

Branch of the



IRELAND-UK BRANCH: OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

2. BRANCH NEWS

Next Branch event in Manchester: 24 October 2007
Branch Event at Edinburgh Castle, July 2007
Future IAIA Conference in the UK?
IAIA & Branch Website Updates
IAIA Branch & IEMA response to Planning White Paper
International Study of the Effectiveness of Environmental Assessment
Evaluation of EIA Directive: scope for simplification
Recent publications by Branch members
Branch initiative at Cardiff University

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT NEWS

IEMA Environmental Assessment Forum 2008
New Centre for Health Impact Assessment launched
Draft Guidance on Health in Strategic Environmental Assessment
Review of Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland
GIS-based Website for SEA Public Participation launched in Ireland
Ireland's Environment at your Fingertips
Welsh Strategic Environmental Assessment reports
Public Participation Directive further amends UK's EIA Regulations
New Marine EIA and Habitats Regulations
Draft Guidance issued on Validating Planning Applications for England
Environmental Impact Assessment of Reserved Matters Applications
EIA case law: Deficiencies in EIA Screening
Amendments to Protected Species Legislation
Guidance on Transport Assessments
UK Housing Green Paper
Power shift to English Regional Development Agencies
Planning for Large Scale Development
Guidance on Tall Buildings
UK Energy White Paper and the future of Nuclear Power

Tidal Power in the UK
Report eases concerns over wind turbine noise
Scottish Executive's Information Site for the Marine Renewables SEA
Revision of Scottish Executive EIA Circular 15/99
Scottish Executive: EIA Guidelines Toolkit for Marine Fish Farming
Warning over adverse impact of development on children
Consultations on EU Soil Framework Directive
Environment Agency's Soil Strategy
UK Draft Sustainable Construction Strategy
Site Waste Management Plans
Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland

4. [OTHER NEWSLETTERS](#)

SEA & Transport Planning Newsletter

5. [OTHER EVENTS](#)

SEA E-course
IEMA - Annual Conference 2007
IAP2 Certificate Programme in Public Participation
Planning Law Update
CIWEM / CMS Conference: Environmental Management Update
Landscape Institute Annual Conference
Environment Agency Annual Conference
Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment Training Course
IEEM Autumn Conference
Northern Europe – Planning Together for a Sustainable Future
Ecological Impact Assessment for Mammals
EIA Screening, Scoping and ES Review

6. [JOBSEEKERS](#)

7. [THE BRANCH COMMITTEE](#)

8. [THE IAIA](#)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Members,

Welcome to the IAIA Ireland-UK Branch Newsletter 'Impact Assessment Matters' for October 2007. This brings together recent news of legislation, guidance, consultations and events relating to impact assessment.

Since the last newsletter in March, news has been forwarded to members by separate emails, notably:

- Branch Event, Edinburgh Castle, 13 July
- Branch joint response with IEMA on the Planning White Paper, England
- Draft Guidance on Health and SEA (Dept for Health/Health Protection Agency, England) www.iaia.org/modx/index.php?id=354

For the next newsletter, we need Branch members to contribute. Please make a note to email any comments on the newsletter (format or content) and news items, recent research, new publications, announcements of events and training, queries members may be able to help with, and any other ideas for Branch activities, to ie_uk@iaia.org, with 'IAIA Branch news' in the subject line. You can also always circulate any urgent items to Branch members by sending an email to ie_ukbranch@iaia.org.

IAIA Conferences

- **IAIA 2007**, in **Seoul, Korea** on **3-9 June 2007** was attended by nearly 650 delegates. This included 26 delegates from Ireland & the UK.
- **IAIA 2008** 'The Art and Science of Impact Assessment' is in **Perth**, Western Australia, on **4 - 9 May 2008**. Visit www.iaia.org for complete conference information.

IAIA Newsletter

The October and July 2007 IAIA newsletters are now available for members to login and download at www.iaia.org > login > Publications > Newsletter Members. The October issue includes a review of IAIA'07 and news of IAIA'08. The July issue includes a challenge from the new IAIA President 'Is IAIA Helping You as a Professional', and Professional News articles and a Viewpoint from the UK!

Been Forwarded this newsletter? Why Not Join The IAIA

With IAIA you will join a network including members in over 100 countries. You will be part of the leading global network on best practices in the use of impact assessment for informed decision making policies, programs, plans and projects. Enjoy membership benefits, professional resources, valuable subscriptions and publications, and join us for our annual conferences across the world. See www.iaia.org for details.

Best Wishes,
Adam Boyden
Chair, IAIA Ire-UK Branch, on behalf of the Branch Committee

[Back to top](#)

2. BRANCH NEWS

Next Branch event in Manchester: 24 October 2007:

The next Ireland & UK Branch event will be held at the University of Manchester on 24th October 2007, and will be a joint event with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) North West England Region. The theme of the event will be '**Changing Climates for Environmental Assessment**'. Presentations will focus primarily on the role of environmental assessment in climate change adaptation and the implications of changing approaches to land-use planning. The afternoon session will also include an update on the emerging '10 years later' review of the International Study of the Effectiveness of Environmental Assessment. Please see information on the event and a booking form at <http://www.iaia.org/modx/index.php?id=354>

Branch Event at Edinburgh Castle, July 2007:

The recent IAIA Ireland & UK Branch meeting on EIA and SEA took place in Edinburgh Castle on 13 July 2007. The theme of the event, organised by Amanda Chisholm (Historic Scotland) in collaboration with the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) was 'EIA and SEA as Design Tools'. A CD of the presentations has been sent to the over 60 attendees. A big 'Thank You!' goes to Amanda and her team for organizing and hosting the event. The final programme is found on the Branch [webpage](#) (with one last-minute change - Iain Bell's fascinating presentation was on the 'St. Helena Access Project: Use of EIA and SEA in Managing Change'). If you would like any of the presentations as pdfs by email, please email ie_uk@iaia.org.

Future IAIA Conference in the UK?

Discussions are currently being held between various parties with a view to putting together a bid to host the IAIA international conference in the UK in 2010, in the north of England. An update will be provided of progress at an appropriate time. If you would like to help or know more at this stage, please contact Ben Cave at ben.cave@bcahealth.co.uk

IAIA & Branch Website Updates:

The IAIA website www.iaia.org has been relaunched with a new design, and includes a new [webpage](#) for the Branch (via 'Affiliates and Branches' > Ireland-UK Branch, www.iaia.org/modx/index.php?id=354). Please email ie_uk@iaia.org if there is any information you would like to see added there.

Earlier in 2007 we added an 'SEA Weblinks' document which comprises a list of internet sites useful to Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland and the UK. As it will need updating, we welcome information on updating or adding to it. We also aim to add an 'EIA Weblinks' document in the near future.

We also recently added details of the Branch organising committee, together with the statements we made in 2006 when putting ourselves forward, so members know who we are and what we aimed to do, and can get in touch more easily. This will be followed later in 2007/08 with a 'Branch Vision' to set out how the committee aim to progress.

IAIA Branch & IEMA response to Planning White Paper:

In May 2007, the Government's Planning White Paper for England 'Planning for a Sustainable Future' proposed major changes to the planning system, including how decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects are made, through new National Policy Statements and a new Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC). The White Paper consultation is closed but can still be found at

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1510503>

Due to the wide-ranging implications for impact assessment, an email was sent to members on 22nd May 2007 to request involvement in a consultation response. Members of the Branch then joined forces with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) to form a working group, which issued a joint Press Release in May 2007 and an initial 'Key Issues' response in July to highlight initial concerns that the White Paper appeared likely to limit the scope and effectiveness of both EIA and SEA. Members of the working group were invited to a meeting with officials from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the new Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR) in early August 2007, at which we were able to agree on many points and discuss concerns.

The full consultation response to the White Paper was then submitted to DCLG on 17 August (see www.iaia.org/modx/index.php?id=354). Our response indicates opportunities where we consider the environmental assessment profession, particularly IEMA, the IAIA Branch and our memberships, can provide an effective contribution in helping take forward the White Paper's proposals, including to help ensure the IPC is appropriately skilled and experienced to achieve its desired role in EIA. We urged the Government to further consider the benefits brought to the planning system by environmental assessment in helping ensure a sustainable environment is maintained through the provision of necessary safeguards.

International Study of the Effectiveness of Environmental Assessment:

The March 2007 Branch newsletter included information on the potential for a follow-up '10 years later' review of the effectiveness of environmental assessment. The final report of the International Study of the Effectiveness of Environmental Assessment, prepared by Barry Sadler, was published in 1996 and can currently be found here:

http://www.iaia.org/Non_Members/EIA/EAE/EAE_10E.PDF

Barry would welcome the active involvement of the Ireland-UK Branch, and the IEMA, in this work, including perhaps taking a lead responsibility for one of the areas of the study framework, or assisting with critically revisiting and shoring up its policy and methodological foundations.

Since that time, several members and organisations have expressed an interest in assisting any future study. Possible options for initial action in the Ireland & UK include holding one or more workshops, and undertaking a practitioner survey. Barry Sadler and others are still actively considering the way forward, and would welcome further interest. If you would like to know more and potentially help with the Study, please email ie_uk@iaia.org.

Evaluation of EIA Directive: scope for simplification

The European Union's Enterprise-Industry Directorate-General is looking into the cost-effectiveness for business and taxpayers of the EIA Directive (85/337/EEC as amended) and whether there are ways of simplifying the EIA regime whilst

retaining its effectiveness, in line with the 'Better Regulation' agenda. This is because industry stakeholders have previously identified the EIA Directive as an impediment, in terms of procedures and delays, to the success of investment projects in Europe. A key objective of this study is to therefore identify possible ways to reduce delays and to reduce the complexity of procedures.

As this research could lead to amendments to the EIA Directive, it is therefore seen by the Branch organising committee as highly important to respond in order to help provide the researchers with the best possible basis on which to make any recommendations to the European Commission. An email was sent to Branch members on 21 May 2007 requesting inputs. Since that time, members of the IAIA Branch have been key amongst those assisting the researchers, GHK Consulting, in the UK case study.

The study is currently progressing with potential ideas under discussion for:

- a significant change in the EIA regime, with the introduction of clearly defined projects of EU significance and interest, and related changes in EIA procedures;
- simplification based on improvements in the existing EIA system, for consideration at EU level and for inclusion in revised guidance (such as a 'Finding of No Significant Impact' test and mandatory scoping);
- simplification of the EIA regime at Member State level, which would allow 'grassroots' improvement.

A stronger perspective from developers and industry is being requested on the researchers' ideas. If you would like to know more and potentially help respond to queries from the researchers, please contact Adam Boyden at email ie_uk@iaia.org.

Recent publications by Branch members:

The following recent publications have been authored by Branch members:

- Cashmore, M. 2007: The contribution of environmental assessment to sustainable development: Toward a richer conceptual understanding. In George, C. and Kirkpatrick, C., editors, Impact assessment and sustainable development: European practice and experience, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 106-130.
- George, C. and Kirkpatrick, C., editors, 2007: Impact assessment and sustainable development: European practice and experience, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Cave, B. and Bond, A., A 2007: Addressing health in strategic environmental assessment. Town and Country Planning 76, 59-61.
- Donnelly, A., Jones, M., O'Mahony, T. and Byrne, G. 2007: Selecting environmental indicator for use in strategic environmental assessment. Environmental Impact Assessment Review 27, 161-175.
- Jay, S., Jones, C. E., Slinn, P. and Wood, C. 2007: Environmental assessment: Retrospect and prospect. Environmental Impact Assessment Review 27, 287-300.
- João, E. 2007a: The importance of data and scale issues for strategic environmental assessment (SEA). Environmental Impact Assessment Review 27, 361-364.

- João, E. 2007b: A research agenda for data and scale issues in strategic environmental assessment (SEA). *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 27, 479-491.
- Therivel, R. and Ross, B. 2007: Cumulative effects assessment: Does scale matter? *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 27, 365-385.
- Wood, G., Rodriguez-Bachiller, A. and Becker, J. 2007: Fuzzy sets and simulated environmental change: Evaluating and communicating impact significance in environmental impact assessment. *Environment and Planning A* 39, 810-829.

Branch initiative at Cardiff University:

Pilar Clemente-Fernandez, and Shane Larkin, members of the Branch organising committee, have introduced the IAIA and the Ireland-UK Branch to Cardiff University. Shane gave a presentation on the activities of the IAIA and the Branch on 1st May 2007 to lecturers and students at the School of City and Regional Planning, Cardiff University, after an earlier meeting by Pilar with Andrew Flynn, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Policy and Planning, in the School. The initiative aimed to raise awareness of impact assessment, the IAIA and Branch activities, and the benefits of membership, and with a view to holding future Branch events at the University.

[Back to top](#)

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT NEWS

IEMA Environmental Assessment Forum 2008:

Building on the success of the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management (IEMA)'s 2007 SEA Forum (held in Leeds in March), it has been decided to expand the 2008 forum to address both EIA and SEA practices. IEMA are currently putting together a programme for the event. Any suggestions for venues, workshop topics, plenary speakers and topics, themes and chairperson should be emailed to technical@iema.net. The Environmental Assessment Forum, at which the IAIA Branch is likely to have a role and presence, is due to be held on 24th April 2008 in Birmingham. Potential themes include 'Integration' and 'Effectiveness'.

New Centre for Health Impact Assessment launched:

The Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM), based in the UK, has set up a new Centre for Health Impact Assessment (CHIA) to take forward its work on environmental and occupational health and wellbeing. The vision of CHIA is to be an international Centre of Excellence for:

1. HIA theory and practice
2. Evidence-based analysis of the impacts of policies and programmes on health
3. Understanding the wider determinants of health and wellbeing
4. Healthy urban planning and development
5. Tackling environmental and health inequalities

For more information on the work of the Centre and opportunities for collaborative working please contact: Dr Salim Vohra MBChB MSc PhD, Director,

Centre for Health Impact Assessment, Institute of Occupational Medicine,
Research House Business Centre, Fraser Road, Perivale, Middlesex UB6 7AQ
Mob: +44 (0)7 980 728 814; Tel: +44 (0) 208 537 3491/2; Fax: +44 (0) 208
537 3493; Email: salim.vohra@iom-world.org; Web: www.iom-world.org

Draft Guidance on Health in Strategic Environmental Assessment:

The Department of Health, for England, in partnership with the Health Protection Agency, developed draft guidance to help plan-makers more effectively consider the population's health when undertaking SEA for plans, programmes and strategies under the SEA Regulations. See:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_073261

Review of Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland:

The final report of the Review of the Environmental Governance in Northern Ireland has been published by the Review Panel and presented to the Northern Ireland Minister of the Environment on 19 June 2007. One of the main recommendations is that responsibility for environmental regulation should be transferred to a new independent Environmental Protection Agency. For details see: <http://www.regni.info/>

GIS-based Website for SEA Public Participation launched in Ireland:

As part of a research project being carried out by IAIA member Ainhoa Gonzalez at the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) on the advantages and disadvantages of using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a GIS-based public participation website has been officially launched by Kilkenny County Council in Ireland. The method promotes the use of GIS through all SEA stages with the aims of identifying the benefits that may derive from its application, and evaluating the barriers and limitations that may impinge upon the effective uptake of GIS in SEA processes. See:

<http://gisea.nuim.ie/> (direct link to the website)

http://kilkennycoco.kilkenny.ie/eng/Services/Planning/Draft_Development_Plans_2008-2014/ (Access to the website through the County Council's official website)

Kilkenny County Council is supporting the research and, in doing so, endeavouring to adopt best practice in relation to the implementation of the legislation. The website provides an opportunity to examine and comment on the environmental data used in the preparation of the SEA as well as on how the new County Development Plan might affect – or better protect – the environment. Your comments and feedback will greatly assist in the development of better SEA techniques. For further information on the research method, approach and preliminary findings, please e-mail: ainhoag@yahoo.com

Ireland's Environment at your Fingertips

In September 2007, Ireland's Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government, launched a major new enhancement on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website. Entitled ENVision – environmental maps at your fingertips, the online viewer allows people to access environmental information about their locality, or any region in Ireland.

See <http://www.epa.ie/news/pr/2007/sep/>

Welsh Strategic Environmental Assessment reports:

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has created an electronic library of SEA Scoping Reports and Environmental Reports that are available via the WAG website. These provide a source of information that could usefully inform future Scoping and Environmental Reports prepared in compliance with the SEA Directive. To facilitate the use of SEA reports in this way WAG has also created an index that would allow the reader to identify the information and data available at what spatial scale in which SEA report. It is recommended that you read the guidance before using the data index. The index has been categorized by Spatial Scale, and SEA Topic. For details, see:

http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/env_cons_management/sea/baselineindex/?lang=en

Public Participation Directive further amends UK's EIA Regulations:

The UK government and devolved administrations have issued further regulations to implement the requirements of the EU Public Participation Directive (Directive 2003/35/EC). Article 3 of the Public Participation Directive amends Directive 85/337/EEC as amended (the Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA, Directive) to align the public participation provisions of the EIA Directive more closely with those of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention). The Aarhus Convention was signed by the European Commission and the United Kingdom among others in June 1998.

The regulations introduce further minor additional requirements to publicise EIAs and decisions, to increase public access to information, and make various other amendments. New regulations issued since March 2007 comprise:

- Highways (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 1062) (highway projects in England and Wales)
- The Offshore Petroleum Production and Pipe-lines (Assessment of Environmental Effects) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 933)
- Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England And Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 1977)
- The Pipe-line Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 1992)
- The Gas Transporter Pipe-line Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 1996)
- The Harbour Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (Statutory Rules 2007 No. 312)
- The Roads (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (SR 2007 No. 346)

All the amending regulations, and their Explanatory Memoranda, can be found in the links below using the statutory instrument/rule numbers above:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/uk.htm>

New Marine EIA and Habitats Regulations:

1. The new Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 no. 1518) apply EIA to regulated activities in the UK's marine waters, including deposits to the sea, navigational safety and harbour works. Consultation on draft regulations was covered in the Branch's January 2007 newsletter. See: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si200715.htm>.

2. The Environmental Impact Assessment and Natural Habitats (Extraction of Minerals by Marine Dredging) (England and Northern Ireland) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007 No. 1067) also for the first time establish a scheme of regulation for marine minerals dredging, and implement the EIA and Habitats Directives for these activities in English and Northern Ireland territorial waters, on the continental shelf around England and Northern Ireland and also in some outer marine areas around Scotland and Wales. There has been no previous UK legislation regulating marine minerals dredging in the waters to which these Regulations apply. See <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si200710.htm>

Draft Guidance issued on Validating Planning Applications for England:

Following the Planning White Paper for England, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued updated draft guidance on the new procedures (in force from April 2008) for the validation of planning applications by local planning authorities. It provides guidance on the scope of material that should be supplied with planning applications, and provides greater certainty as to the nature and extent of information required.

This includes a recommended 'local list' of potential material that local authorities can require to validate an application where it is relevant to do so, as well as a list of minimum national requirements. Local authorities will only be able to require material on its adopted local list, although this does not affect developments that require EIA. The guidance recommends that local lists include for assessments of biodiversity, heritage, lighting, trees, impacts on open spaces, and various other assessments. Interestingly, matters absent from the recommended local list include landscape & visual impact assessments, and assessments of health, new open space requirements, energy use and sustainability. See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planning-apps-validation>

Environmental Impact Assessment of Reserved Matters Applications in England and Scotland

in England:

A consultation paper was published on 19 October 2007 on the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007. The paper sets out proposals for amending the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/293) in England to take account of two judgments of the European Court of Justice in May 2006. These require that where development consent comprises a multi-stage process e.g. outline planning applications, EIA can be required before approval of reserved matters. The Regulations will also apply to conditions attached to full planning permissions which do not permit development until the submission of certain detailed matters and their approval by the planning authority.

The closing date for consultation comments is **11 January 2008**. These changes will be reflected in a DCLG Circular to replace the current DETR Circular 2/99 'Environmental Impact Assessment' and the new good practice guide on EIA, which are both due around the time the regulations come into force. See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/towncountryplanning>

in Scotland:

A consultation paper was published in June 2007 by the Scottish Executive on proposed regulations to amend Part II of The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999. It proposes a statutory footing for requiring consideration to the need EIA before determining a planning application for approval of reserved matters, in line with the EIA Directive and recent European Court of Justice rulings.

See: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/06/26172457/0>

Separate consultation exercises are due in Wales and Northern Ireland shortly.

EIA case law: Deficiencies in EIA Screening:

In March 2007, in *R (on the application of Mortell) -v- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council*, the High Court for England and Wales ruled that because a Local Planning Authority (LPA) had failed to consider certain potential impacts in its EIA Screening Opinions, before concluding that EIA was not required, the Screening Opinions were invalid and subsequent outline planning permissions (granted in 2006) should be quashed. The case involved the proposed demolition of terraced housing in the Derker area of Oldham to facilitate residential and associated developments being promoted through the Oldham and Rochdale Housing Renewal Pathfinder Initiative regeneration scheme. The impacts of the three developments found not considered at the screening stage included cumulative effects (of each development when combined together and with the other development proposed for the area under an overall masterplan), impacts arising from the construction phase (energy, natural resources and waste), land contamination and the potential destruction of architectural heritage. See <http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/markup.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2007/1526.html&query=Mortell&method=boolean>

Amendments to Protected Species Legislation:

As a result of a European Court of Justice ruling, the UK's regulations that transpose the EU Habitats Directive have recently been amended by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (No. 2) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 (and equivalent regulations for Northern Ireland) and new Offshore Marine Conservation Regulations. Amongst other things, these changes tighten the rules on species protected under the regulations, including to remove the commonly-used defence that the killing, capture or disturbance of such species or the destruction or damage of their breeding sites or resting places was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity. The amended regulations also apply the requirements for 'appropriate assessments' to Local Development Plans (LDDs, RSS) and water abstraction plans in relation to their effects on European sites. See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd09.htm> and <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/uk.htm>

Guidance on Transport Assessments:

In March, the UK's Department for Transport (DfT) published guidance on the process and preparation of Transport Assessments for new developments, with a greater emphasis on the better management of the existing road network and on reducing the need to travel. See:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportassessments/>

UK Housing Green Paper:

The UK Government's Housing Green Paper sought views on the proposals to increase the supply of housing, to provide well designed and greener homes that are supported by infrastructure and to provide more affordable homes to buy or rent. See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homesforfuture>

Power shift to English Regional Development Agencies:

Following the UK Government's Constitutional Green Paper, the Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration proposes to abolish Regional Assemblies in England, and transfer regional planning and housing powers to Regional Development Agencies by combining Regional Spatial Strategies and Regional Economic Strategies. RSS are 'development plans' under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, were originally brought in to replace Regional Planning Guidance and County Councils' Structure Plans, and are subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Planning for Large Scale Development:

Stage one of the 'ATLAS Guide: Planning for Large Scale Development' has been launched by the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS, part of the Planning Advisory Service and provided by English Partnerships). It is designed to provide advice and guidance to all stakeholders involved in taking forward large development projects. The guide is being published online through a two-stage process which can be accessed at www.atlasplanning.com. 'Topic Zone' T3 and Process Zone P7 include information and guidance on EIA for large scale planning applications.

Guidance on Tall Buildings:

English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) have reviewed and updated their Joint Guidance on Tall Buildings, including good practice in the planning process, including in EIA and SEA. The guidance was endorsed by the UK Government in July 2007. See <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.11149>

UK Energy White Paper and the future of Nuclear Power:

In May 2007, alongside the Planning White Paper, the UK's Department for Trade and Industry (now the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) published the Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge'. This sets out the Government's international and domestic energy strategy to deliver its energy goals in order to respond to long term energy challenges. See <http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/page39534.html>

The separate Nuclear Power consultation seeks comments on the Government's preliminary view that companies should be allowed to build new nuclear power stations in the UK because of their potential contribution to tackling the UK's goals on climate change and security of supply. A related consultation sets out the proposed 'Strategic Siting Assessment' processes for new nuclear power which would identify siting criteria to help identify locations where the Government would support new nuclear power stations, and indicate areas of the UK within which there are sites that meet the criteria. The Government propose to integrate Strategic Environmental Assessment into the SSA process. See: <http://nuclearpower2007.direct.gov.uk/>

<http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file39197.pdf> (consultation document)
<http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/consultations/nuclearpower2007/page39554.html>

Tidal Power in the UK:

The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has carried out a comprehensive study of tidal power in the UK, including an evaluation of proposals for a Severn barrage. The UK's outstanding tidal resources could provide at least 10% of the country's electricity. The report, 'Tidal Power in the UK', includes a series of recommendations to Government on how to develop the UK's tidal resource, and emerging tidal technologies, to provide secure, low carbon electricity for the long term. See <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/tidal.html>

Report eases concerns over wind turbine noise:

The UK's most comprehensive Government commissioned study into sound created by the country's 133 wind farms has concluded that, despite media coverage to the contrary, the occurrence of complaints about noise is low. Acoustics researchers at Salford University investigated complaints of the noise created by aerodynamic modulation (AM) - a phenomenon sometimes compared to the sound of a distant train. By surveying all of the local authorities with wind farms in or near their areas, the team discovered that the incidents of complaints were relatively insignificant compared with complaints about other noise sources. Based on the University's findings, the UK Government's Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) does not consider there to be an issue for the UK's wind farm fleet, nor to be a compelling case for more work into AM at this time. See <http://www.salford.ac.uk/news/details/552> and <http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=304343&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=True>

Scottish Executive's Information Site for the Marine Renewables Strategic Environmental Assessment:

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is being undertaken for the Scottish Executive to enable a better understanding of the environmental impacts from wave and tidal energy development around the west coast of Scotland from the North Channel northwards to Orkney and Shetland and the Pentland Firth. The full [Environmental Report](#), including Non-technical Summary, was published on 30 March 2007. See <http://www.seaenergyscotland.co.uk/> for details.

Scottish Executive: Revision of Circular 15/99 'The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999':

This paper set out the Scottish Executive's proposals for the revision of Circular 15/1999 on The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999, including:

- Removal of the three main types of case for which EIA will generally be required
- Removal of indicative EIA screening thresholds and criteria
- Expansion of the guidance on case-by-case screening requirements
- To take account of regulatory changes since 1999

Consultation ended in June, but the document remains available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/27104445/0>

This consultation mirrors those for England and Wales in 2006.

Scottish Executive: EIA Guidelines Toolkit for Marine Fish Farming

In September 2007, the Scottish Executive published the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Practical Guidelines Toolkit for Marine Fish Farming. The publication provides a set of guidelines for planners, applicants and stakeholders, and aims to help streamline the process and result in more concise Environmental Statements, whilst at the same time ensure that the responsibility to protect the environment is not compromised. A set of templates to provide a clear structure to the Environmental Impact Assessment responses and streamline the consultation process have also been produced. See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2007/09/21105932>

Warning over adverse impact of development on children:

Poorly designed road and housing developments are invading children's space, according to the Sustainable Development Commission. The commission has published a report which claimed that large building projects, aircraft flight paths and busy roads are causing excessive noise levels, increased pollution and safety fears and preventing children from enjoying their local parks and neighbourhoods. See http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/edu_cayp.html

Consultations on EU Soil Framework Directive:

DEFRA, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government published a consultation on the proposed EU Soil Framework Directive. The overall objective of the proposed Directive is to provide a framework for action by Member States, identifying threats to soil quality and resources and requiring measures to overcome identified issues.

See: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/soil-directive/index.htm> and <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations/Current>

Environment Agency's Soil Strategy:

Earlier in October, the Environment Agency for England and Wales launched 'Soil: a precious resource', its strategy for protecting, managing and restoring soil. This will help the Agency undertake its roles and responsibilities for soil, and highlights priorities for soil and the actions the Agency will take. See: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/landquality/1730389/?lang=e>

UK Draft Sustainable Construction Strategy:

The purpose of this consultation is to help develop a UK Government / industry strategy on sustainable construction. The consultation document outlines proposals and seeks views on targets and ways in which the targets can be achieved. Consultation closes **30 November 2007**. See <http://www.dti.gov.uk/consultations/page40642.html>

Site Waste Management Plans:

England's Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recently consulted on proposals to introduce a requirement, under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, for all major construction sites to have mandatory Site Waste Management Plans (SWMPs) to reduce illegal waste disposal and improve efficiency. Responses published earlier in October showed that 75 per cent of respondents support the idea of legally binding SWMPs. The

views will now feed into DEFRA's preparation of regulations in 2008. See <http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=318593&NewsAreaID=2>

Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland:

The UK Government and the devolved administrations published the latest Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in July 2007. See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/strategy/index.htm>

4. OTHER NEWSLETTERS

SEA & Transport Planning Newsletter

IAIA member Paul Tomlinson writes: "The SEA and Transport Planning Newsletter which has seen over 780 subscribers from people across the globe from as far from the UK as Yemen, Korea and Japan has come to the end of the sponsorship it received from the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT). Without the support of ECMT the newsletter would not have reached the audience that it has.

"We have received many complementary comments about the Newsletter which takes a considerable resource to prepare alongside other research and consultancy duties that are undertaken on SEA and transport planning. Currently we are investigating several possibilities for continuing the Newsletter. These include seeking new sponsors or introducing a subscription charge.

"We would welcome your views on whether readers would be prepared to pay a fee for downloading the Newsletter or whether potential sponsors would like to come forward." The Newsletter can be found at:

<http://www.sea-info.net/newsletters/default.asp?pid=225>

Please send your views to: ptomlinson@trl.co.uk

5. OTHER EVENTS:

SEA E-course

The United Nations University and Oxford Brookes University have developed an SEA e-course which provides an introduction to SEA theory and practice and a more in depth analysis of SEA methodology. The e-course can be accessed here: http://sea.unu.edu/course/?page_id=92

HEMA - Annual Conference 2007

Papers from the Conference, held in Manchester on 12-13 June 2007, including workshop sessions on EIA and SEA, are now available at <http://www.HEMA.net/conferences/intro/annualconference/annualconference2007>
In particular, 'The EIA Process' (Laurie Richards and Michelle Cox, Arup) presented the emerging revisions to the DCLG's EIA good practice guide and revised Circular on EIA.

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

29 October – 2 November 2007, London

The Certificate Course offers a clear and thoroughly tested approach to building personal and organisational skills in engaging people in a meaningful way. The

course is delivered in three discrete modules over five days. It provides a clearly articulated and unique approach to involving the public in decisions that affect them and using public input to make better decisions. The three modules are:

- Planning for Effective Public Participation (two days)
- Effective Communication for Public Participation (one day)
- Techniques for Effective Public Participation (two days)

At the end of the three modules, participants will receive a Certificate from IAP2 that is increasingly recognised in countries as diverse as the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Uruguay, and the UK.

See <http://www.iap2.org/cde.cfm?event=184066>

Planning Law Update

29 October 2007, Oxford Brookes University

A one-day course from the Department of Planning will provide an overview of recent planning legislation, highlight some significant court cases, outline the current position in relation to recent reforms and Planning Policy Statements, and attempt to forecast the way forward in light of the Planning and Heritage White Papers. See [http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/planning/shortcourses/!](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/planning/shortcourses/)

CIWEM / Coastal Management for Sustainability (CMS) Conference: Environmental Management Update 2007

31 October 2007, London

The aim of this conference will be to update delegates on areas of environmental and sustainability management practice and how this is being influenced by policy and legislative changes. This event will include:

- An update on Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Sustainable communities and environmental management
- The Planning White Paper and proposed Independent Planning Commission
- The complexity of work in the sector – future demands

See <http://www.coastms.co.uk/conferences/EMU07.html>

Email: bob.earll@coastms.co.uk Tel: 01531 890415

Landscape Institute Annual Conference: Climate Change - The Challenge for Landscape Architecture

1-2 November 2007, London

With climate change at the top of the political and media agenda, landscape architects and allied professionals need to consider and articulate their position. This conference will offer an important opportunity to pool expertise and demonstrate how policy and practice is being effectively developed to tackle this crisis. See <http://www.liconferences.org/>

Environment Agency Annual Conference: Environmental Futures 07: Adapting to Change

5-6 November 2007, London

Environmental Futures 07 will combine international perspectives from government, business, the investment community and others, with interactive discussion and problem-solving. It will provide a major national platform on adapting to and mitigating climate change, the risks and opportunities for the UK and global economy, and practical solutions for a climate-changed world. See <http://www.neilstewartassociates.com/sw110/>

Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment Training Course

12-16 November 2007, Liverpool

IMPACT, the International Health Impact Assessment Consortium at University of Liverpool, are organising a 5-day course training at the Foresight Centre on the

University of Liverpool campus. Contact impact@liverpool.ac.uk, call Hilary Dreaves on 0151-794 5004, or see www.ihia.org.uk.

IEEM Autumn Conference

13-15 November 2007, Nottingham

The autumn conference of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management will be on the theme of Making the Connections – A Role for Ecological Networks in Nature Conservation. See <http://www.ieem.org.uk>

Northern Europe – Planning Together for a Sustainable Future

13-15 November 2007, Nairn, Scotland

The Spatial North Project team in Inverness are holding a 3 day international spatial planning conference entitled 'Planning Together for a Sustainable Future'. It is the final event of *Spatial North*, an INTERREG IIIB project involving regions with peripheral characteristics, in Scotland, Iceland, Sweden and Finland. See <http://www.spatialnorth.eu/>

Ecological Impact Assessment for Mammals

23-24 November 2007, London

Mammal Society Autumn symposium, London Zoo.

See <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/conferences.shtml>

EIA Screening, Scoping and ES Review

13 December 2007, Oxford Brookes University

Local authorities and planning consultants need to understand the full implications of these regulations and how they should be implemented. This one day course seeks to provide the information necessary for the successful implementation of the regulations and the skills required to carry out effective screening, scoping and ES Review. In the face of increasing legal challenges to EIA projects, the course will also provide vital knowledge and understanding of the full implications of the regulations. Workshop sessions on Screening, Scoping and ES Review will provide delegates with the opportunity to share experiences and develop new skills.

See www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/planning/shortcourses/

Contact: Karen Hughes, Short Course/In-House Training Coordinator School of Built Environment Department of Planning, Oxford Brookes University;
tel: 01865 483560; email: khughes@brookes.ac.uk

6. JOBSEEKERS

Conrad Jenkins writes from New Zealand: "I am a graduate of the University of Otago, New Zealand, gaining first class honors in a Bachelor of Applied Science, majoring in Environmental Management. My head lecturer and referee is Richard Morgan, a past president of IAIA. Richard taught me in various papers and stemmed my interest in Impact Assessment. I have work experience in both the private and public sectors. Working for local council within the planning department, I updated and rewrote their State of the Environment Report and discussion documents for the review of the district plan. I have also completed a self managed impact assessment project with Fonterra, an international dairy factory, assessing the costs and effects of emissions, which involved working with the local community and businesses. I am travelling to the UK in November on a working visa and looking for a job within Impact Assessment, to gain valuable experience. If there is anyone who would be able to help me in securing a job or interested in more information you can contact me through jenkinsconrad@gmail.com"

7. THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

The Branch [website](#) includes a listing of the members of the Branch committee. This month, **Shane Larkin**, currently Environmental Manager (Middle East) at Parsons Brinckerhoff's Bristol office, writes of his recent work experience in Abu Dhabi:



"There are a number of environmental agencies in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which have the responsibility of protecting the environment. There are 7 Emirates in UAE and depending on the location of your project you will consult with the relevant agency. For example in Dubai you need to consult with Dubai Municipality (DM) however in Abu Dhabi you consult with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD). The Federal Environment Agency (FEA) produce environmental laws for the UAE, and organise workshops or conferences but are not very active in specific areas such as environmental assessments.



If a company wants to produce an EIA within Dubai they don't need to be registered with them. However if you undertake an EIA in Abu Dhabi the company has to be registered with EAD. You can insert the company on a consultancy list with DM which is provided to prospective developers whereas with the EAD you need to produce an application, which is quite onerous and graded depending on a number of factors. The grade awarded will determine the type of EIA you can undertake. Furthermore for any oil and gas developments with Abu Dhabi, the appropriate environmental authority to consult with is Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). The reason for this is that the EAD consider ADNOC's Health and Safety procedures to be very rigorous, therefore EAD do not need to regulate these developments. And you thought the English Environment Agency were strict!!!" Shane is due back in 2008.

[Back to top](#)

8. THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The IAIA is the leading global networking organisation on impact assessment for sustainable decision-making, providing an international forum for communicating information on best practice and innovation. It is truly a multi-disciplinary organisation covering the many aspects of impact assessment, 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. See www.iaia.org.

The Ireland-UK Branch of IAIA

In 2005, a regional Branch for Ireland and the United Kingdom was created, which aims to promote interaction between impact assessment researchers at leading Irish and UK universities with professionals in the field. For more information on the Branch please see www.iaia.org and follow > Affiliates and Branches > Ireland-UK Branch (www.iaia.org/modx/index.php?id=354).

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.

Adam Boyden

Chair, IAIA Ire-UK Branch, On Behalf of the IAIA Ire-UK Branch Committee

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Email: adam.boyden@npaconsult.co.uk