# BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN EIA CHECKLIST FOR PLANNERS

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#### OUTLINE

Biodiversity in EIA

Best practice approach and guidance

Ecological impact assessment checklist – adapted from CIEEM

https://cieem.net

Ireland is already losing much of what is important in its environment. Unspoilt areas are being squeezed out and we are losing our pristine waters and the habitats that provide vital spaces for biodiversity.

We seem unable to stem the tide of natures destruction and may not fully understand its full impact



# BIODIVERSITY IN EIA

Ecological impact assessment (EcIA) is the process of identifying, quantifying and evaluating the potential effects of development related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems (CIEEM 2019)

Provides the biodiversity component for EIA (EIA Directive 2014/52/EU)





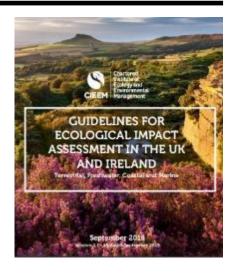
# BEST PRACTICE APPROACH AND GUIDANCE

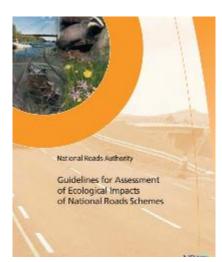
- General: EPA Guidance,
   Department Guidance
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
- Industry specific guidance
- Habitats, GIS mapping, ecological survey methods

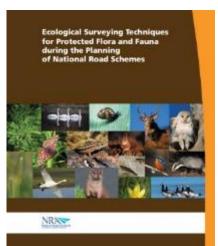


ON THE INFORMATION TO BE CONTAINED IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORTS

> DRAFT AUGUST 2017







#### BIODIVERSITY/ ECIA CRITERIA ADAPTED FROM CIEEM (2019)

#### Pre-app/scope

Consultation
Scope, structure,
content in line with
best practice
Proportionate

## Surveys, sites, species & habitats

Adequate and up to date
All key sites id
Protected species, habitats, adequate survey
Invasive species
Detailed survey

#### Impacts and effects

Clearly defined development
Likely significant effects
Cumulative
Geographic scale
Interactions with other topics – water, soils etc.

## Mitigation, compensation & enhancement

Mitigation hierarchy
Measures,
effectiveness
Monitoring
Any licenses
Summary tables
Proposals for
ecological
enhancement/
biodiversity net gain

#### Competence/ good practice

Limitations
Timing issues
Survey work
Ecologists and
surveyors competent

#### Conclusions

Compliance with relevant legislation, policy etc., Clear summary, justifiable conclusions based on sound professional judgement

#### Pre-app/scope

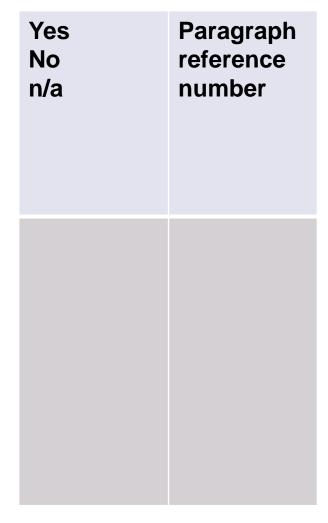
- 1. Where pre- application advice has been received from the Local Planning Authority/ABP, statutory body (NPWS, IFI) or an NGO it has been fully account for in the assessment
- 2. Scope, structure, content in line with best practice

Yes No n/a	Paragraph reference number

#### Surveys, sites, species & habitats

#### 3. Adequate and up to date

- Desk study
- Habitat/ multidisciplinary survey
- Detailed species or habitat specific surveys undertaken
- 4. All key sites identified: SAC, SPA, NHA, pNHA, other
- 5. All protected species, habitats likely to be affected are clearly and correctly identified, adequate survey to inform baseline
- 6. Invasive and non-native species considered and recorded where present
- 7. Detailed survey results submitted



#### Impacts and effects

- 8. Clearly defined development proposals along with relevant drawings/plans
- 9. The report clearly describes and assesses all likely significant ecological effects including cumulative effects. Geographical scale, magnitude, duration of effects are described etc. All stages of the proposal considered.
- 10. References made to scientific literature where relevant.

Yes No n/a	Paragraph reference number

### Mitigation, compensation and *enhancement*

- 10. Mitigation hierarchy has been followed (Avoid, minimize, compensate for loss)
- 11. Report sets out:

Proposed mitigation and compensation measures and how they will address all likely significant effects

Link to any CEMP or EOP

Includes any necessary post-construction monitoring, Ecological Clerk of works etc.

Recommendations on measures to be secured through planning conditions, licenses etc.

- 12. Includes a mitigation summary table
- 13. Need for any mitigation licenses or derogations for protected species clearly identified
- 14. Proposals to deliver ecological enhancement / Biodiversity net gain provided ?

Yes No n/a	Paragraph reference number

#### Competence/Good Practice

- 15. Any limitations of the ecological work identified, and implications explained
- 16. All relevant timing issues (e.g. vegetation removal, roof removal) that may constrain or affect the timing of the development have been identified
- 17. All ecological work and surveys are in line with published good practice methods and guidelines and where there is any deviation it is made clear and justified and any implications for the overall conclusions made explicit
- 18. All ecologists and surveyors have necessary competencies to do the work and hold appropriate species licenses (e.g. for Bats, bird ringing) as needed.

Yes No n/a	Paragraph reference number

#### Conclusions

- 19. The report identifies compliance with relevant legislation and policy, highlighting any non- compliance issues or where conclusions cannot be drawn (e.g. non ecological issues)
- 20. The report provides a clear summary of biodiversity losses and any gains
- 21. Justifiable conclusions based on sound professional judgement made as to the significance of effects on any designated site, protected habitat or species or tother ecological feature and a scale of significate stated

Yes No n/a	Paragraph reference number



#### **SUMMARY**

**Proportionate** 

In-line with best practice guidance and recommendations

Include Ecologist / ecology team early in project

Competencies of ecologists/ specialists and professional memberships

Apply a checklist in <u>review</u>
Apply checklist in <u>assessment</u>





#### **KEY REFERENCES**

Links:

https://cieem.net/resource/ecological-impact-assessment-ecia-checklist/

https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ECIA-Guidelines-2018-Terrestrial-Freshwater-Coastal-and-Marine-V1.1Update.pdf



#### THANK YOU

Please post questions for panel discussion