (NMH DU) in partnership with the National MWIA Collaborative. This version builds on the earlier MWIA Toolkit published in 2007. Improving population mental health and well-being is a key theme in the recent Public Health White Paper and is expected to be a major strand of the UK Government's forthcoming Mental Health Strategy. The online toolkit will help to deliver this by supporting national, regional and local services and systems across health, local government, the voluntary, community and private sector to embed mental well-being into their work. NMH DU have also funded a national programme of development and promotion of MWIA across the regions of England. The Toolkit provides a practical and flexible downloadable resource that can be adapted to local requirements.

The main new additions are:

- a strengthened evidence base with a specific focus on what protects and promotes mental health and well-being – a salutogenesis or 'health assets' approach;
- a greater emphasis on wider determinants of mental well-being such as socio-economic position, environment, transport, education, food, and the understanding of resilience, core economy, social justice and equity;
- a revised MWIA framework and criteria to use which reflects the strengthened evidence base and understanding;
- a revised section on measuring mental well-being with practical explanations of how to identify suitable indicators for your proposal;
- an improved set of resources including an extensive mental well-being Bibliography.

For access to the MWIA Toolkit and further information on MWIA please look at the MWIA section on www.hiagateway.org.uk

The National Mental Health Development Unit has also launched a Mental Well-being Checklist which is based on the MWIA framework. This is a brief, simple and easy to use guide that helps the reader become more familiar with the major influences on mental well-being and provides a quick reference source to help with planning, policy development, as part of local commissioning, development, review, delivery or evaluation.

<http://www.nmhd.org.uk/news/mental-wellbeing-checklist-available-to-download>

If you have questions on MWIA please do not hesitate to contact Anthea Cooke at anthea.cooke@inukshukconsultancy.com

Debra Fox, Dept of Civic Design, University of Liverpool

EIA in the UK: survey of experiences and outlook

The University of Liverpool in cooperation with Utrecht University and the University of Groningen in the Netherlands is conducting a survey on experiences with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the UK and the Netherlands. The survey is conducted in the context of the 25 years existence of the European EIA Directive. The purpose of the survey is to reflect on the experiences of professionals with EIA in the past 25 years (mainly the last 5 years) and also to look ahead to the future role of EIA. In addition, the extent to which health issues have been accommodated within EIA will also be explored.

The survey on experiences in the UK will be live for a period of 8 weeks during February-March 2011. If you have any questions or comments about this research, more information is available from Urmila Jha-Thakur (Urmila.thakur@liv.ac.uk).

Urmila Jha-Thakur and Thomas Fische, University of Liverpool

GIS-Supported Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Methodology

John Fry and Ainhoa González del Campo have announced that they will be working in the next 12 months to prepare a GIS-supported Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Methodology. This will aim to meet Ireland's current and future needs for Appropriate Assessment and other legislative obligations and better integrate biodiversity considerations into EIA and SEA. The project is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency under the STRIVE programme and is a University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin and Scott Cawley Ltd joint initiative. John and Ainhoa will post updates in future Newsletters.

Scottish SEA Review

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is conducting a review of SEA in Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Consultation Authorities and the Scottish Government. Launched at National SEA Forum in June 2010, the Scottish SEA Review will assess the effectiveness of SEA in influencing environmental outcomes in Scottish plan and policy preparation and seek to identify meaningful opportunities to improve the process. The project is being undertaken by SEPA and is overseen by a project Steering Group comprising of the Consultation Authorities, the Scottish Government, a range of Responsible Authorities and academia. Evidence gathering took place through the autumn and the review aims to report draft findings in Spring 2011 for further discussions with stakeholders. It is intended to complete the review in Summer 2011. See:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/environment/sustainabledevelopment/14587/review>

Details of the November 2010 meeting of the National SEA Forum (see also *July 2009 Branch newsletter*) can be found here:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/SustainableDevelopment/14587/Forum>

Consultation begins on new planning framework for England

The UK Government's Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) is proposing a radical overhaul of planning policy that will aim to consolidate existing policy statements (PPSs, PPGs, MPGs etc.), circulars and guidance documents into a single National Policy Framework for England. The Government states that in recent years the planning system has become overloaded with central guidance and statements (some 40 or so documents), creating too much paperwork for councils, developers and local communities to use effectively. The proposed single framework will integrate the current suite of Government planning policy statements and guidance into a single concise document, and will "focus on the Government's key priorities for planning and help deliver a more effective, decentralised system." The framework will also seek to become more user-friendly and accessible so that it will become easier for members of the public to have a meaningful say in planning decisions.

Planning professionals, local authorities, community groups and members of the public will have an opportunity to shape the new framework. At the end of December 2010, Decentralisation Minister Greg Clark invited organisations and individuals to offer their views to the Department by **28 February 2011** on what priorities and policies the Government might adopt to produce the national planning policy framework.

See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/planningandbuilding/1804407> and <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>

EIA Regulations to be revised in England

In August 2010 the UK Government's Department for Communities and Local Government issued a consultation paper on their proposed consolidation of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations, as amended, as they apply to England. The proposed amendments are:

- Proposals to change or extend existing development: It is proposed that the exclusive thresholds for 'screening' projects of a type listed in the Directive that may require EIA shall apply to the development as a whole once modified, and not just to the change or extension. This arises from the 'Baker' court case (see Branch News December 2009).
- Reasons for negative screening decisions: it is proposed that where the Secretary of State or local planning authority issue a screening direction or opinion that EIA is not required, they shall make available their reasons for that conclusion, as they already do when EIA is required. This arises from the 'Mellor' court case (see Branch News December 2009).
- Multi-stage consents: it is proposed to remove the current requirement for public consultation on the Environmental Statement at each stage of a multi-stage consent application (e.g. applications for outline planning consent and the subsequent application for approval of reserved matters), as this goes beyond the requirement of the Directive and was inadvertently introduced in 2008.
- A small number of other changes are proposed, including a proposed amendment to the threshold and criteria for wind farms, the inclusion of projects for the geological storage of carbon dioxide (as required by Directive 2009/31/EC), the addition of the Marine Management Organisation as a statutory consultee and the removal of the criminal offence provision where an applicant is required to publicise an ES.

The consultation ended in October but the documents are still available here:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/eiaregs2010consult>

EIA case law update

A number of court cases in the latter half of 2010 have continued to involve the application of EIA procedures by local authorities and developers and have key issues for others:

- **Screening decisions need to be reconsidered if local circumstances change:** In *Mageean v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and others* [2010] WLR (D) 209, a planning permission (given in 2009 for a wind turbine, sub-station and associated works at High Down, Liskeard, Cornwall), was quashed in court. This is because the Court found that a previous EIA screening decision should have been reconsidered after nearby land was designated to be of environmental importance (a World Heritage Sites nearby), and the change of circumstance, which could affect the decision not to require EIA, could have led to a different screening decision. The validity of a Screening Direction made by the Secretary of State under the EIA Regulations was also found to not be limited to two years. See http://www.lawreports.co.uk/WLRD/2010/QBD/Mageean_v_SSCLG.html for details.
- **Screening decisions need to be based on information which is both sufficient and accurate:** In *Friends of Basildon Golf Course, R (on the application of) v Basildon District Council* [2010] EWCA Civ 1432, heard in December 2010, the Court of Appeal quashed planning permission for the remodelling of a golf course in Basildon by the importation of hundreds of thousands of tonnes of waste material. The court held that the Council's EIA screening opinion that EIA would not be required was wrong in substance as it resulted from an incorrect consideration of the quantities of waste to be imported, and an inadequate assessment of the potential impacts of the deposit of waste material. The court also held that the Council had failed to consider properly the potential for impact upon European and other

protected species, as it was inadequate for the Screening decision to conclude that EIA was not required, and then refer to the fact that detailed ecological surveys and proposed mitigation strategies would be provided by the developer at a later stage. See <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2010/1432.html> and <http://www.ftb.eu.com/news/2009-archive.asp>

- **Screening decisions need to be comprehensive:** In *R (Birch) v Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council* [2010] EWHC 416 (Admin), the High Court quashed planning permission for a waste composting site, due to a failure of the local planning authority to properly consider whether all parts of the project were subject to the EIA regulations. The court found that the council had failed to give any real consideration to whether the spreading of the composted waste on fields next to the waste composting site amounted to the disposal of waste (which is covered within Schedule 2 of the EIA regulations) and was part of the overall project. See: <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2010/416.html> and <http://www.richardbuxton.co.uk/v3.0/view/alltranscripts> (An article by Dr Paul Stookes (Richard Buxton Environmental & Public Law) on this case appeared in IEMA's The Environmentalist journal, issue 109, December 2010: see www.iema.net).

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines to be revised

Work is now underway on a revised edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), published jointly by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). The 'blue book' has become the established guidance on good practice in carrying out landscape and visual impact assessment of developments. The second edition was published in 2002 and is now due for revision in order to reflect current landscape thinking and practice as well as changes in the policy context and statutory framework. The third edition, to be written by Professor Carys Swanwick, is due for publication in 2012. The LI and IEMA recently held a consultation on the first stages of the development of the 3rd edition: see <http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/GLVIA.php>.

Northern Ireland guidance for wind energy developments

The Planning Service in Northern Ireland has launched new supplementary planning guidance 'Wind Energy Developments in Northern Ireland's Landscapes'. The guidance includes landscape character assessments for the whole of the country and is likely to prove valuable as a baseline information source for landscape and visual impact assessments of EIA developments in Northern Ireland. See: http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/supplementary_guidance/spg_other/supplementary_guidance_wind_energy_development_in_ni_landscapes-2.htm

Scottish Natural Heritage's Habitats Regulations Assessment guidance

In August 2010, Scottish Natural Heritage held an event to launch its new guidance on Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) of Plans, including development plans, for all plan-making bodies in Scotland. This replaces the Scottish Government's interim guidance for local authorities on the need for appropriate assessment of development plans. See: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/environmental-assessment/habitat-regulations-appraisal/>

Guidance on assessing impacts of wind energy projects and plans on Natura 2000 sites

In October 2010, the European Commission launched new guidance on assessing wind energy developments' impacts on Natura 2000 sites (including Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas). The guidance states: "The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how best to ensure that wind energy developments are compatible with the provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives. It focusses in particular on the procedures to follow under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive when dealing with wind farm related plans and projects which could affect a Natura 2000 site and provides clarifications on certain key aspects of this approval process." See:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/Wind_farms.pdf

Offsetting the impacts of development on biodiversity

The UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) are currently assessing the scope for action to offset the impact of development on biodiversity. This will feed in to the new Natural Environment White Paper, due to be launched in Spring 2011, which will be prepared alongside the Government's proposal for a consolidated national planning framework (see above). DEFRA is requesting comments on their current work by the **end of January 2011**. A key statement is that "greater use of offsetting should not weaken existing levels of protection for our biodiversity; it would not make it easier to build on our most valuable conservation sites". Sir John Lawton's review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network ('Making Space for Nature') also set out some principles for offsetting, which are included for comment. See:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/offsetting/index.htm>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/index.htm>

Ecosystem Services in EIA

In 2010, the World Resources Institute (WRI) carried out an online survey of environmental assessment professionals to better understand how they address ecosystem services in their work as well as identify the main obstacles to integrating ecosystem services into environmental assessments. The survey found that 79% of the 171 respondents are familiar with the concept of ecosystem services, but only 40% have seen ecosystem services addressed in environmental assessments. To respond to the barriers identified in the survey, WRI is now developing a conceptual framework and practical guidance to incorporate ecosystem services more comprehensively in Environmental Impact Assessments. The survey request and results were also circulated to Branch members in 2010. See: <http://www.wri.org/project/ecosystem-services-indicators#survey>.

Mainstreaming the economics of nature

TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) has launched its final report on building the consideration of ecosystems into many different aspects of decision-making, from international policy through business practice to local authority planning work. The report, 'Mainstreaming the economics of nature - a synthesis of the approach, conclusions and recommendations of TEEB' was launched at COP 10 (the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity) in Nagoya, and is available at:

<http://www.teebweb.org/InformationMaterial/TEEBReports/tabid/1278/Default.aspx>

IEMA's final Principles on Climate Change Adaptation and EIA

In November 2010, EMA launched its follow-up to its principles on climate change mitigation and EIA - the Climate Change Adaptation & EIA Principles. The new principles have been updated following consultation with IEMA members and now include reference to a specific climate change scenario that IEMA recommends EIAs should follow to ensure consistent consideration of the impacts of climate change on both the proposed development and the receiving environment. Further to this principles provide direction on integrating climate change adaptation into all aspects of the EIA process.

For further information on how to get involved or to download the Climate Change Adaptation & EIA Principles see <http://www.iema.net/eia-cc>.

Environmental Impacts of Climate Change Adaptation in Scotland

In December 2010, the Scottish Government launched its consultation on the SEA Environmental Report on the draft Sector Action Plans, which sit beneath the Climate Change Adaptation Framework. The aim of the Adaptation Framework, which underwent SEA in 2009, is to lead planned adaptation responses across all sectors to increase the resilience of Scotland's communities, and the natural and economic systems on which they depend, to the impacts of climate change. See: <http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/10140608/0>

Carbon Assessment of Scotland's 2011-12 Draft Budget

As required by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Scottish Government issued its high-level carbon assessment of the Draft Budget in November 2010, calculating the direct and indirect emission consequences of the Scottish Government's spending proposals. This assessment "helps us to understand how the money we spend affects emissions and, as importantly, enables us to better appreciate the production patterns set in motion by our expenditure." See: <http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/17115613/0>

Recommended good practice SEA/SA and HRA reports

Once again, Riki Therivel is collating people's recommendations for good practice Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal and HRA/appropriate assessment reports, and is asking for recommendations of your own favourite reports from 2010.

Riki wrote: "I will collate the recommendations and make them available for anyone to use: please see www.levett-therivel.co.uk/SEAre09.htm for a previous list. The lists provide inspiration for people who carry out SEA/HRAs or research SEA/HRA, and act as a kind of indicator of good current practice. I get a remarkable amount of feedback on these lists – people do look at them, so do please contribute your own favourites. Please definitely include a working web-link, and a concise (say up to a dozen words) explanation of why you liked the report. Feel free to recommend reports anonymously if you want. Consultancies can recommend a maximum of three - if I get more than that, I'll take the first three. Please send me any recommendations by the end of Monday 17 January, I'll have them collated and on www.levett-therivel.co.uk/SEAre10.htm by 24 January. Please forward this e-mail to anyone else who might be interested."

The recommendation template was circulated to Branch members in January 2011. Please reply directly to Riki at levett-therivel@phonecoop.coop

Europe drops EIA case against Ireland

In the previous Branch newsletter, we reported that the European Commission had issued Ireland with a final warning in relation to implementing EIA Regulations related to consenting fish farms. In September 2010, the Commission issued a press release indicating the case against Ireland had been dropped as they were satisfied with the actions the Irish Government had taken to strengthen its requirements for EIAs for aquaculture installations.

SEA of Scotland's draft Land Use Strategy

In September 2010, the Scottish Government launched the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of its draft Land Use Strategy ('Getting the best from our land') which sets out an agenda for sustainable land use in Scotland and aims to guide and support decision making. The Environmental Report follows SEA screening and scoping undertaken in 2010 in consultation with SEPA and SNH, other stakeholders and the public. Consultation closed in December 2010; responses are to be considered and the Land Use Strategy laid before the Scottish Parliament in March 2011. See:

<http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/09/30105117/0>

SEA for English and Welsh marine energy

The compilation of responses to scoping for an update & extension to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) SEA covering UK Offshore Energy has been published in August 2010. See the *July 2009 Branch newsletter* for news on the SEA Scoping Report released in March 2010. The compiled consultation responses, OESEA2 Scoping Report and 2009 reports are found here: <http://www.offshore-sea.org.uk/site/index.php>

SEA and HRA of revised draft National Policy Statements for energy

Between November 2009 and February 2010, the UK Government consulted on the six draft Energy NPSs and the Appraisals of Sustainability (AoS, which incorporates SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) that accompanied those NPSs. A Government Response to that consultation was published in November 2010. Having considered the responses received to consultation and the outputs of the Parliamentary scrutiny process, the UK Government has made changes to the draft Energy NPSs, AoSs and HRAs. Given the changes that have been made the UK Government is now re-consulting on the revised draft NPSs and associated documents, until **24 January 2011**. Subject to the consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny, the UK Government intends to finalise and formally approve the energy National Policy Statements in Spring 2011 for use in decision-making on applications for development consent for nationally significant energy infrastructure. See: <https://www.energynpsconsultation.decc.gov.uk/>

SEA and HRA of Draft Waste Water National Policy Statement

In November 2010, DEFRA launched the draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Waste Water, which sets out UK Government policy for the provision of major waste water infrastructure. The draft NPS is accompanied by an Appraisal of Sustainability and Habitats Regulations Assessment, which cover generic impacts arising from the policy statement, and impacts arising from the Thames Tunnel project and the proposed replacement of Deephams Sewage Treatment Works in north London. Consultation runs until **22 February 2011**. See: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/waste-water/index.htm>

Rapid environmental impact assessment research report and toolkit

A new report from the UK's Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) provides a practical toolkit which public service managers and decision makers in councils throughout the UK can use to assess the impact of their public service plans, projects and policies on the environment, with the exception of those that are subject to the statutory framework. The toolkit contains 14 potential factors including air pollution, waste, noise, impact on the visual environment, energy and transport, and these factors are listed as a checklist. It uses a traffic light system for each of these factors, which assess whether the project has a 'positive', 'negative' or 'neutral' impact on each of these factors. The report identifies the powers available to councils as well as the varied picture on what measures councils currently have in place to meet the forthcoming environmental challenges. See: <http://www.apse.org.uk/research.html>

IEMA Conference focuses on environmental assessment

Adam Boyden attended Day 1 of the 2-day Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Annual Conference in London at the beginning of November. There was considerable focus on environmental assessment on day 1, which included presentations on the following:

- Tom Simpson, DCLG, 'Reinventing or Reforming Environmental Assessment': Tom discussed the Coalition Government's proposals to consolidate and update the EIA Regulations to reflect recent court cases; the EU's emerging proposals to reform the EIA system, to 'step up from minimum requirements and improve the Directive'; that new types of development were and would be covered by EIA requirements under amendments to the regs; the Government's intention to replace its current EIA Guidance (Circular 2/99) with a procedural guide after the regulations are updated in 2011. The above was placed in the context of the Government's desire to transform the planning system through the Localism Bill and a National Planning Framework.
- Ross Marshall (Head of the National Environmental Assessment Service (NEAS) of the Environment Agency, and former President of IAIA): 'Identifying the True Cost of EIA' – Ross discussed the holistic benefits and savings to a project of undertaking EIA, as part of the justification and business case for the EIA process. NEAS's 'Value Register' of predicted cost savings identified during a project, and the wider social, economic and environmental benefits of EIA to development and flood risk management projects, were discussed, including by using EIA tools to reduce risks.
- Ruth Waters (Natural England) – 'The Ecosystems Approach': Ruth presented NE's Ecosystems Services approach to valuing the natural environment in order to progress sustainable land management policies and practices. This covered EIA and SEA in which a more holistic assessment of the environmental effects of a development project or plan could be achieved by considering effects on the provision of ecosystem services.
- Martin Broderick (Infrastructure Planning Commission (Commissioner)): 'Infrastructure Planning and EIA': Martin discussed the IPC's way of engaging with the major infrastructure development projects it deals with (more than 50 at the time), through enhanced EIA Screening, Scoping and consultation stages.
- Chris Baines: 'The Value of Green Infrastructure' emphasized the wide ranging importance of multi-functional green spaces, for wildlife, flood management, health, and local climate, and considered how best to plan for and deliver green.
- Sue Manns (Planning Aid England): 'Engaging with the public': Sue explained the need for all those involved in planning for new development to ensure consultation with local communities is "balanced, inclusive and meaningful", with reference to some good case studies.

Presentations from the conference are all still available at:

<http://www.iema.net/conferences/iemaconference/2010/intro>

Retail Impacts: Large Foodstores and Town Centres

Supermarkets built on the edge of town centres have an important role to play in helping maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of those centres, according to a new report 'The Impacts of Large Foodstores on Market Towns and District Centres', published by the University of Southampton. The report, which was commissioned by Tesco, presented new evidence on this issue based on the findings of a major large-scale before/after study of eight UK market towns and district centres. More than 8,000 consumer and 1,000 trader responses were gathered during the three- year study, which focused on four market towns in South West England and four district centres in the North West. The study involved interviewing local residents and traders and measuring the retail composition of the centres both prior to, then six months and one year after, the opening of new supermarkets. Specifically the study was designed to assess and reflect the consequences of over a decade of planning policy which since 1996 has prioritised a 'town centre first' approach to retail in the UK. The study represents a revisiting of the findings of the influential 1998 DETR report of the same name, which assessed the impacts of large out of town foodstores before the change in Government policy. See: http://www.soton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/2010/dec/10_129.shtml and http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/news/stories/2010/dec2010/9dec2010/091210_5.

The above report comes shortly after the recent report by the Commission on Architecture for the Built Environment (CABE) '**Supermarket-led development: asset or liability**' which warned that many supermarket-led developments in town centres will be a liability rather than an asset to the community if they are not well designed. The CABE report is based on reviews of 30 major retail-led schemes from around the UK. "New stores and mixed used developments by these supermarkets are now creating large parts of our towns and cities and may be the only regeneration on offer in the foreseeable future. ... Supermarket-led development can bring valuable jobs and investment to an area. But CABE reports that many schemes are simply repeating old out-of-town proposals – typically big plain buildings in a large car park – which are unsuitable for town centres. It warns that short term economic gain will not compensate for the loss of local character." See <http://www.cabe.org.uk/news/supermarket-led-development>

4. OTHER EVENTS

East of England Conference: Environmental Assessment: Updates in Theory and Practice

The Landscape Partnership are organising an RTPI East of England 1 day Environmental Assessment conference in March 2011, in Ipswich. The 1-day conference will cover updates to legislation, EIA, SEA and Health Impact Assessment. For further information please contact steven.bainbridge@woodbridge.tlp.uk.com or see <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/592/23/5/3>

Certificate Programme in Public Participation - International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

20-21 January and 2-4 March 2011, London

A 5-day, 3-module professional development programme, devised by and in consultation with practitioners around the world. The Certificate provides all you need to know about devising effective public participation programmes (Planning module), communications processes, skills and techniques (Communications module) and linking technique selection to different levels of engagement, providing a broad understanding of what, when and how to use different techniques (Techniques module). Thousands have benefitted from the training worldwide, including over 30 organisations in the UK and

Ireland. Participants can undertake all 3 modules or simply start with Module 1, Planning, after which participants will have learned:

- the foundations and full scope of planning needed for effective public participation
- a 5-step planning process including advice on gaining internal commitment and identifying strategic focus
- ways to identify communities and their issues
- how to develop a public participation plan, including selecting the appropriate level of engagement, and setting clear, shared objectives for effective public participation

More information is available online at <http://www.essentialplanning.eu/>, by emailing tanyaburdett@essentialplanning.eu or calling Tanya on +44(0)2077988251.

Tanya Burdett, Director, Essential Planning Ltd

Advance Notice: Impact Assessments for Health and Equality

9th November 2011, Wigan Oak Hotel, Wigan

Organiser: RTPI Northwest in collaboration with Ireland & UK Branch of IAIA.

Price: £45.00 excl. VAT; Concessions: Limited £20 +VAT places available for unwaged members and students on full time RTPI accredited courses. Retired members half price.

Spatial planning and public health grew up together so it is no surprise they share similar goals to improve quality of life, create healthier communities and reduce inequalities. They lost sight of each other for a while but this last decade they have got to know each other better through Local Strategic Partnerships and Area Agreements. The new localism agenda and changes to public health encourages these old friends to snuggle up even closer, and applies more pressure on the planning system to deliver better health outcomes. Planning legislation is also shifting, with examples of health as a material consideration. Whilst Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has emerged as a key tool for ensuring that opportunities to promote health and well-being are fully explored and integrated into policies, plans programmes, other forms of impact assessment can be redesigned to also consider health and equality. The aim of this workshop is to showcase practical examples of different types of impact assessments that consider health and equality, and highlight the difference looking through a 'health and equity' lens can make.

NB: If you book please mention you are a member of the Ireland and UK IAIA as the Branch has negotiated the same price for Branch members as RTPI members. Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

Debra Fox, Dept of Civic Design, University of Liverpool

IEMA Environmental Assessment Training:

CPD courses available shortly from IEMA include:

- An Introduction to EIA and SEA
- EIA Screening and Scoping
- Strategic Environmental Assessment

For further information see http://www.iema.net/cpd/cpd_courses

Health Impact Assessment courses

See: http://www.apho.org.uk/default.aspx?QN=P_HIA

IEEM Workshops:

Workshops include those relating to ecological impact assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment. See: <http://www.ieem.net/workshops.asp>



Oxford Brookes University CPD

See: www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/development/calendar.html

RTPI Masterclasses:

See: <http://www.rtpiconferences.co.uk/rtpi/category.php?category=149&type=public>

Have You Been Forwarded this newsletter? Why Not Join the IAIA

The IAIA exists to improve and better inform the decision-making of today that has environmental consequences for tomorrow. The IAIA is the leading global networking organisation on impact assessment for sustainable decision-making, providing an international forum for communicating best practice and innovation. It is a multi-disciplinary organisation and has 1500 members in more than 120 countries, including private and public sector planners and managers, consultants and policy analysts, university and college lecturers, researchers and students, and community bases.

See www.iaia.org for full details of membership services and benefits.

The Ireland-UK Branch of IAIA

This newsletter is for members of the IAIA within the Ireland & United Kingdom 'region', who automatically become members of the Ireland-UK Branch on joining.

For those based in Ireland and the UK, membership of IAIA comes with the added value of automatic membership of the **Ireland-UK Branch**. This regional Branch was created in 2005, and was granted permanent Branch status in May 2008, and with the aim of promoting interactions among and between professionals in the field and impact assessment researchers at leading Irish and UK universities. The existence of the Branch provides further benefits to members, including:

- Additional networking opportunities at IAIA Branch events with reduced costs;
- Branch Newsletter with domestic impact assessment news, events listings and members' contributions;
- Opportunities to contribute to the promotion of impact assessment interests at national level;
- Branch webpage.

For more information on the Branch please see

<http://www.iaia.org/affiliatesbranches/irelanduk-branch.aspx>

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