



# SEA Guidance on Air, Water and Soil

**Project Title:** Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidance for practitioners on how to take account of air, water and soil

**Project Code:** UKCC09

**Who this research is intended for:** environmental policy and regulators, environmental consultants, planners and developers

## Objectives of the project

The guidance was developed to support Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) practitioners in Scotland and Northern Ireland on how to take into account the potential environmental effects upon air, water and soil of implementing a plan, programme or strategy.

The objectives of this guidance were to:

- a) Ensure that air, water and soil are addressed effectively through the process of SEA;
- b) Make it clearer for SEA practitioners in Scotland and Northern Ireland to consider air, water and soil issues in an effective and resource efficient way;
- c) Add value to existing SEA guidance published by Government Departments and devolved administrations; and
- d) Promote good practice with use of practical examples.

## Background

Under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) European Directive 2001/42/EC, public plans and programmes (and, in Scotland, strategies) that are likely to have a significant environmental effect may be required to undergo SEA.

SEA promotes a holistic approach by assessing the likely significant effects of implementing a Plan on key environmental topics; these topics are Biodiversity; Population; Human Health; Fauna; Flora; Soil; Water; Air; Climatic Factors; Material Assets; Cultural Heritage and Landscape. The guidance developed here focussed on air, soil and water.

The guidance has been developed specifically for organisations involved in undertaking SEA and other interested stakeholders in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## Key Findings and Recommendations

The guidance is available via a report format and also as a website tool that can be accessed online at [www.seaguidance.org.uk](http://www.seaguidance.org.uk).



Both the website and reports are structured around the SEA stages of Screening, Scoping, Assessment and Monitoring. For each stage, there is guidance on information such as sources of pollution, sources of baseline information, current and emerging legislation and developing SEA objectives.

The guidance:

- makes it easy for SEA practitioners to consider air, soil and water issues in an effective and resource efficient way
- adds value to existing SEA guidance published by Government Departments; and
- highlights and promotes good/best practice

It is aimed at practitioners in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but much of the guidance will be useful for the practitioners in the rest of the UK and also in Europe.

There is a separate research report for each of the three topics and one common introductory report to SEA. The website contains the key information from the research reports, but the guidance is presented in parallel in a way that should be easy for users to navigate.

## Next Steps

It is envisaged that the website content will be updated every 6-12 months.

## Further Information

Copies of the research outputs are available for free download from [www.sniffer.org.uk](http://www.sniffer.org.uk) (search on 'Project Search' UKCC09);



The website can be accessed at [www.seaguidance.org.uk](http://www.seaguidance.org.uk)



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## Partners

Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Historic Scotland, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Environment Agency

## Contractors

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