

SEA Review - General Questionnaire

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General Survey

Thank you for your interest in providing us with your views on SEA in Scotland. This survey is aimed at those who have a general interest in the effective operation of SEA in Scotland. This may include statutory Consultation Authorities, NGOs, stakeholders who have commented on or input to assessments. This survey asks about your perceptions and experiences of SEA as practiced in Scotland.

Instructions for Completing this Survey

The survey is self explanatory and in many cases offers choices from drop down menus or to tick a box. There are also opportunities to provide free text to explain your views where necessary (up to 500 characters). There are however some brief instructions which we would be grateful if you could follow:

- Please complete this survey based on your experiences as an individual, not from your organisation. We want your honest views of how you think SEA has worked and how it has helped you as a stakeholder to engage in planmaking processes. Please note that all responses will be anonymised and no individual respondent or plan/SEA that you provide views upon will be identified
- For this work we are looking for views on Scottish SEA experience only – ie on plans and programmes that qualify for SEA under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 or the previous 2004 regulations.
- The survey is broken down into 5 parts. At the end of each part you may save and return later. To save and return later, please click on "exit this survey" The progress bar at the top of the screen will tell you how far you have progressed. It should take around 20-30 minutes to complete.

The five parts are:

- Part 1 - Basic Information
- Part 2 - Stakeholder engagement in SEA - Your Experiences
- PART 3 – Influence of sea over plan content and decision making
- Part 4 - Overall perception of SEA in Scotland
- Part 5 - How can we deliver improvements?

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PART 1 – BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION

In this part, we are looking for some basic details about you and the organisation you represent. This will help us to understand if there are any correlations between types of organisation and how effective SEA is considered to be.

*** 1. Which one of the following groups best describes your organisation?**

Other (please specify)

*** 2. How would you describe your main interest in SEA practice in Scotland?**

Other (please specify)

3. Which SEA topics are you/your organisation most interested in? (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All topics | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil | <input type="checkbox"/> Material Assets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity (incl flora and fauna) | <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Climatic Factors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population | <input type="checkbox"/> Air | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage | |

*** 4. How would you describe your experience of SEA in Scotland?**

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PART 2- STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN SEA – YOUR EXPERIENCES

This section is aimed at those stakeholders that have been involved in consultation on SEAs. It aims to secure views about how the consultation process worked and how you as a stakeholder in the process felt that your views were considered.

If you have not been involved in responding to SEA consultations, then you may go straight to the next part by clicking "next section" at the bottom of this page

1. Approximately how many SEA consultations do you / your organisation respond to each year?

- One or two
- Up to 5
- Between 5 and 10
- Between 10 and 20
- Between 20 and 50
- More than 50
- Don't know

2. What stages of SEA do you / your organisation normally get involved? (tick all that apply)

- Scoping
- Providing information to help prepare the environmental baseline
- Advising / helping the assessment process
- When Environmental Report published
- Post adoption stage
- Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

3. How do you / your organisation usually become aware of SEA consultations? (tick all that apply)

- Directly contacted by the Responsible Authority doing the SEA
- Via Responsible Authority website
- Public events / workshops
- Newsletters and other publications
- Via Scottish Government SEA Gateway
- Through my organisation's consultation and tracking process
- Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

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4. Please provide your views on the following statements about you/your organisation's engagement on SEA consultations

| | Strongly agree | Agree | No view | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| SEA consultation documents are generally easy to access | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA consultation documents are generally easy to read and understand | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA documents are generally accurate and of good quality | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Timescales for SEA consultations are generally reasonable | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Responsible Authorities are generally effective at engaging stakeholders in their SEA processes | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, it is clear how my response on the SEA consultation would be taken into account | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, I feel that I have sufficient knowledge of the SEA process to respond to consultations effectively | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, I am aware of when an SEA consultation is taking place | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I use the Scottish Government SEA database to track SEA consultations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

If you answered "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" to any of the questions above it would be helpful if you could provide reasons for your view

5. What guidance have you referred to in preparing SEA consultation responses? (please tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Govt SEA Toolkit | <input type="checkbox"/> SNIFFER guidance on air, water and soil (www.seaguidance.org.uk) | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal guidance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Govt Introduction to SEA | <input type="checkbox"/> UK Practical Guide to SEA | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Govt PAN on SEA and Development Plans | <input type="checkbox"/> English topic guidance | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Govt climate change and SEA guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh topic guidance | |

Other (please specify)

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6. To what extent was the guidance that you referred to helpful when preparing SEA consultation responses? (please answer for those that you have used)

| | Very helpful | Helpful | No view | Not helpful | Not helpful at all |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Scottish Government SEA Toolkit | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Scottish Government Introduction to SEA | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Scottish Government PAN on SEA and Development Plans | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Scottish Government climate change and SEA guidance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SNIFFER guidance on air, water and soil (www.seaguidance.org.uk) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| UK Practical Guide to SEA | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| English topic guidance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Welsh topic guidance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Internal guidance developed by the Responsible Authority | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Did not use guidance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (please specify)

7. If you answered "Not Helpful at all" or "Not helpful" for any of the Scottish pieces of guidance above, it would be helpful if you could explain here why you think this was the case?

8. Was there a particular issue that you had to resolve for which there was little or no guidance?

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9. Do you think there should be further guidance prepared for other topics in Scotland? If so, which topics (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity (including flora and fauna) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cumulative and other effects | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Determining significance | <input type="checkbox"/> Post adoption procedures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Organisations aspects for delivering SEA | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please define) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Material Assets | <input type="checkbox"/> Public/stakeholder participation | <input type="checkbox"/> No, there is no need for further guidance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and population | <input type="checkbox"/> Mitigation | |

Other

10. Do you think that additional training on SEA processes would be useful for stakeholders / the public to help them engage in the process?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

11. If yes, who do you think should be responsible for this? (please select a maximum of two)

- Scottish Government
- Consultation Authorities (SEPA, SNH & Historic Scotland)
- Consulting body – (Responsible Authorities)
- Stakeholder Groups (eg NGOs)
- Academia
- Private Sector
- Other (please specify)

Other

12. Do you have any examples of where stakeholder engagement in SEA has worked particularly well? Please provide basic details.

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13. What do you think are the main barriers to effective engagement with stakeholders in SEA?

14. If you could offer one piece of advice to other stakeholders engaging in SEA, what would it be?

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PART 3 – INFLUENCE OF SEA OVER PLAN CONTENT AND DECISION MAKING

This part seeks your views on how you think that SEA influences the content of plans and subsequent decision-making.

Where possible, it would be helpful if you could give examples, in the free text boxes, of where something has worked well or not well.

1. Generally what do you think has the most influence on the preparation of the plan? (please tick up to five) In the space in the next question briefly explain why.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The SEA Scoping Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder/ public representations on SEA | <input type="checkbox"/> Driven by commitments in other related RA plans and programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The SEA Environmental Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder/ public representations on plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Driven by Responsible Authority's socio-economic objectives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Consultation Authorities' written responses on the ER | <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings/liaison with stakeholders | <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Government policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Consultation Authorities' written response on the plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Political influence | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings/liaison with Consultation Authorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Single Outcome Agreements | |

Other

2. Briefly explain why

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* 3. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding how you think SEA influences a plan and decisions made on it

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | No view | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Generally I feel that my/my organisation's SEA responses make a difference to the outcome of the plan | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, I feel that my / my organisation's SEA responses are fully taken into account by the Responsible Authority | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, I feel that I am kept informed about how my / my organisation's SEA response is being taken into account | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Generally, I feel that SEA makes decision making on a plan more transparent and accountable | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEAs generally result in direct, significant and clearly demonstrable improvements to a plan | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEAs generally enhance the environmental performance of a plan | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEAs make public bodies consider environmental issues more carefully during plan preparation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEAs generally promote more evidence based policy making | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

If you answered "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" to any of the questions above it would be helpful if you could provide the reason for your view

4. If you have any good examples of where stakeholder engagement has effectively influenced the outcome of a plan, please provide basic details.

5. Is the influence of SEA over a plan restricted by barriers? If so, what do you think these are?

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PART 4 – OVERALL PERCEPTION OF SEA IN SCOTLAND

In this part of the questionnaire we are seeking your general views about how you think SEA is performing in Scotland.

* 1. Please provide your view on the following statements:

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| SEA is currently an effective use of time and resources | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA is only worthwhile if it changes the plan | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA is generally proportionate to the environmental impacts that may result from the plan | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA is most effective if it is carried out in house by the plan-making authority | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA is most effective if it is carried out by independent consultants | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA in the long term will transform planning practices to support more sustainable development | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA allows for effective public/stakeholder participation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA makes relevant environment information available to decision-makers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA outputs are understandable and accessible to stakeholders | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| SEA outputs are understandable and accessible to the public | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

If you answered "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" to any of the questions above it would be helpful if you could provide the reason for your view

2. If you could identify one single most important contribution of SEA to better policymaking in Scotland, what would it be?

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3. If you could identify one single most frustrating aspect of SEA, what would it be?

4. What do you think are the strengths of current SEA practice in Scotland (tick up to four)?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly defined requirements provided by legislation | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved transparency of decision making | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding cumulative and other impacts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robust procedures and processes | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved stakeholder involvement in plan-making | <input type="checkbox"/> Requirement to monitor environmental impacts of a plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and easy to access guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved public involvement in plan-making | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility of approach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well developed methods of assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective mitigation of environmental effects | <input type="checkbox"/> Wider application of SEA in Scotland to cover more plans and programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well developed consultation process and advice received | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental enhancement to plan content | <input type="checkbox"/> The fact that SEA also covers "positive" plans and programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrable influence over plans and programmes | <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to compare alternatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please define) |

Other

5. What do you think are the weaknesses of current SEA practice in Scotland (tick up to four)?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements of legislation unclear | <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation process too restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> Skills and training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly defined processes and procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited influence over plan content / decision making | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of SEA documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor stakeholder engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Inflexible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly understood assessment methods | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor public engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Time consuming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation process too complicated | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate consideration of alternatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Duplication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation process too time consuming | <input type="checkbox"/> Subjectivity / lack of scientific rigour | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please define) |

Other

In the next part we provide opportunities to make suggestions about where improvements to SEA can be made

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PART 5 – HOW CAN WE DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS

This section seeks to get your views generally on how the process of SEA could be improved. Much of this section allows free text answers and we welcome your views.

To help with structure, we have made some suggested areas for comment. You are welcome to use these and / or the general comments box at the bottom of this section. For ease of analysing views, please keep your text concise as possible. There is more space for expanding your views in the final two questions.

1. Do you have any suggestions for changes to the SEA legislation that would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of SEA?

2. Do you have any suggestions for improving stakeholder / public engagement in SEA?

3. Do you have any suggestions for improving the way SEA influences plan making?

4. Do you think that there are any areas of duplication in the SEA process and do you have any suggestions about how they can be avoided?

5. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to guidance?

6. Do you have any suggestions for improving the service offered by the Consultation Authorities?

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7. Do you have any suggestions for improving the proportionality of SEA?

8. What do you think are the biggest barriers to achieving proportionality in SEA?

9. General comments – please insert here any general comments about improvements you feel should be made to enhance the effectiveness of SEA (note, there is no text limit on this box).

10. Last Chance! – If you have any further points about any aspect of SEA in Scotland that you would like to make and have not made elsewhere in this survey, then please provide brief details here.(note, there is no text limit on this box).

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THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you for your time and interest in this review. Your views will be taken into account and included within the review findings. While all of the information we collect will be anonymised, we are looking to follow up this questionnaire with some more detailed interviews. Accordingly, if you are happy to be interviewed as part of this follow up work, we would like to take some basic details from you so that we may contact you.

Many thanks for your assistance.

1. As part of this review, some follow up interviews will be conducted. Would you be happy to be interviewed ?

Yes

No

2. If yes, please provide us with the following contact details

Name

Organisation

Email address

Telephone number