

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## Introduction

### Practitioners Survey – Consultants

#### Introduction

Thank you for your interest in providing us with your views as an SEA practitioner in Scotland. This survey is aimed at those who have undertaken (ie authored) SEAs on behalf of Responsible Authorities. This is most likely to be consultants commissioned by a Responsible Authority to undertake this work. This survey asks very detailed questions about your experiences in undertaking SEA on behalf of a Responsible Authority, including questions on all stages of SEA. It also asks more general questions aimed at securing 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 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 that of your organisation. We want your honest views as a practitioner. Please note that all responses will be anonymised and no individual respondent or plan/SEA will be identified.
- In the first two parts of the survey we need you to answer based on your experiences with one nominated plan. This will allow us to identify whether there are any trends with respect to different types of plan. We do however recognise that you may have been involved in a number of SEAs. We would ask you to choose an example where there were interesting issues or where the process went particularly well or was particularly problematic. The more general questions in parts 3 and 4 provide opportunities for you to raise other examples of issues from other SEAs. Accordingly, part 1 asks you to identify a nominated plan which should be one that you have been closely involved with and which has progressed at least to Environmental Report stage.
- For this work we are looking for Scottish experience only on plans and programmes that qualify for SEA under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 or the previous 2004 regulations. We recognise that as a consultant you may well have undertaken similar work elsewhere in the UK. Parts 3 and 4 of the survey offer opportunities for you to cite good practice more generally and it is in these sections that we would ask you to refer to other UK examples where appropriate.
- The survey is broken down into five 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. Depending on the amount of information you are able to provide. It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete. The five parts are:

PART 1 – Basic information about you and the plan you were commissioned to undertake SEA for

PART 2 – Your experiences

- a) Stakeholder involvement
- b) Consultation Authority liaison
- c) The SEA process
- d) SEA Guidance
- e) Influence over decision making
- f) Integration with Habitats Regulations Assessment

PART 3 – Overall perception of SEA in Scotland

PART 4 – Opportunities for improvement

PART 5 – Next Steps

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 1 – BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEA YOU WERE COMMISSIONED TO UNDERTAKE

In this part, we are looking for some basic details about the SEA that you were commissioned to undertake. This will help us to understand if there are any correlations between types of organisation, types of plans and how effective the SEA was found to be.

**IMPORTANT** –We need you to answer Parts 1 and 2 based on your experiences with one nominated SEA. We recognise that you may have been involved in a number of SEAs, but we need to be able to secure views on specific cases that we may also review documentation for. Accordingly, please identify a plan/SEA that you have been most closely involved with and which has progressed at least to Environmental Report stage.

- \* 1. Please provide the name of the plan which you have nominated to answer Parts 1 – 2 (see note above)**

- \* 2. Which one of the following sectors does the plan cover?**

Other

- \* 3. When was most of the SEA work undertaken for this plan?**

- \* 4. Which one of the following groups describes the organisation(s) that commissioned you to undertake the SEA on their behalf?**

Other

- 5. What was the approximate value of the commission? You may answer in either pounds or in resources. All data will remain confidential and non attributable.**

In answering in ££

If answering in Person Days

Cost

Actual cost if able to provide

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2 (A) – THE SEA PROCESS - SCREENING

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at the screening stage. If you did not screen then move to the next page

**1. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding your experiences of the SEA Screening process. If you did not screen, then move to the next page.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No View - This was managed by the Responsible Authority
a) The screening report was easy to prepare using the templates provided by Scottish Government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Generally, it was straight forward to determine whether the plan was likely to have significant environmental effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The screening stage helped me to focus the subsequent SEA on the key issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Consultation Authorities screening response was helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. If you answered "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" in response to any of the questions above, it would be helpful if you could explain here why you think this was the case**

**3. Beyond your nominated plan, do you have any examples of where identifying significant effects at the screening stage worked particularly well? Please provide brief details.**

Please note: in Part 4 we will give you the opportunity to suggest any improvements to the screening process.



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**4. If you answered "not easy at all" or "not easy" for any of the topics above, it would be helpful if you could provide further details of datasets that were difficult to obtain.**

**\* 5. How easy was it to obtain baseline data from the Consultation Authorities? Please answer for each:**

	Very easy to find	Easy to find	Indifferent	Not easy	Not easy at all	No View, this was managed by the Responsible Authority
SEPA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic Scotland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**\* 6. To what extent was the baseline data in a format that was easy to use? Please answer for each:**

	Very easy to use	Easy to use	Indifferent	Not easy	Not easy at all	No View, this was managed by the Responsible Authority
SEPA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic Scotland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. Did you use any other tools developed by the Responsible Authority to assist with your baseline data collection (eg State of the Environment Reports)? Please provide brief details.**

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details

Please note: in Part 4 we will give you the opportunity to suggest any improvements to the process of collating information for the environmental baseline.

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(A). THE SEA PROCESS - SCOPING

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at the scoping stage. This page looks at the Scoping stage.

### 1. Did you scope any SEA topics out of your assessment?

- Yes
- No

### 2. If yes, what were they? (tick all those that apply)

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity (including 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 |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soil                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Material Assets   |   |

### 3. If yes, what were the main reasons for scoping these topics out? (3 max)

- Determined that plan will have no effects on these topics
- Determined that plan may have some effects, but these were not considered to be significant
- Following advice from Consultation Authorities
- Following representations from other stakeholders
- Benchmarking research indicated other responsible Authorities with similar plans had done this
- Used Scottish Government / other external guidance
- Used internal Responsible Authority guidance
- Specifically requested by the Responsible Authority
- Other

Other (please specify)

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## 4. If no, what were the main reasons for scoping in all of the SEA topics? (tick all those that apply)

- Determined that plan will have significant effects on all topics
- Following advice from Consultation Authorities
- Following representations from other stakeholders
- All scoped in as initial findings unclear
- All scoped in as following a precautionary approach
- All scoped in due to perceived danger of legal challenge
- Following advice in Scottish Government / other external guidance
- Following advice in internal Responsible Authority guidance
- Specific request from Responsible Authority to scope in all SEA topics
- Other (please specify)

Other

## \* 5. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding your Scoping Report:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No View - This was managed by Responsible Authority
a) The Scoping Report provided a good basis upon which to prepare the Environmental Report	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) It was easy to establish the level of detail required for the assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Consultation Authorities scoping response was helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 6. Do you have any examples of where aspects of the scoping process worked particularly well? Please provide brief details.

## 7. Did you prepare a revised Scoping Report following consultation with the Consultation Authorities?

- Yes
- No

Please note: in Part 4 we will give you the opportunity to suggest any improvements to the scoping process.

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(A). THE SEA PROCESS - ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at the Environmental Report stage.

### 1. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding your Environmental Report:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Identifying existing environmental problems was straightforward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) It was easy to gather information about other relevant plans and programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Identifying the significant effects was straightforward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Alternatives were easy to identify and assess	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Identifying cumulative and other effects was straightforward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) It was easy to focus the Environmental Report just on the significant environmental effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) Identifying ways to prevent, reduce or offset adverse effects (ie mitigation measures) was straightforward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h) The process of preparing the Environmental Report was proportionate to the influence it had on the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 2. If you answered "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" for any of the questions above it would be helpful if you could briefly explain why

### 3. Beyond your nominated plan, do you have any examples of where aspects of the Environmental Report preparation process worked particularly well? Please provide brief details.

Please note: in Part 4 we will give you the opportunity to suggest any improvements to the process of preparing Environmental Reports.



# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(A). THE SEA PROCESS - CONSIDERING SEA TOPICS

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at how you considered the SEA topics.

**\* 1. With respect to each of the SEA topics, could you please provide a view on the following:**

	Identifying the significant environmental effects arising from the plan on this topic was straightforward	Considering cumulative and other impacts in relation to this topic was straightforward
Biodiversity (including fauna and flora)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Population	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Human Health	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Soil	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Water	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Air	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Cultural Heritage	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Material Assets	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Climatic Factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Landscape	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**2. If you answered "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" for any of the questions above, it would be helpful if you could briefly explain here why you think this was the case.**

**3. Do you have any examples of where consideration of particular SEA topics has worked well? Please provide brief details.**

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(A). THE SEA PROCESS - POST ADOPTION

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at the post adoption stage. If you have not reached the post adoption stage on your nominated plan, please go to the next section.

### 1. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding post adoption processes:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No View - This was managed by the Responsible Authority
a) It was easy to identify monitoring indicators for the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Preparing the post adoption statement was straightforward	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) A clear roadmap for implementing the mitigation measures was set out and will be followed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 2. If you answered "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree" for any of the questions above, it would be helpful if you could explain here why you think this was the case.

### 3. Do you have any examples of where identifying mitigation or monitoring has worked well? Please provide brief details.

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(A). THE SEA PROCESS - GENERAL POINTS

This section seeks your views on how the process of SEA worked for your nominated plan SEA. This will help us to understand what parts of the SEA process are working well and those which are working less well and where efficiency improvements may need to be made. This page looks at some general points

### 1. What were the key lessons learned from your SEA process?

### 2. On a scale of 1 to 5, in your view to what extent did the Responsible Authority have adequate resources to manage the commission effectively?

- 1 - Significantly fewer resources than needed
- 2 - Fewer resources than needed
- 3 - Unsure
- 4 - Some resources
- 5 - Adequate resources

### 3. On a scale of 1 to 5, in your view, were the time and resources for undertaking the SEA proportionate to the benefits and outcomes?

- 1 - Costs significantly outweighed the benefits
- 2 - Costs outweighed the benefits
- 3 - Cost and benefits about the same
- 4 - Benefits outweighed costs
- 5 - Benefits significantly outweighed the costs

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2(B). STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

This section seeks your views on how stakeholders were engaged in your nominated plan SEA. This is to help us understand what stakeholders were involved and how effective that engagement was.

### 1. Were any stakeholders (over and above the statutory Consultation Authorities) directly involved in the assessment? Please tick those that apply

- Internal stakeholders (eg other Council depts.)
- Other public bodies
- Scottish Government
- Community groups
- Non-Governmental Organisations
- Business groups
- Others (please specify)
- Don't know, this was managed by the Responsible Authority

Other

### 2. Was the Scoping Report made available to other stakeholders beyond the Consultation Authorities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

### 3. Approximately how many responses to the Environmental Report consultation did you receive?

- Consultation Authorities only
- Consultation Authorities and up to 5 others
- Consultation Authorities and up to 10 others
- Consultation Authorities and up to 20 others
- Consultation Authorities and more than 20
- Don't know, this was managed by the Responsible Authority

### 4. What would you suggest are the main barriers to engagement with stakeholders and the public?

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



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**\* 6. Did you find any of the Consultation Authority responses unreasonable (eg difficult to implement, not relevant to the plan in question)? Please answer for**

	Yes	No	Don't know, this was managed by the Responsible Authority
SEPA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic Scotland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If yes, please provide details.

**7. Over and above the written responses, did you meet with the Consultation Authorities during your SEA or contact them in other ways?**

	Yes	No	Don't know, this was managed by the Responsible Authority
Meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Phone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. If yes, how useful were these contacts in helping you complete the SEA? Please answer for each:**

	Very useful	Useful	Indifferent	Not useful	Not useful at all	Don't know, this was managed by the Responsible Authority
SEPA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic Scotland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. Over and above your nominated plan, do you have any examples of where Consultation Authority engagement has worked particularly well? Please provide basic details**

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2 (D). SEA GUIDANCE

This section seeks your views on SEA guidance that you used in your nominated plan SEA. It seeks to establish what guidance was used and how useful it was.

### \* 1. What guidance did you refer to during your SEA process?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Government SEA Toolkit                      | <input type="checkbox"/> SNIFFER guidance on air, soil and water(www.seaguidance.org.uk) | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal guidance developed by the Responsible Authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Government Introduction to SEA              | <input type="checkbox"/> UK Practical Guide to SEA                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not use guidance                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Government PAN on SEA and Development Plans | <input type="checkbox"/> English topic guidance  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish Government climate change and SEA guidance  | <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh topic guidance  |   |

Other

### 2. To what extent was the guidance that you referred to helpful when undertaking your SEA? (Please answer for those that you used)

	Very helpful	Helpful	Indifferent	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,soil and water (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 RA	<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"/>

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



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## 4. Do you think there should be further guidance prepared for other topics in Scotland? If so, please identify which topics

- Biodiversity (Including flora and fauna)
- Landscape
- Cultural Heritage
- Material Assets
- Health and population
- Cumulative and other effects
- Determining significance
- Organisational aspects for delivering SEA
- Public/stakeholder participation
- Mitigation
- Monitoring
- Post adoption procedures
- No, there is no need for further guidance
- Other (please define)

Other

Please note: in Part 4 we will give you the opportunity to suggest any improvements to guidance.

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2 (E). INFLUENCE OF SEA OVER DECISION MAKING

This section seeks your views on how your nominated SEA actually influenced the plan to which it relates. This will help us to understand the extent of influence SEA is having and to identify opportunity for greater effectiveness in improving the environmental performance of plans.

### 1. Can you please provide a view on the following statements regarding the influence you think your SEA had on the outcome of the plan.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) The SEA made the Responsible Authority you were working for consider issues that they would not normally have done in preparing the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The SEA resulted in direct, significant and clearly demonstrable improvements to the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The SEA identified mitigation or enhancement measures which will provide significant environmental protection over and above what the plan would have delivered anyway	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The SEA enabled all the reasonable alternatives to be fully considered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The SEA ensured that more environmentally sustainable options were taken forward instead	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The SEA promoted more evidence based policy-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) The SEA improved transparency and accountability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 2. If you answered "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" for any of the questions above, it would be helpful if you could let us know why.

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## 3. What had the most influence on the preparation of the plan (please tick up to five)? In the space please briefly explain why.

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

Other

## \* 4. What had the most influence on the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report (please tick top three)? In the space please briefly explain why.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The SEA Scoping Report                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder representations on the SEA  | <input type="checkbox"/> Commitments in other related plans and programmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Consultation Authority written responses   | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder representations on the plan | <input type="checkbox"/> SEAs of other plans and programmes                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings/liaison with Consultation Authorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Political influences                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                            |

Other

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 2 (F). INTEGRATION WITH HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

Some plans, in addition to SEA, also require an assessment under the Habitats Regulations (the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 as amended), including the “appropriate assessment” of the impacts on any Natura interests. This section seeks some basic information about whether this was the case for your nominated plan SEA and, if so, how well this worked. This will help us to consider the interaction of assessment under the Habitats Regulations with SEA.

### 1. Did your nominated plan require an assessment under the Habitats Regulations?

- Yes
- No - If no, go to next section

### 2. If yes, did you integrate this assessment with your SEA ?

- Yes - If yes go to question 4
- No - If no go to next question
- Don't know - go to next section

### 3. If no, what were the reasons for not integrating Appropriate Assessment and SEA?

### 4. If yes, please list what the benefits were that you think resulted

### 5. If yes, please list any drawbacks you experienced

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 3 – OVERALL PERCEPTION OF SEA IN SCOTLAND

This part of the questionnaire seeks to get your views generally on SEA practice in Scotland. We do not need your views in relation to a nominated plan SEA for this section, we are looking for your general thoughts on SEA.

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

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) SEA is an effective use of time and resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) SEA allows decision making to be much more transparent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) SEA is only worthwhile if it changes the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) 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"/>
e) SEA is most effective if it is carried out in house	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) SEA is most effective if it is carried out by consultants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) 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"/>
h) SEA does not delay preparation and implementation of the plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i) SEA allows for effective public/stakeholder participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j) SEA makes relevant environment information available to decision-makers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k) SEA outputs are understandable and accessible to stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l) SEA outputs are understandable and accessible to the public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. If you answered "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" for any of the questions above, it would be helpful if you could let us know why.**

# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

**\* 3. If you could identify one single most important contribution of SEA, what would it be?**

**\* 4. If you could identify one single most frustrating aspect of SEA, what would it be?**

**5. What do you think are the strengths of current SEA practice in Scotland? (4 max)**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <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

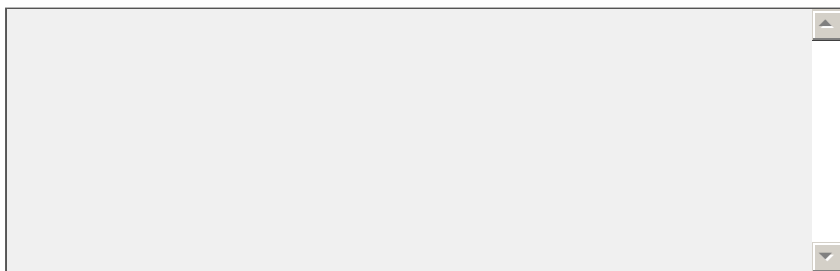
**6. What do you think are the weaknesses of current SEA practice in Scotland? (4 max)**

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

Other

## SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

**7. If you have any further points about the effectiveness of SEA in Scotland that you would like to make and which you have not raised elsewhere in this survey, then please provide brief details here. Part 4 allows you the opportunity to suggest improvements.**



# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 4 – HOW CAN WE DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS

This section seeks to get your views generally on how the process of SEA could be improved. We do not need your views in relation to a nominated plan SEA for this section, we are looking for your general thoughts on how the process of SEA could be enhanced. Much of this section allows free text answers and we welcome your views.

To help with the 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 as concise as possible. There is more space for expanding your views in the last question.

**1. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the Screening stage?**

**2. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the scoping stage?**

**3. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to collation of baseline information/data?**

**4. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the process of identifying significant environmental effects?**

**5. Do you have any suggestions for improving the assessment of alternatives?**

**6. Do you have any suggestions for improving the identification of mitigation measures?**



## SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

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

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

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

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

**11. 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?**

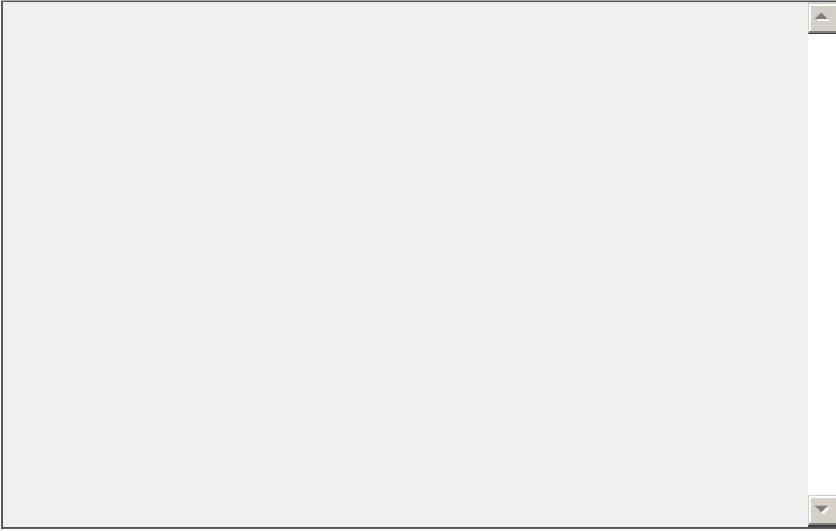
**12. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to guidance?**

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

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

## SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

**15. General comments – please insert here any general comments about improvements you feel should be made to enhance the effectiveness of SEA.**



# SEA Practitioners Survey - Consultants

## PART 5 – 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	<input type="text"/>
Organisation	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>
Telephone number	<input type="text"/>