

SEA Statement for the Water Services Strategic Plan

Customer



Water



Wastewater



Environment



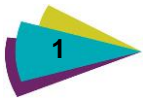
Growth



Investment







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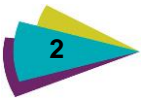


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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this SEA Statement

This report forms the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement to accompany the final version of Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP). The report describes the way in which Irish Water has taken environmental consideration and the views of consultees into account in the WSSP and fulfils the plan and programme adoption requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the SEA Directive) and Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 435 of 2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (as amended) (the SEA Regulations).

This SEA Statement is the final output of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the WSSP and follows the publication of, and consultation on, the SEA Environmental Report concerning the Draft Water Services Strategic Plan (the draft WSSP).

1.2 The Water Services Strategic Plan

Development of the WSSP

Irish Water was incorporated in July 2013 under the Water Services (No.2) Act of 2013 (the Water Services Act) and in January 2014 assumed responsibility for the provision of public water services from local authorities. Irish Water has responsibility for the supply of drinking water and wastewater treatment to over 80% of the population and has taken over a large portfolio of assets including pumping stations, approximately 60,000 km of water pipelines, 25,000 km of wastewater pipelines, around 900 water treatment plants and over 1,000 wastewater treatment plants.

Section 33 of the Water Services Act requires Irish Water to prepare a WSSP that sets out the objectives of Irish Water over a 25 year period and outlines the strategies to achieve these objectives. Work on the WSSP began in early 2014 and included the publication of the WSSP Issues Paper in July 2014 which was subject to public consultation for a period of five weeks. Taking into account responses to the WSSP Issues Paper and consultation with statutory bodies and key stakeholders, Irish Water prepared the draft WSSP that was published for consultation between 19th February 2015 and the 17th April 2015.

The final WSSP was adopted by the Irish Water and Ervia Boards in June 2015 and submitted to the Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government (the Minister) for approval in July 2015. The WSSP is available to view via Irish Water's website at <http://www.water.ie>.

WSSP Scope and Content

Irish Water's vision for water services in the future is that:

"Through responsible stewardship, efficient management and strong partnerships, Ireland has a world-class water infrastructure that ensures secure and sustainable water services, essential for our health, our communities, the economy and the environment."

To achieve Irish Water's vision for future water services, the WSSP sets out six strategic objectives which in-turn are underpinned by a series of aims relevant to the various aspects of water services identified in the Water Services Act. The strategic objectives and associated aims of the WSSP are reproduced in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1 WSSP Strategic Objectives and Aims

Strategic Objective	Aim
Meet Customer Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE1: Establish both customer trust and a reputation for excellent service.
Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WS1: Manage the sustainability and quality of drinking water from source to tap to protect human health. WS2: Manage the availability, sustainability and reliability of water supply now and into the future. WS3: Manage water supplies in an efficient and economic manner.
Provide Effective Management of Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WW1: Manage the operation of wastewater facilities in a manner that protects environmental quality. WW2: Manage the availability and resilience of wastewater services now and into the future. WW3: Manage wastewater services in an efficient and economic manner.
Protect and Enhance the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EN1: Ensure that Irish Water services are delivered in a sustainable manner that contributes to the protection of the environment. EN2: Operate our water services infrastructure to support the achievement of water body objectives under the Water Framework Directive and our obligations under the Birds and Habitats Directives. EN3: Manage all our residual waste in a sustainable manner.
Support Social and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SG1: Support national, regional and local economic and spatial planning policy. SG2: Facilitate growth in line with national and regional economic and spatial planning policy. SG3: Ensure that water services are provided in a timely and cost effective manner.
Invest in Our Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IF1: Manage our assets and investments in accordance with best practice asset management principles to deliver a high quality secure and sustainable service at lowest cost. IF2: Invest in our assets while maintaining a sustainable balance between meeting customer standards, protecting the environment and supporting the economic development and growth of the country. IF3: Establish a sustainable funding model to ensure that Irish Water can deliver the required capital investment in order to achieve the required outcomes. IF4: Promote research and develop proven, innovative technical solutions to meet standards set by our regulators including our objectives for cost and energy efficiency.

The WSSP contains a range of strategies that are intended to support the delivery of each strategic objective and their associated aims. In total, 68 strategies are included within the WSSP across the following chapters:

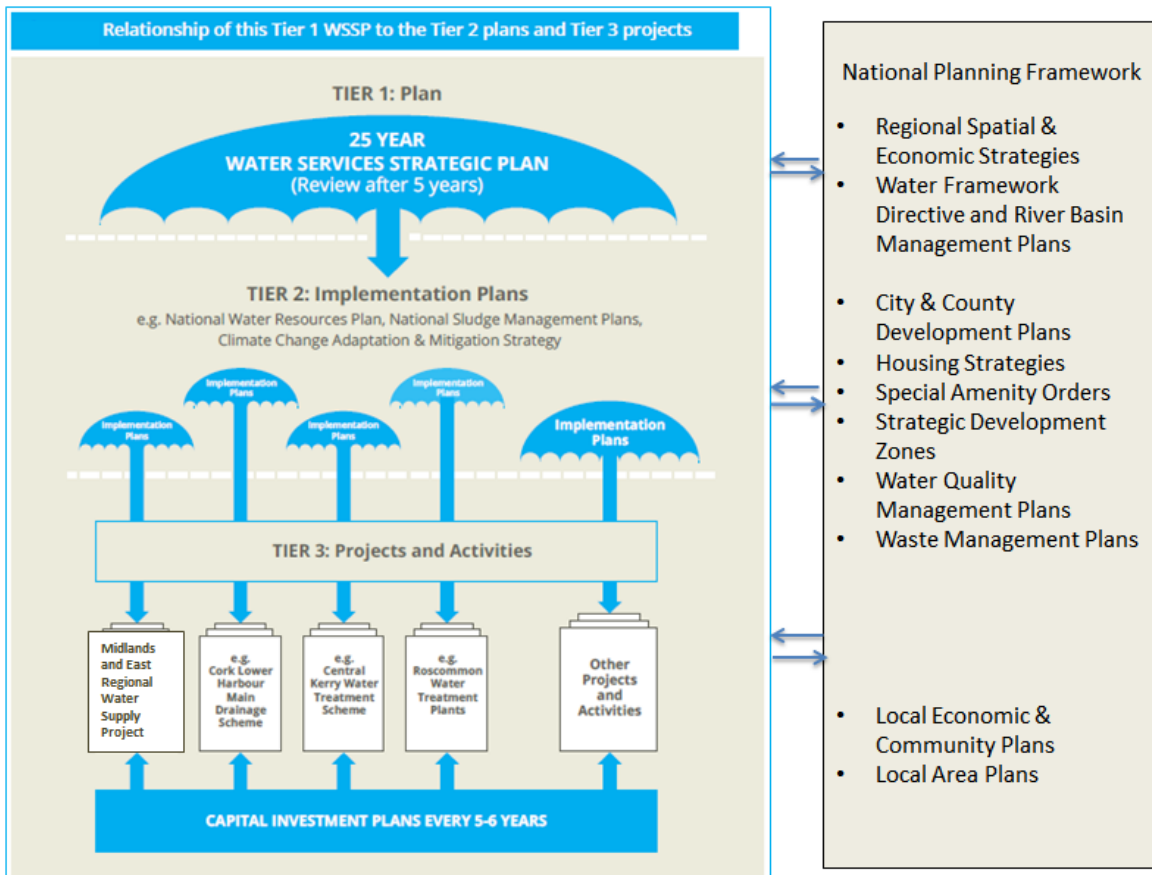
- ▶ Meet Customer Expectations: which contains six strategies;
- ▶ Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply: which contains seventeen strategies;
- ▶ Provide Effective Management of Wastewater: which contains fourteen strategies;
- ▶ Protect and Enhance the Environment: which contains ten strategies;
- ▶ Support Social and Economic Growth: which contains nine strategies; and
- ▶ Invest in Our Future: which contains twelve strategies.

The WSSP sets the context for subsequent implementation plans, some of which are identified in the Plan strategies. These implementation plans will detail the programmes of works to be completed in specific water service areas, for example, water resource planning, sludge management planning, climate change

adaptation and mitigation and wastewater compliance. Each implementation plan will ensure that Irish Water complies with its legal obligations, meets the objectives of the WSSP and Irish Water's performance targets. The implementation plans will also take into account the findings of other relevant national, regional and local plans (e.g. river basin management plans and regional development plans).

The relationship of the (Tier 1) WSSP to the (Tier 2) implementation plans and the future (Tier 3) projects is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1 Relationship of the Tier 1 WSSP to the Tier 2 Plans and Tier 3 Projects and to national planning policy



1.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Water Services Strategic Plan

SEA became a statutory requirement following the adoption of the SEA Directive which is implemented in Ireland by the SEA Regulations. The objective of SEA, as defined in Directive 2001/42/EC, is: *“To provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to contributing to sustainable development.”*

As the WSSP is a statutory requirement, has been prepared by a semi-state company (Irish Water) and concerns the management of water, Irish Water determined that the WSSP requires SEA. SEA of the WSSP has been subsequently undertaken in compliance the SEA Directive and SEA Regulations. Throughout the course of the development of the WSSP, the SEA has sought to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the WSSP and to propose measures to avoid, manage or mitigate any significant adverse effects and to enhance any beneficial effects.

The main requirements and stages of the SEA are:

- ▶ Setting the context and objectives, reviewing other relevant policies, plans and programmes, establishing the baseline, developing the assessment framework and deciding on the scope of the SEA in consultation with statutory bodies (**Stage A**);
- ▶ Developing and refining alternatives, assessing the likely direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the WSSP and identifying mitigating and monitoring measures (**Stage B**);
- ▶ Completing an Environmental Report to present the predicted environmental effects of the WSSP, including alternatives, in a form suitable for public consultation and use by decision-makers (**Stage C**);
- ▶ Consulting on the draft WSSP and Environmental Report (**Stage D**);
- ▶ Assessing the environmental implications of any significant changes to the draft WSSP (**Stage D**);
- ▶ Providing information in an SEA Statement on how the Environmental Report and the consultees' opinion on it have been taken into account when deciding the final form of the WSSP (**Stage D**); and
- ▶ Undertaking periodic monitoring of the associated effects of the WSSP (**Stage E**).

This SEA Statement has been prepared in completion of **Stage D** above. It follows consultation on the scope of the SEA, which comprised initial consultation with the SEA statutory consultees in May 2014 and publication of a Draft Scoping Report for consultation alongside the WSSP Issues Paper in July 2014. The assessment of the draft WSSP was recorded in the Environmental Report published alongside the draft WSSP for consultation between 19th February 2015 and the 17th April 2015.

In accordance with Article 8 of the SEA Directive, and Regulation 15 of the SEA Regulations, Irish Water has taken into account the findings of the Environmental Report and the consultation responses in coming to its decision on the final form of the WSSP and its adoption.

1.4 This SEA Statement

Article 9 of the SEA Directive and regulation 16 (2) of the SEA Regulations require that when a plan or programme is adopted, in this case the WSSP, the consultation bodies, the public and any other Member States consulted on the Environmental Report, are informed and the following specific information is made available:

- ▶ The plan as adopted;
- ▶ A statement summarising:
 - How environmental considerations have been integrated into the WSSP (**Section 2** of this document);
 - How the Environmental Report has been taken into account (**Section 3**);
 - How submissions and observations received in response to the consultation on the Environmental Report have been taken into account (**Section 4**);
 - The reasons for choosing the WSSP, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (**Section 5**); and
 - The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the WSSP (**Section 6**).

The purpose of this SEA Statement is to provide the specific information outlined under each of the points listed above and which is presented in the following sections of this report. A table demonstrating how this SEA Statement complies with the SEA Regulation is included in **Appendix A**.

2. How Environmental Considerations have been Integrated into the Water Services Strategic Plan and SEA

2.1 Environmental Considerations in the Water Services Strategic Plan

Environmental considerations are a central component of Irish Water's vision for future water services in Ireland (as set out in **Section 1.2** of this SEA Statement). In this context, the WSSP includes a specific strategic objective to protect and enhance the environment and which is underpinned by the following strategic aims:

- ▶ EN1: Ensure that Irish Water services are delivered in a sustainable manner that contributes to the protection of the environment.
- ▶ EN2: Operate our water services infrastructure to support the achievement of water body objectives under the Water Framework Directive and our obligations under the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- ▶ EN3: Manage all our residual waste in a sustainable manner.

Those strategies of the WSSP that have been identified to deliver these aims are reproduced in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1 Aims and Strategies Under the Strategic Objective: Protect and Enhance the Environment

Ref	Strategy	Purpose
Aim EN1 – Ensure that Irish Water services are delivered in a sustainable manner which contributes to the protection of the environment.		
EN1a	Implement a Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Framework	To ensure that Irish Water services are delivered in a sustainable manner balancing the need to support the social and economic development of the country with the need to protect water resources and the water environment.
EN1b	Prepare and implement a Sustainable Energy Strategy.	To meet our obligations under the National Energy Efficiency Plan (2009-20).
EN1c	Prepare and implement a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy.	To support national objectives for climate change mitigation and to meet our obligations under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework to ensure the resilience and sustainability of water services.
EN1d	Adopt a Green Procurement Approach and drive efficient use of all our resources.	To ensure that we utilise resources efficiently in our management of water and wastewater services.
EN1e	Adhere to environmental and planning legislation when planning and developing water services assets.	To ensure that all future Irish Water infrastructure meets national planning and environmental legislation and to protect sites of natural and cultural importance.
Aim EN2 - Operate our water services infrastructure to support the achievement of water body objectives under the Water Framework Directive and our obligations under the Birds and Habitats Directives		
EN2a	Work effectively with other stakeholders to support a catchment based approach.	To contribute to the achievement of water body objectives under the Water Framework Directive.
EN2b	Manage the operation of our water and wastewater infrastructure towards the achievement of water body objectives and the conservation of protected sites and species.	To ensure that the operation of our water and wastewater infrastructure assists the achievement of water body objectives under the WFD and the conservation of protected sites and species under the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Ref	Strategy	Purpose
Aim EN3 – Manage all our Residual Waste in a Sustainable Manner		
EN3a	Develop and implement a Corporate Waste Management Strategy.	To ensure Irish Water meets its corporate sustainability responsibilities.
EN3b	Develop and implement a National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan.	To reduce the environmental impacts from wastewater treatment by re-use and renewable energy generation, where feasible.
EN3c	Develop and implement a National Water Sludge Management Plan.	To reduce the environmental impacts from water treatment processes.

Many of the other WSSP strategies are also expected to deliver substantial environmental benefit through the sustainable management of water resources and the delivery of infrastructure to support the achievement of Water Framework Directive (WFD) water body objectives and compliance under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD). In this regard, the assessment of the draft WSSP strategies presented in the Environmental Report found that the implementation of the WSSP is likely to have either positive or significant positive effects on the majority of the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) used to assess the effects of draft WSSP (as described in **Section 2.2** below) whilst no significant negative environmental effects were identified. Further detail regarding the findings of the SEA of the draft WSSP is provided in **Section 3.2**.

Assessment

To ensure that environmental considerations were taken into account during the development of the WSSP, the plan has been informed by SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA)¹. Together, the SEA and AA have assessed the likely environmental effects of the WSSP as well as reasonable alternatives to it. This has helped to ensure that the potential environmental effects of the WSSP's implementation are understood and that opportunities to mitigate adverse effects and enhance positive effects are incorporated into it where appropriate.

Further information in respect of the influence of the SEA on the development of the WSSP is provided in **Section 3** of this SEA Statement.

Consultation

Irish Water has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement during the preparation of the WSSP which culminated in consultation on a draft version of the Plan between 19th February 2015 and the 17th April 2015. Importantly, this has helped to ensure that opportunities to enhance the environmental performance of the WSSP have been realised.

Section 4 of this SEA Statement provides further information in relation to the consultation undertaken in developing the WSSP.

2.2 Environmental Considerations in the SEA

It is important that any plan takes into account the environmental circumstances in which it is to be implemented. This is to ensure that unintended effects are avoided as well as to identify the potential for contributions towards other complementary public strategic objectives.

¹ In recognition of the potential for the WSSP to affect European sites, Irish Water undertook an Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna, enacted through the Republic of Ireland (ROI) by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. The findings of the AA are reported in a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that has been published alongside the WSSP. The NIS concludes that the WSSP will have no significant and adverse effects on any European sites, alone or 'in combination' with other plans and programmes.

To provide the context for the SEA of the WSSP, and in compliance with the SEA Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and its evolution without the WSSP were considered, along with the environmental characteristics likely to be significantly affected.

The key environmental issues relevant to Irish Water's activities and the WSSP as identified through the analysis of baseline conditions are summarised in **Table 2.2** by topic area. It should be noted that the environmental issues identified are in most cases wide ranging and do not relate solely to Irish Water's activities or the WSSP. The issues identified will be influenced by a range of factors including the activities of other sectors.

Table 2.2 Key Environmental Issues Relevant to Irish Water's Activities and the Water Services Strategic Plan

Topic Area	Key Environmental Issues
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to contribute to the protection and improvement of the condition of sites that have been designated for nature conservation purposes; • The need to help improve the status of protected habitats and species; • The need to help maintain/enhance ecological connectivity; and • The need to support the protection and enhancement of non-designated sites.
Population and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to accommodate for a rising population and growing economy through the associated delivery of water supply and wastewater services without placing undue pressure on the environment; • The need to support the protection of the health of the Irish population through the provision of affordable water and wastewater services; and
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to contribute to the protection and enhancement of geodiversity and sites designated for their geological importance; • The need to support the protection and enhancement of soil quality, particularly in peatland areas which have been degraded or are at risk of degradation; and • The need to help maintain the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to help maintain and improve the status and quality of surface and ground waters including bathing waters; • The need to help reverse the decline in the number of high-status waterbodies; and • The need to reduce pollution from wastewater treatment works.
Air Quality and Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to avoid detrimental impacts on air quality; • The need to adopt fuel efficiency and minimise transport use; and • The need to avoid causing noise nuisance.
Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from Irish Water's activities; • The need to take into account, and where possible mitigate for, the potential effects of climate change on water resources and infrastructure; • The need to ensure the resilience of water supply and treatment infrastructure to the impacts of climate change; and • The need to manage the impact of climate change on water resource availability.
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to account for the growth in urban populations across Ireland and their potential water and wastewater needs; • The need to reduce waste generated from Irish Water's activities and the proportion of that waste which is sent to landfill; and • The need to reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources related to Irish Water's activities through measures such as improved energy efficiency and enhanced uptake of renewable energy.
Water Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to maintain or improve the quality of drinking water supplies; • The need to improve standards of wastewater treatment and reduce pollution events; and • The need to ensure sufficient water and wastewater capacity is available to meet demand.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to contribute to the protection and enhancement of features and sites of archaeological importance and cultural heritage interest in relation to Irish Water activities; • The need to help protect and enhance sites of architectural cultural heritage; and • The need to help ensure the protection of unknown archaeology.
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty

Topic Area	Key Environmental Issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> of Ireland including designated sites; The need to help protect and maintain the landscape distinctiveness across Ireland; and The need to help protect visual amenity.

The key environmental issues listed above helped to inform the scope of the assessment of the draft WSSP in terms of the extent to which the 12 environmental topics identified in the SEA Directive should be considered. In this instance, none of the SEA topics were scoped out of the assessment.

The environmental issues also informed the SEOs used to guide the assessment of the draft WSSP and which are reproduced in **Table 2.3**. By assessing the draft WSSP against the SEOs it was more apparent where the WSSP will contribute to environmental sustainability, where it might have a negative effect, and where a positive effect could be improved.

Table 2.3 Strategic Environmental Objectives Used in the SEA of the Water Services Strategic Plan

SEA Topic	Strategic Environmental Objective(s)
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	1. Prevent damage to terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species resulting from Irish Water's activities.
Population and Human Health	2. Protect and reduce risk to human health in undertaking water services.
Water	3. Prevent deterioration of the status of water bodies with regard to quality and quantity due to Irish Water activities and contribute towards the improvement of water body status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters and groundwaters to at least good status, as appropriate to the Water Framework Directive.
	4. Minimise increases in flood risk resulting from Irish Water's activities.
Air and Climatic Factors	5. Minimise contributions to climate change and emissions to air (including greenhouse gas emissions) as a result of Irish Water activities and ensure the resilience of water supply and treatment infrastructure to the effects of climate change.
Material Assets	6. Provide new, and upgrade existing, water and wastewater management infrastructure to protect human health and ecological status of water bodies.
	7. Protect water as an economic resource.
Soil	8. Avoid conflicts with, and contribute towards, where possible, the appropriate management of soils.
Cultural Heritage	9. Avoid damage to cultural heritage resources resulting from Irish Water's activities.
Landscape	10. Avoid damage to designated landscapes resulting from Irish Water's activities.

Following a high level review of the draft WSSP, it was considered necessary to apply SEA to the strategic objectives (in terms of their supporting aims) and strategies of the plan. The reasonable alternatives to the preferred option for the WSSP were also assessed.

The assessment of the draft WSSP aims was undertaken by testing their compatibility with the SEOs using a compatibility matrix. This helped to identify potential synergies or inconsistencies between the aims and the SEOs and whether refinement of the aims was required.

The following two-stage approach was adopted to assess the draft WSSP strategies:

1. A screening assessment to identify those strategies that would not have any significant effects against the SEOs. These strategies were 'screened out' from further assessment; and
2. A more detailed assessment of those strategies identified in the screening assessment that may result in significant effects against the SEOs. This required the identification of the likely changes to the baseline conditions as a result of implementing the strategies. The changes were described (where possible) in terms of their geographic scale, the timescale over which they could occur, whether the effects would be temporary or permanent, positive or negative, or likely or unlikely, frequent or rare.

In addition, an assessment of cumulative effects was undertaken in order to clearly identify areas where strategies across the different aims of the draft WSSP work together and to consider where the draft WSSP may have effects in-combination with other plans and programmes.

One alternative to the draft WSSP was also identified and assessed as part of the SEA using the SEOs. This alternative ('Successional WSSP') was based on the principle that the management of water services would continue with previous management practices with the retention of around 900 water treatment plants and investment on large capital works including major improvements at larger wastewater treatment plants.

Further detail relating to the findings of the assessment of the draft WSSP and the reasonable alternative is provided in **Section 3** whilst **Section 5** sets out the reasons for choosing the WSSP as adopted in light of the reasonable alternative considered.

The Environmental Report documented the findings of the assessment of the draft WSSP and reasonable alternative, outlining where any likely significant effects were identified and proposing, where appropriate, mitigation measures. This was subject to consultation between 19th February 2015 and the 17th April 2015, alongside the draft WSSP.

3. How the Findings of the Environmental Report have been Taken into Account

3.1 Development of the Water Services Strategic Plan and the SEA Process

The SEA and development of the WSSP have been undertaken in tandem. **Table 3.1** details the key stages of the SEA and its relationship with the development of the WSSP.

Table 3.1 Key Stages in the SEA and its Relationship with the WSSP

SEA	WSSP	Relationship
<p>Scoping The scoping stage of the SEA identified other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives which could be affected by, or which could affect, the WSSP.</p> <p>The scoping stage also characterised the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and its evolution without the WSSP.</p>	<p>The key issues to be addressed by the WSSP were identified.</p>	<p>The WSSP used the plans and programmes identified to ensure that it was in compliance with local, national and international legislation.</p> <p>Baseline information supported early plan development and in particular the identification of the challenges to be addressed by the WSSP.</p>
<p>Assessment The aims of the draft WSSP were tested for their compatibility with the SEOs.</p> <p>The draft WSSP strategies were screened to identify those with the potential for significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Reasonable alternatives to the WSSP were assessed.</p>	<p>The draft WSSP aims and strategies were developed.</p>	<p>The Environmental Report and the draft WSSP were developed together.</p> <p>The findings of the screening assessment helped to identify those strategies that may give rise to significant environmental effects thereby enabling amendment or alternatives to be implemented if appropriate.</p> <p>The findings of the detailed assessment of the strategies informed the development of the WSSP.</p> <p>The assessment of reasonable alternatives helped to confirm the approach taken in the draft WSSP.</p>
<p>Reporting The Environmental Report and draft WSSP were finalised. The key findings of the Environmental Report and how the SEA has informed the final WSSP is detailed in Table 3.2.</p>		
<p>Consultation The draft WSSP and Environmental Report were published for consultation. Responses to the consultation on the Environmental Report are presented along with the conclusions of the submissions in Section 4.</p>		
<p>Finalising the WSSP and Adoption Following consultation, the WSSP has been finalised. Changes to the WSSP since consultation have been considered in order to determine whether further assessment is required. This is discussed further in Section 3.4.</p>		
<p>Monitoring Proposals for monitoring identified in Section 6 of this SEA Statement will be implemented by the Irish Water.</p>		

As demonstrated in **Table 3.1** above, the SEA process has played an important role in the development of the WSSP. **Section 3.2** below summarises the key findings of the SEA whilst **Section 3.3** describes how the resulting recommendations contained in the Environmental Report have informed the final WSSP.

3.2 Key Findings of the Environmental Report

Assessment of the Draft WSSP

Overall, the assessment identified that the implementation of the draft WSSP would be likely to have positive effects on the majority of the SEOs used in the assessment to help characterise the environmental effects of the plan. Significant positive effects were identified in respect of the following SEOs: Biodiversity; Population and Human Health; Water Quality and Quantity; Food Risk; Air and Climatic Factor; Water Management Infrastructure; and Water as an Economic Resource. This reflected the emphasis of the draft WSSP aims and strategies on the sustainable management of water resources and the delivery of infrastructure through Tier 2 plans and Tier 3 projects to support the achievement of WFD water body objectives and compliance under the Drinking Water Directive (DWD) and UWWTD.

No significant negative effects were identified during the assessment. The assessment did identify that minor negative effects on some SEOs are likely to arise as a result of the implementation of the WSSP. In this respect, the potential for negative effects was identified in respect of SEOs relating to: Biodiversity; Population and Human Health; Water Quality and Quantity; Air and Climatic Factors; Soil; and Landscape. Whilst the upgrade of existing, and provision of new, infrastructure and services identified in Tier 2 plans are expected to generate long term environmental benefits, the assessment found that, like other types of development, the construction of new infrastructure arising from the implementation of the WSSP could also have short term and local adverse environmental effects due to, for example, land take, emissions to air and disturbance. The assessment highlighted that the probability/magnitude of these effects is subject to the number, type, scale and location of future proposals as well as the sensitivity of the receiving environments which are currently unknown. Notwithstanding, it is expected that the potential for adverse environmental effects would be identified and, where possible, addressed during the preparation of Tier 2 plans and through the SEA and AA process of the respective plans. Similarly, at the project stage (Tier 3 projects), environmental impacts would be considered as part of the environmental permitting and planning application process (which may require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and AA depending on the scale, location and nature of development proposed).

Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives

In accordance with the SEA Regulations 'requirements to consider reasonable alternatives to the WSSP', one reasonable alternative, a 'Successional WSSP', was identified and assessed as part of the SEA with the findings of this assessment recorded in the Environmental Report.

As set out in **Section 2.2**, the 'Successional WSSP' alternative was based on the principle that the management of water services would continue with previous management practices with the retention of around 900 water treatment plants and investment on large capital works including major improvements at larger wastewater treatment plants.

The assessment of this alternative found that whilst investment in large capital works would be expected to enhance water quality and drinking water supply in some areas (with associated benefits in terms of aquatic ecology and human health), these positive effects would not be uniform. Some areas of Ireland would continue to receive substandard drinking water supply whilst the status of some water bodies would not be improved. Further, the approach would restrict the potential for Irish Water to adopt a strategic approach to the management of its assets which could mean that investment, operational improvements and maintenance would not be targeted where greatest benefit would be delivered.

Further detail relating to the reasons for choosing the WSSP as adopted in light of the 'Successional WSSP' alternative is provided in **Section 5**.

3.3 Environmental Report Recommendations

The assessment of the draft WSSP identified a range of measures to avoid or minimise potential negative effects, and to enhance positive effects, arising from the implementation of the plan. The measures identified can be broadly categorised as:

- ▶ measures that could be considered to enhance the performance of the WSSP (for example, amendments to strategy wording);
- ▶ measures that could be considered in the development of proposals contained in Tier 2 plans to avoid adverse effects arising from, for example, the delivery of new infrastructure; and
- ▶ measures that could be considered at the individual project stage (Tier 3) to avoid, in particular, adverse effects arising from the construction and operation of new infrastructure.

Table 3.2 highlights those measures identified during the assessment that cut across a number of the strategies together with the SEO(s) to which they relate and at what level they should be implemented (i.e. through the development of the WSSP, in the preparation of Tier 2 plans or at the Tier 3 project stage, reflecting the mitigation categories listed above).

Table 3.2 Environmental Report Recommendations

Measure	Strategic Environmental Objective	Category / Level (Draft WSSP, Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects)
Consider the inclusion of specific wording in the draft WSSP relating to the avoidance of adverse effects on biodiversity, human health, air quality, cultural heritage and landscape and visual amenity as a result of the upgrade to / construction of new infrastructure. Alternatively, this commitment could be made as part of any future Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Framework (as proposed under Strategy EN1a of the draft WSSP).	SEO 1: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna SEO 2: Population and Human Health SEO 5: Air and Climatic Factors SEO 9: Cultural Heritage SEO 10: Landscape	Draft WSSP or Tier 2 (Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Framework)
Where possible, future proposals for the provision of new infrastructure should avoid designated nature conservation sites.	SEO 1: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects
Specific mitigation plans may be required to ensure that any adverse effects on designated sites from Irish Water's activities are avoided and localised effects on biodiversity minimised.	SEO 1: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Tier 3 Projects
Where possible, future proposals should be located so as to minimise the potential for adverse effects on human receptors.	SEO 2: Population and Human Health	Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects
Construction activities should be undertaken in accordance with relevant best practice pollution prevention guidance and appropriate mitigation implemented (such as dust suppression, spill containment and emergency response procedures) to avoid adverse impacts on water quality.	SEO 3: Water Quality and Quantity	Tier 3 Projects
Where possible, vulnerable infrastructure should be located so as to avoid areas of high flood risk. Where infrastructure is located in areas of flood risk, appropriate flood protection measures should be	SEO 4: Flood Risk	Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects

Measure	Strategic Environmental Objective	Category / Level (Draft WSSP, Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects)
implemented by Irish Water. New infrastructure should not increase flood risk of other development located downstream within a catchment.		
Measures to reduce emissions to air during construction and operation of infrastructure should be considered including, for example, the use of low emission plant and dust suppression.	SEO 5: Air and Climatic Factors	Tier 3 Projects
Where possible, future proposals for the provision of new infrastructure should avoid locations of cultural heritage value.	SEO 9: Cultural Heritage	Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects
Where possible, future proposals for the provision of new infrastructure should avoid locations within, or in close proximity to, designated landscapes or sensitive visual receptors.	SEO 10: Landscape	Tier 2 Plans, Tier 3 Projects
At the project stage, construction activity should be screened where possible so as to avoid/minimise adverse landscape/visual impacts.	SEO 10: Landscape	Tier 3 Projects
Where possible, new above ground infrastructure should adopt high quality design principles with landscaping / screening measures utilised to minimise adverse landscape / visual amenity impacts.	SEO 10: Landscape	Tier 3 Projects

As highlighted in **Table 3.2**, the majority of the measures identified through the assessment related to Tier 2 plans and Tier 3 projects. However, one overarching mitigation measure was identified in respect of the draft WSSP itself and which sought to ensure that potential adverse environmental effects arising from new infrastructure are avoided. This recommendation has been accepted by Irish Water and Strategies EN1a and EN1e of the WSSP have been revised to include wording relating to the avoidance of significant adverse effects on biodiversity, human health, water, air quality, cultural heritage, soil and landscape and visual amenity as a result of the upgrade to/construction of new infrastructure.

3.4 Changes Made to the WSSP Since Consultation

The final WSSP has taken into account the submissions received during consultation, the findings of the Environmental Report and AA, further discussion with key stakeholders and new information. This has resulted in changes to the draft WSSP which include:

- Further emphasis on sustainability in delivery of water services;
- Commitments to timelines for delivery of the Tier 2 Implementation Plans;
- Inclusion of explicit references to meeting the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Irish Water's activities; and
- Updates to Irish Water's commitments in the management of septic tank sludges.

The amendments to the draft WSSP have been reviewed in order to determine the extent to which they are significant and therefore require assessment as part of the SEA process. In this instance, the amendments made to the draft WSSP are not substantive. No additional Aims or Strategies have been included within the final WSSP and changes principally comprise minor amendments to wording that were considered not material to the outcome of the assessment contained in the Environmental Report. In consequence, further assessment is not considered to be necessary.

4. How the Opinions Expressed in Response to Consultation on the SEA have been taken into Account

4.1 Overview

Consultation has been an integral part of the SEA of the WSSP and has comprised three key stages:

- ▶ Initial consultation with the SEA statutory consultees on the scope of the SEA;
- ▶ Consultation on a Draft Scoping Report, alongside the WSSP Issues Paper; and
- ▶ Formal public consultation on the Environmental Report, alongside the draft WSSP.

A summary of the consultation undertaken at each stage of the SEA process and the outcomes is provided in the sections that follow.

4.2 SEA Scoping Consultation

A consultation on the proposed scope of the SEA was held with the SEA statutory consultees in May 2014. Subsequently, a Draft Scoping Report was prepared and consulted on alongside the WSSP Issues Paper for a five week period between July and September 2014. The environmental bodies specified under the SEA Regulations² as well as the relevant trans-boundary authority in Northern Ireland and other key stakeholders were notified of the publication of the Draft Scoping Report. A total of 14 submissions and observations to the consultation were received. A detailed summary of the submissions received, Irish Water's response and the amendments to the Draft Scoping Report were collated into a Public Consultation Report (PC1) which is available from www.water.ie. Broadly, the responses received to the consultation concerned:

- ▶ requests for additional baseline information and inclusion of further plans and programmes;
- ▶ amendments to the environmental sensitivities identified in the Draft Scoping Report;
- ▶ consultation on the WSSP and SEA;
- ▶ the scope/content of the WSSP (as opposed to the SEA thereof); and
- ▶ the impact of unconventional oil and gas exploration and production on water resources.

4.3 Public Consultation on the Environmental Report

The draft WSSP was subsequently published on the 19th February 2015 for public consultation. A total of 58 responses were received with many respondents supportive of the Plan. A Public Consultation Report (PC2) has been prepared by Irish Water and which provides a summary of the responses received. This is available via Irish Water's website at <http://www.water.ie>

Public consultation on the Environmental Report also ran from 19th February 2015 to the 17th April 2015. Comments on any aspect of the Environmental Report were welcomed, but in particular views were sought to the following questions:

- (i) Do you think that the Environmental Report has identified the significant environmental effects of the draft WSSP? If not, what other significant effects do you think we have missed?

² The following authorities were notified: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government; and Environmental Protection Agency.

- (ii) Do you agree with the conclusions of the Environmental Report and the recommendations for avoiding, reducing or off-setting the significant effects of implementing the WSSP? If not, what do you think the key recommendations should be and why?
- (iii) Do you agree with the proposed arrangements for monitoring the significant effects of the WSSP, as detailed in the Environmental Report? If not, what measures do you propose?

Responses to the Environmental Report were received from the following nine bodies:

- ▶ Environment Protection Agency;
- ▶ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Geological Survey of Ireland);
- ▶ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Inland Fisheries Ireland);
- ▶ Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;
- ▶ Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly;
- ▶ Northern and Western Regional Assembly;
- ▶ Southern Regional Assembly;
- ▶ Sustainable Water Network;
- ▶ Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

A brief overview of the areas of the Environmental Report commented on by these bodies is set out in **Table 4.1**. Detailed responses to the consultation and Irish Water's response are also published in the second Public Consultation Report (PC2) which is available from www.water.ie.

Table 4.1 Summary of Comments Received on the Environmental Report

Consultee	Plans and Programmes	Baseline Information	SEOs	Assessment	Mitigation	Monitoring	Alternatives	The WSSP /Tier 2 Plans/Tier 3 Projects	Other
Environment Protection Agency		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Geological Survey of Ireland)		✓	✓					✓	
Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Inland Fisheries Ireland)								✓	
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht;		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly		✓				✓			
Northern and Western Regional Assembly					✓				

Consultee	Plans and Programmes	Baseline Information	SEOs	Assessment	Mitigation	Monitoring	Alternatives	The WSSP /Tier 2 Plans/Tier 3 Projects	Other
Southern Regional Assembly	✓	✓							
Sustainable Water Network				✓				✓	
Northern Ireland Environment Agency				✓				✓	

4.4 Overview of Submissions

No substantive concerns were raised by consultees in respect of the findings of the SEA. Generally, the responses to consultation focused on the baseline information presented in Appendix C to the Environmental Report and the SEOs.

A number of amendments to the WSSP document were requested, for example, the EPA asked for information on how the SEA informed the preparation of the WSSP and this has been included in this SEA statement. The EPA also requested that the monitoring programme within the SEA be linked with WSSP implementation and monitoring. The monitoring framework presented in the Environmental Report has been updated in response to this submission and is presented in **Section 6** of this SEA Statement.

The submission from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht requested reference to the recent Article 17 reports and improved integration of the ecological issues between the Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The NIS has been updated to reflect this. Further information on the timelines for the implementation of the Tier 2 plans was requested and this has been included within the WSSP. Corrections to minor inaccuracies in the Environmental Report and NIS were also noted.

4.5 Conclusion on Submissions

The submissions received to consultation on the Environmental Report would not be expected to materially affect the outcome of the assessment and in consequence, Irish Water has determined that no further assessment of the WSSP is necessary. Notwithstanding, Irish Water will take account of the comments in any future SEA of Tier 2 plans.

Where comments have been received in relation to additional mitigation, these have been considered by Irish Water in preparing the final WSSP. In particular, the following amendments have been made to the WSSP as a result of the responses received:

- ▶ the text of Strategy EN1e has been expanded to include reference to archaeology; and
- ▶ a statement has been included in the WSSP in relation to the environment in Northern Ireland in order to avoid or minimise trans-boundary negative effects (see Strategy EN1e).

Additionally, comments made in relation to monitoring the implementation of the WSSP have been considered in finalising the monitoring framework which is detailed in **Section 6** of this SEA Statement.

5. The Reasons for Choosing the Water Services Strategic Plan as Adopted, in Light of the Other Reasonable Alternatives Dealt With

The findings of the assessment of the draft WSSP contained in the Environmental Report confirmed that the implementation of the plan is likely to have positive environmental effects. This principally reflects the emphasis of the WSSP aims and strategies on the sustainable management of water resources, compliance with the UWWTD and support for measures to achieve WFD water body objectives. No significant negative environmental effects are anticipated, although the assessment identified the potential for the WSSP to have minor negative effects on Biodiversity; Population and Human Health; Water Quality and Quantity; Air and Climatic Factors; Soil; and Landscape (potential effects on Cultural Heritage are considered to be uncertain at this stage) principally due to short term effects related to the construction of new infrastructure identified in Tier 2 plans. The Natura Impact Statement has also concluded that the WSSP will have no significant and adverse effects on any European sites, alone or 'in combination' with other plans and programmes. The potential for Tier 2 plans and Tier 3 projects to have significant and adverse effects on any European sites, alone or 'in combination' with other plans and programmes will be considered within the environmental assessments for these plans and projects when required and appropriate mitigation will be proposed.

The 'Successional WSSP' alternative is based on the principle that the management of water services would continue with previous management practices. This would include the retention of existing water treatment plants managed on an individual basis and investment on large capital works including major improvements at larger wastewater treatment plants. The assessment of this alternative contained in the Environmental Report found that, similar to the WSSP, a 'Successional WSSP' would be expected to have minor negative effects across a number of the SEOs due to construction-related environmental effects. However, the assessment also revealed that whilst investment in large capital works would be expected to enhance water quality and drinking water supply in some areas (with associated benefits in terms of aquatic ecology and human health), these positive effects would not be uniform. Some areas of Ireland would continue to receive substandard drinking water supply whilst the status of some water bodies would not be improved. Furthermore, the approach would restrict the potential for Irish Water to adopt a strategic approach to the management of its assets which could mean that investment, operational improvements and maintenance would not be targeted where greatest benefit would be delivered. In consequence, the 'Successional WSSP' has been determined through the SEA as not the preferred alternative from an environmental perspective.

More broadly, Irish Water currently operates a fragmented network of water and wastewater services. The assets are wide ranging in their type, operation, efficiency and effectiveness. The origins of this position lie in the dispersed and rural nature of a significant part of the Irish population and the development of water and wastewater services along local authority boundaries.

Drinking water quality in many supplies does not meet the standard required by the European Drinking Water Directive and Irish Drinking Water Regulations. This is due to the quality of the water source and the performance of the treatment plant and network. Water abstractions have in many areas been sourced from smaller water bodies (lakes, rivers or groundwater) which are not capable of meeting future growth in demand. Likewise, smaller water bodies have a lower capacity to accept discharges from wastewater treatment plants without significant impact to the ecology (fish, invertebrates and plants).

The resilience (i.e. reliability, security and ability to cope with change) of water and wastewater services is weak in many areas with networks reliant on a single source, treatment plant or storage reservoir and low headroom (additional capacity above that required to deliver its service).

Cost effective provision of water and wastewater services becomes more possible as Irish Water consolidate toward resilient, interconnected regional supply networks, served by larger treatment plants, where an actual emerging need for water, or wastewater capacity, can be planned, and readily delivered from a capacity reserve, subsequently replenished.

The adopted WSSP is based on consolidation and interconnection of water assets, so that constructed capacity is more regionally deployable and cost effective offers a number of advantages. It will improve



security of supply of services through interconnection and enable national planning for future provision of water services. It aims to be safe, sustainable and affordable.

A continuity of the current local scale provision of water and wastewater services under a 'Successional WSSP' would not be as cost effective as a regionally planned business model and will result in some water services continuing to struggle to meet standards for drinking water quality and wastewater discharges and measures required under the WFD.

6. The Measures Decided Concerning Monitoring

The SEA Directive requires the significant environmental effects of implementing a plan to be monitored. Monitoring the environmental effects of the WSSP can help to answer questions such as:

- ▶ Were the SEA predictions of effects accurate?
- ▶ Is the WSSP contributing to the achievement of the SEOs?
- ▶ Are mitigation measures performing as well as expected?
- ▶ Are there any adverse effects? Are these within acceptable limits, or is remedial action desirable?

Monitoring the effects of the implementation of the WSSP will focus on:

- ▶ Significant effects that may give rise to irreversible damage, with a view to identifying trends before such damage is caused; and
- ▶ Significant effects where there was uncertainty in the SEA and where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigation measures to be undertaken.

Consistent with the proposals in the Environmental Report, potential effects against all of the SEOs have been included in the monitoring framework, which is set out in **Table 6.1**. The proposed indicators are integrated into, and consistent with, those in the WSSP to ensure that they are carried through into further stages of implementation. The sources are also consistent with: the River Basin Management Plans and their associated SEAs; data which is monitored to comply with the WFD; and EPA drinking water quality monitoring data.

Table 6.1 Monitoring Indicators

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)	SEO Targets	SEA Indicators	Data Source
1. Prevent damage to terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species resulting from Irish Water's activities.	Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation to be unaffected by implementation of WSSP ³ .	The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species (Article 17 Conservation Status Assessments reports due every 6 years, current reports published in 2013). (Ire and NI)	NPWS/NIEA
		WSSP indicators in relation to "operating water services infrastructure in a manner that facilitates the achievement of the water body objectives under the WFD and IW's obligations under the Birds and Habitats Directives".	Irish Water

³ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available; (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and, (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)	SEO Targets	SEA Indicators	Data Source
<p>2. Protect and reduce risk to human health in undertaking water services.</p>	<p>WSSP to contribute to the achievement of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All drinking water areas (including groundwater), as identified on the register of protected areas, to achieve good status, or maintain high status. All bathing waters, as identified on the register of protected areas, to achieve good status, or maintain high status. All economic shellfish waters, as identified on the register of protected areas, to achieve good status, or maintain high status. All water bodies designated for salmonids, as identified on the register of protected areas, to achieve good status, or maintain high status. Long term reduction in drinking water restriction notices. 	<p>WSSP indicators and targets in the 'Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply' Strategic Objective.</p> <p>WSSP indicators and targets in the 'Provide Effective Wastewater Management' Strategic Objective.</p>	<p>Irish Water & EPA</p> <p>Irish Water & EPA</p>
<p>3. Prevent deterioration of the status of water bodies with regard to quality and quantity due to Irish Water activities and contribute towards the improvement of water body status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters and groundwaters to at least good status, as appropriate to the Water Framework Directive.</p>	<p>WSSP to contribute to the achievement of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No deterioration in status of waters currently with high or good status (WFD Objective). Restoration to good status of waters currently at moderate, poor or bad status (WFD Objective). Progressively reduce chemical pollution in waters (WFD). Limit pollution inputs to groundwaters and prevent deterioration (WFD Objective). 	<p>WSSP indicators and targets in the 'Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply' Strategic Objective.</p> <p>WSSP indicators and targets in the 'Provide Effective Wastewater Management' Strategic Objective.</p>	<p>Irish Water & EPA</p>
<p>4. Minimise increases in flood risk resulting from Irish Water's activities.</p>	<p>No increase in properties at risk from flooding as a result of Irish Water's activities.</p>	<p>WSSP indicator and target under Aim WW2 (Number of incidents of sewer flooding of properties).</p> <p>WSSP Strategy EN1e with completion of Flood Risk Assessments to planning requirements (where required).</p>	<p>Irish Water</p> <p>Irish Water</p>

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)	SEO Targets	SEA Indicators	Data Source
5. Minimise contributions to climate change and emissions to air (including greenhouse gas emissions) as a result of Irish Water activities and ensure the resilience of water supply and treatment infrastructure to the effects of climate change.	Improve energy efficiency by 33% by 2020 (from the 2009 baseline).	Preparation and implementation of the Sustainable Energy Strategy [EN1b]. Report % increase in overall energy efficiency at Irish Water facilities.	Irish Water
	Compliance with odour criteria to prevent deterioration in amenity beyond the site boundary as set out in license for new or upgraded wastewater infrastructure.	Number of complaints received related to odour.	Irish Water
	Ensure resilience of infrastructure to the effects of climate change	Preparation and implementation of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy [EN1c]	Irish Water
6. Provide new, and upgrade existing, water and wastewater management infrastructure to protect human health and ecological status of water bodies.	Interim Target: Increase investment in water services infrastructure.	Interim Indicator: Water services investment expenditure per annum.	Irish Water
	Long Term Target: Full compliance with the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive and Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and their associated regulations.	Long Term Indicator: Number of exceedances of the Emission Limit Values (ELVs) for Wastewater Treatment Discharge consents set by the EPA.	EPA
7. Protect water as an economic resource.	Achieve a reduction in leakage.	Meet the leakage targets set in WSSP Aim WS3.	Irish Water
	Achieve sustainable use of water in the context of maintaining its economic benefit.	Change in economic value of water relative to the baseline report The Economic Analysis of Water Use in Ireland.	EPA economic studies for the 2nd cycle of RBMP.
8. Avoid conflicts with, and contribute towards, where possible, the appropriate management of soils.	Avoid conflicts with, and contribute towards, where possible, the appropriate management of peatlands as per the National Peatlands Strategy.	The status of raised bogs as reported to the EU (report due every 6 years, latest report in 2013).	NPWS
9. Avoid damage to cultural heritage resources resulting from Irish Water's activities.	No unauthorised physical damage or alteration of the context of cultural heritage features due to Irish Water activities.	Implementation of Strategy EN1e [Adherence to environmental and planning legislation]	Irish Water
		Any change in the condition of monuments on the Record of Monuments and Places due to Irish Water activities.	Archaeological Survey of Ireland Sites and Monuments Record

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)	SEO Targets	SEA Indicators	Data Source
10. Avoid damage to designated landscapes resulting from Irish Water's activities.	Avoid damage to designated landscapes as a result of WSSP implementation.	Compliance with WSSP Strategy EN1e [Adherence to environmental and planning legislation]	Irish Water

It should be noted that the indicators and targets that comprise the monitoring framework represent high level and wide ranging environmental parameters derived from existing plans and programmes and are not the sole responsibility of Irish Water. The indicators and the achievement of associated targets will be influenced by a range of factors including the activities of other sectors and Irish Water will need to take a broad view of the findings of ongoing monitoring processes to identify whether the WSSP has any significant unforeseen effects. Where these are identified, Irish Water may need to put in place specific monitoring arrangements and will consider how best to mitigate or avoid the adverse consequences.

Irish Water recognises that there is some uncertainty relating to the outcomes of the WSSP which reflects the high level nature of the Plan. However, as set out in **Section 3.2**, it is anticipated that more detailed assessments (i.e. SEA and AA and, at a project level, EIA) of outcomes from the WSSP (e.g. Tier 2 plans and Tier 3 projects) will be undertaken as appropriate. These assessments will help to identify any potentially unforeseen or unknown effects arising from the WSSP and, further, will define more specific/detailed monitoring indicators. In this context, detailed monitoring programmes (including environmental monitoring) will be developed for the national Tier 2 plans, as appropriate.

Appendix A

Compliance with SEA Regulations

Table A.1 details the SEA Regulations’ requirements of the post adoption procedures and indicates where relevant information required can be found in this report.

Table A.1 Compliance of this Report with the Requirements of the SEA Regulations

SEA Regulations Requirement	Location in this SEA Statement (where appropriate)
Information on decision (SEA regulation 16)	
<p>1. As soon as practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, the competent authority shall—</p> <p>(a) send notice of adoption of, and a copy of, the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, and a copy of the statement referred to in sub-article (2)(b) to the environmental authorities specified in article 9(5), as appropriate, and</p> <p>(b) publish notice of the adoption of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, in at least one newspaper with a sufficiently large circulation in the area covered by the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme.</p> <p>2. A notice under sub-article (1)(b) shall state that</p> <p>(a) a copy of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, is available for inspection at a stated place or places and at stated times and a copy shall be kept available for inspection accordingly, and</p> <p>(b) a statement is also available for inspection (which summarises the matters outlined below)..</p>	<p>Irish Water, as the competent authority, will send notice of the adoption of the WSSP, the WSSP itself and this SEA Statement to the environmental authorities subsequent to the Ministers approval of the WSSP.</p> <p>Irish Water will publish notice of the adoption subsequent to the Ministers approval..</p> <p>A copy of the WSSP and accompanying reports and documentation are available at: http://www.water.ie/</p> <p>A paper copy of the WSSP, Environmental Report and this SEA Statement are available for public viewing at: Colvill House, Talbot Street, Dublin 1.</p> <p>The office is open from 9 am until 5 pm Monday to Friday</p> <p>This SEA Statement addresses 2(b) and contains particulars specified in the Regulations as outlined below.</p>
<p>The particulars under 2(b) are:</p> <p>(i) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme,</p> <p>(ii) how:</p> <p>(I) the environmental report prepared pursuant to article 12,</p> <p>(II) submissions and observations made to the competent authority in response to a notice under article 13, and</p> <p>(III) any consultations under article 14,</p> <p>have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme,</p> <p>(iii) the reasons for choosing the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and</p> <p>(iv) the measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with article 17, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme.</p>	<p>Section 2</p> <p>Section 3 and Section 4. Further detail is provided in the second Public Consultation Report (PC2) which is available from www.water.ie.</p> <p>Section 5</p> <p>Section 6</p>

SEA Regulations Requirement	Location in this SEA Statement (where appropriate)
<p>Monitoring (SEA regulation 17)</p> <p>The competent authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action and, for this purpose, existing monitoring arrangements may be used, if appropriate, with a view to avoiding duplication of monitoring.</p>	<p>Monitoring procedures are set out in Section 6. Irish Water will identify effects and undertake remedial action (as necessary) as the WSSP is implemented.</p> <p>The monitoring procedures set out in Section 6 will complement existing monitoring arrangements where possible.</p>