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# Strategic Environmental Assessment SEA Statement

## of the Wexford Destination and Experience Development Plan

September 2025



## ACRONYMS

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AACH	Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage (AACH)
ABP	An Bord Pleanála
AQ	Air Quality
BFF	Biodiversity Flora and Fauna
C	Climate
CAP	Climate Action Plan
DAFM	Department of the Agriculture, Food & Marine
DAU	Development Applications Unit
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
DEDP	Destination and Experience Development Plan
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage [formerly Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)]
DTCAGSM	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPO	Environmental Protection Objective
ER	Environmental Report
EU	European Union
FI	Fáilte Ireland
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
L	Landscape
LA	Local Authority
L&S	Land and Soils
MA	Material Assets
NATURA 2000	Network of SPAs and SACs
NHA / pNHA	Natural Heritage Area / proposed Natural Heritage Area (designated by EU Habitats Directive)
NIAH	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPF	National Planning Framework
PHH	Population and Human Health
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
ROD	Roughan & O'Donovan
RPS	Record of Protected Structure
SAC (cSAC)	Special Area of Conservation (candidate Special Area of Conservation)
SEO	Strategic Environmental Objective
SO	Strategic Objectives

SPA	Special Protection Area
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
S.I.	Statutory Instrument
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
SRRSEs	Southern Region Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032
SSFRA	Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
W	Water
WCCC	Wexford County Council
WDEDP	Wexford Destination and Experience Development Plan
WFD	Water Framework Directive

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SEA Statement  
of the Wexford Destination and Experience Development Plan**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement has been prepared by Roughan & O'Donovan (ROD) on behalf of Fáilte Ireland (FI) as part of the SEA process of the Wexford Destination and Experience Development Plan (WDEDP), referred to hereafter as “the Plan”.

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic, social and other considerations.

The purpose of this SEA Statement is to document how the SEA process has influenced the Plan including:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- How consultation has influenced the Plan and SEA process;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan in light of the other reasonable alternatives considered; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan.

This SEA Statement should be read in conjunction with the Plan.

### 1.1 Legislative Context

Under the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), of the European Parliament and of the Council, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, referred to hereafter as the “SEA Directive”, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including tourism.

Article 9 of the SEA Directive requires a report on how the findings of the SEA and the results of the associated consultation have been integrated into the plan/programme.

The Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, form the relevant legislation for SEA of tourism plans. Section 13(I) requires that after the making of a plan, the plan or programme making authority is required to make a Statement available to the public and the prescribed environmental authorities.

This SEA Statement must be made available when the plan/programme is formally adopted.

This SEA Statement has been prepared with reference to relevant guidance including, but not limited to:

- *Guidance on SEA Statements and Monitoring* (EPA, 2023)
- *SEA Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities* (2022) Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- *Good practice guidance on SEA for the Tourism Sector* (2023) Environmental Protection Agency; and
- *Good practice guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Landscape* (EPA, 2023).

## 2. SUMMARY OF THE PLAN

The *Wexford Destination & Experience Development Plan* (Wexford DEDP) is a five-year tourism development plan for county Wexford developed by Fáilte Ireland through a programme of research and consultation guided by the V.I.C.E. (Visitor, Industry, Community, Environment) model for sustainable tourism. The framework presented within the plan is based on the views of visitors, the tourism industry and community stakeholders.

It is a non-statutory tourism plan, it does not provide consent, and/ or establishes a framework for granting consent. The Plan sits within a hierarchy of statutory plans from national, regional to local level but does not influence decision-making of either plans or projects.

The Plan has been informed by and is situated within a hierarchy of higher level public policy plans for land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These plans and policies include the *National Planning Framework* (NPF), *Climate Action Plan* (CAP), the *Southern Region Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032* (SRRSEs), and lower tier *Wexford County Development Plan* (WCDP) 2022-2028 and local area plans in the county.

The destination development strategy for county Wexford adopts a spatial approach designed to develop the county's coastal, rural and urban experience. Three areas of focus will guide destination and experience development in Wexford namely, the: Coastal Experience, Tourism Axis Towns, and County Wexford, which represent the three strategic objectives that will guide product and experience development. The key objectives of the Wexford DEDP are:

- Ensure the visitor experience in county Wexford is brought to life through a mix of tourism products and experiences that will attract domestic and international visitors and retain them in the destination for longer.
- Unlock the economic potential of tourism by progressing key initiatives that will disperse tourists across the county.
- Strengthen the value of tourism to local communities by providing sustainable employment opportunities.
- Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development by enhancing and creating compelling destination experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike.
- Create more reasons to attract leisure visitors on a year-round basis to county Wexford and providing the opportunity for visitors to interact with local people as part of an authentic Wexford experience.
- Develop the role of County Wexford as driver of regional tourism development and influence visitor flows across the South East.

Fáilte Ireland recognise the need to integrate environmental considerations into the Plan in a way that responds to the sensitivities and requirements of the wider natural environment. Environmental considerations including inland and coastal water quality and amenity, climate change, traffic, biodiversity, built and cultural heritage, landscape, critical infrastructure and communities, all play a vital part in a sustainable tourism sector. The protection, enhancement and promotion of the most important tourism asset – the natural environment, has been an integral part of the formation of the Plan which was also supported by this SEA process.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland, who will facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans.

The implementation of the Plan is based on stakeholder commitment to project delivery and is structured around a multi-annual action plan. The stakeholders will take ownership or partner on the delivery of the key tasks required to implement the Wexford DEDP. It represents a five-year operational plan providing a commercial destination development focus that builds on existing project plans and integrating all related activity for a co-ordinated programme of activity. This includes projects that are currently being implemented, projects featured in existing plans and new concepts to grow the destination's capacity to increase the value of tourism across Wexford.

### 3. SUMMARY OF SEA PROCESS AND WORK TO DATE

A summary of the key stages of the SEA process with relevance to the development of the Plan is presented in the table below and identifies where we are in the process.

**Table 3-1 Summary of the Key Stages of the SEA Process**

SEA Stage	Role within the SEA Process	Relevance to WDEPD
<b>Screening</b>	<p>Determines whether there would likely be significant environmental effects and if an SEA is required to be undertaken.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive and transposing Regulations S.I. 435/2004 (as amended), Fáilte Ireland undertook an SEA Screening having regard to the criteria in Schedule 1 "Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment".</p>	<p>Fáilte Ireland undertook an SEA screening in March 2024. The screening determined that an SEA is required and to proceed directly to Scoping stage.</p>
<b>Scoping &amp; Consultation</b>	<p>The purpose of Scoping is to scope the SEA environmental factors that will be assessed in the SEA Environmental Report (ER). It also provides any opportunity to consult with the relevant environmental authorities to draw an opinion on the scope and level of detail of the environmental information to be included in the ER. The scoping consultation feedback will inform the preparation of the ER and the Draft Plan, as appropriate.</p>	<p>A Scoping Notice/ Letter was issued by Fáilte Ireland on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 for a period of 4 weeks to the statutory consultative bodies.</p>
<b>Environmental Assessment and Preparation of Environmental Report</b>	<p>The purpose of this stage is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment as a result of the implementation of the Draft Plan as well as the consideration of alternatives. The ER records this assessment and is published with the Draft Plan for public consultation.</p>	<p>The SEA ER and Non-Technical Summary (NTS), which were finalised in June 2025, were prepared through an iterative process involving the SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and the Plan teams. The ER incorporated feedback from the scoping consultation, which informed both the assessment and the development of the Draft Plan.</p>
<b>Consultation</b>	<p>The Draft Plan and the SEA ER and Non-Technical Summary (NTS) are issued for public consultation for a period of no less than 4 weeks.</p>	<p>The Draft Plan, SEA ER and NTS and NIS were published for public consultation from 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2025 to 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2025.</p> <p>The NIS was sent to the Minister for consultation from the 10<sup>th</sup> of June to 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2025.</p> <p>Based on feedback received during the consultation process, the</p>

SEA Stage	Role within the SEA Process	Relevance to WDEPD
		Plan and SEA ER were updated. An updated SEA ER is dated September 2025.
<b>SEA Statement &amp; Monitoring</b>	The purpose of this stage is to identify how environmental considerations and consultation feedback has been taken into account in finalising the Plan. This stage also includes screening any changes for significant environmental effects, if required. Finalisation of the monitoring programme is also undertaken. The output of this stage is the SEA Statement.	Current stage in the process.  The Plan was approved by Fáilte Ireland in July 2025. This SEA Statement was finalised and published after the Final Plan.

### 3.1 Extent to Which Certain Matters are More Appropriately Assessed

There is a recognition as part of the SEA process that certain strategic planning issues have and/ or will be determined at a national level, whereas more detailed/ site-specific issues will be left for consideration at regional and/ or county/ local level as part of the appropriate (plan and/ or project level) decision-making process. The SEA process is concerned with the likely significant and strategic effects that the Plan is likely to have on the environment as a result of its implementation.

When more detailed information is available for the specific plan or project, it will be possible to determine with more precision the likely significant environmental impacts as part of those statutory processes. For example, after the implementation of the Plan:

- At plan level, this could include undertaking the relevant stages of the SEA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) and/ or site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (SSFRA), as required.
- At project level, it will involve any necessary project level assessments for example this could include undertaking Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), AA, and/ or SSFRA or other assessment required as part of the planning or consent process.

## **4. INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO THE PLAN**

This section presents a summary of how the Plan was prepared and the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation of the Plan.

Legislation and guidance relating to SEA recommends that the process of plan preparation, SEA, and AA should be integrated and prepared in an iterative process to facilitate ongoing assessment and evaluation of environmental considerations during the preparation of a Plan. In this regard, a multi-disciplinary team fed into the preparation of the Plan. The SEA process was also informed by the AA processes.

### **4.1 Pre-Plan Work Undertaken**

The Draft Plan was developed through a programme of stakeholder consultation and research process, reflecting the views of visitors, local tourism industry, and the wider community. A programme of international benchmarking was also conducted to assess Wexford County against a number of comparable international tourism destinations, which has informed the development of the Plan.

Fáilte Ireland undertook a pre-plan consultation which invited pre-draft submissions and observations regarding the development of the Plan.

The stakeholder consultation was developed around the VICE model (Visitors, Industry, Community, and Environment) for sustainable tourism, gathering views and input from the tourism industry, local community and visitors to the area. The consultation process undertaken by Fáilte Ireland included:

- Hosting an online workshop providing an opportunity for initial input from communities, tourism industry and local tourism networks.
- Hosting an online survey with input received from tourism businesses, networks and public representatives.
- One-to-one consultation with businesses, community groups, local tourism networks and public representatives.
- One-to-one consultations with senior management and tourism staff from Wexford County Council.
- One-to-one interviews undertaken with visitors during their visit to the area.

### **4.2 SEA Screening**

Screening determines whether it is likely for significant environmental effects on the environment to occur as a result of the implementation of a plan or programme, and if SEA is required to be undertaken.

In accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive and transposing Regulations S.I. 435/2004 (as amended), Fáilte Ireland undertook SEA screening and determined that a SEA is required and to proceed to the SEA Scoping stage.

While the Wexford DEDP is a non-statutory plan and does not form a framework for future development consent, the Plan does fall under the definition of a “plan” contained within the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and therefore, was screened for the need to undertake AA. The Department Circular Letter SEA 1/08 and NPWS 1/08 require that plans which require an AA under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) must also undergo SEA. Taking the above into

account and in order to ensure environmental considerations are integrated into the Draft Plan, it was determined that SEA was required.

### 4.3 Scoping Consultation

Under Article 6 of the SEA Directive, the competent authority preparing the Plan, in this case Fáilte Ireland, is required to consult with specific environmental authorities on the scope and level of detail of information to be included in the ER. Under S.I. 436 of 2004 Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. 201 of 2011, the statutory consultees are:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH) – Development Application Units (DAU).
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Other bodies consulted:

- Department for Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts Gaeltacht, Sport & Media (DTCAGSM).

A Scoping Notice was prepared and issued to the environmental authorities and other bodies on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 for 4-week consultation period (ending on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2024). The environmental authorities were invited to provide submissions or observations related to the level of detail and scope that should be included in the SEA Environmental Report (SEA ER).

A total of three responses were received from the environmental authorities consulted, namely:

- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) - Development Applications Unit (DAU);
- The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) - The Planning Advisory Division and Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) Division and;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The submissions received by the environmental authorities were incorporated into the preparation of the Draft Plan and informed the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SEA ER. A summary of the submissions received, and the responses/ action taken and/ or changes that resulted to the Plan, SEA and AA, is detailed in the Table 4-1 below.

**Table 4-1 Summary of Scoping Submissions and Effect on the Plan and SEA process**

Environmental Authority	Summary of Submission Received	Response/ Effect on the SEA process
<b>Development Applications Unit (DAU) received on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2024</b>		
<b>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage - Development Applications Unit (DAU)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DAU have no comments at present.</li> </ul>	The SEA team thank the DAU for their submission.
<b>Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) received on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2024</b>		
<b>The Planning Advisory Division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC)</b>	<p><b>Planning Advisory Division</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The division asserts the critical importance of using the latest climate and environmental figures for quantitative data and analysis to ensure the Draft Plan appropriately supports the State's climate goals and legally binding targets.</li> </ul>	The DECC's submission and guidance is welcomed. The ER considered the latest quantitative data and analysis which is contained in the Section 5.6 Climate of the ER.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A list of national and sectoral policy, plans and strategies are provided for reference while preparing the SEA. These sources could also to be used as baseline data sources for the ER, where applicable. The following documents are listed for these purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPA's report on Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2022</li> <li>SEAI's report on the National Energy Projections 2023 and associated article</li> <li>Ireland's Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030</li> <li>Sectoral Emissions Ceilings</li> <li>The National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2024</li> <li>Sectoral Adaption Plans made under the NAF</li> <li>The outputs from the National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA)</li> <li>EPA's report on Climate Change in the Irish Minds (CCIM)</li> <li>The Clean Air Strategy</li> <li>The Climate Action Plan 2024</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	These documents listed have informed the preparation of the relevant baseline sections contained in the ER. Appendix A contains a review of the plans and programmes which have informed the preparation of this SEA and the Draft Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The division suggests that the impacts of Draft Plan on the projections of the above reports should be assessed to underpin how the Draft Plan contributes to or works</li> </ul>	The SEA team have considered climate policy and targets during the

Environmental Authority	Summary of Submission Received	Response/ Effect on the SEA process
	<p>against national climate objectives and policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The division recommend referring to the following EU Legislation:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Directive (EU) 2023/2413;</li> <li>○ Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577;</li> <li>○ the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU; and</li> <li>○ the Public Participation Directive 2003/35/EC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>assessment of the Draft Plan as appropriate.</p> <p>The SEA team have considered the recommended legislation, as appropriate. These are included in Appendix A of the SEA ER.</p>
<p><b>The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) Division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC)</b></p>	<p><b>GSI Division</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GSI encourages the promotion of geological value of popular tourist destinations and offer their assistance with any geological tourism initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>The Geological Survey Ireland's submission is noted. The GSI's capacity for input into geological tourism initiatives is also acknowledged.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The division recommends the consultation of publicly available datasets prepared by GSI that are relevant to SEA processes, and provides links to such datasets including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Geological heritage;</li> <li>○ Culture and tourism;</li> <li>○ Dimension Stone/Stone Built Ireland;</li> <li>○ Groundwater;</li> <li>○ Geological mapping;</li> <li>○ Geohazards;</li> <li>○ Historic mines;</li> <li>○ Marine and coastal unit;</li> <li>○ National coastal change assessments; and</li> <li>○ Physiographic units.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The publicly available GSI datasets and maps have informed the preparation of various chapters of the ER baseline as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency received on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2024</b></p>		
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EPA notes the Draft Plan should clearly set out the implementation arrangements and governance structures, including relationships between the Draft Plan and existing national, regional and local plans/programmes and authorities.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any synergies between the Draft Plan and key national policies such as the Climate Action Plan 2024, National Planning Frameworks, etc. should be documented, as appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The SEA team acknowledges the EPA's submission and guidance. The ER has been prepared in accordance with relevant and most recent planning policy on national, regional and local levels. Appendix A contains a review of the plans and programmes which have informed the preparation of this SEA. The synergies between these plans and policies and the Draft Plan have been identified and documented in section 4.</p>

Environmental Authority	Summary of Submission Received	Response/ Effect on the SEA process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The integration of the SEA process into the Draft Plan should be clearly explained. The EPA recommends using summary tables in the ER and the Draft Plan to highlight links between the identified environmental impacts and monitoring/mitigation measures proposed as a result of the SEA process.</li> </ul>	<p>The SEA team have included in section 8 summary tables linking impacts of the Draft Plan and their respective mitigation and monitoring measures in the ER as appropriate.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EPA provided general guidance on the SEA process from scoping to SEA Statement, and links to online resources relevant to the preparation of the Plan and ER.</li> </ul>	<p>The guidance in the EPA's good practice guidelines has informed the SEA team's development of the ER, as appropriate.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EPA states that the SEA ER should incorporate and consider as appropriate, the findings of the EPA's State of the Environment Report 2024.</li> </ul>	<p>The findings of the EPA's State of the Environment Report 2024 have been incorporated by the SEA team as appropriate in the development of the ER.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPA notes requirements to contact statutory environmental authorities.</li> </ul>	<p>The SEA team confirms that all relevant statutory environmental authorities have been contacted, as per SEA requirements.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EPA requests confirmation of receipt of their scoping feedback submission.</li> </ul>	<p>Confirmation of receipt of this submission was confirmed by Fáilte Ireland.</p>

#### 4.4 Preparation of the Environmental Report

An Environmental Report (ER) is required to include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account:

- Current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail in the Draft Plan;
- The stage of the Draft Plan in the decision-making process; and
- The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the decision-making process in order to avoid duplication of environmental assessment.

The preparation of the SEA ER included gathering baseline data, identifying the pressures and threats on environmental receptors, integrating consultation received from environmental authorities during the scoping stage and setting the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for which the provisions of the Draft Plan would be assessed.

This ER details the assessment of the likely significant effects of the Draft Plan and proposes mitigation or monitoring, as appropriate.

It also included identification and assessment of alternatives to the Plan. The likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan were identified and

communicated with the plan-making team. The identification of these potential effects informed the plan-making team in the development of provisions as part of the policy-making process.

The SEA team worked with the plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland to inform the preparation of the Plan. While significant work was already completed on the Plan before the SEA and AA teams were commissioned, the teams worked together to review the Plan and integrate requirements for environmental protection and management. This iterative process included recommending change to the text in the Draft Plan before it went to public consultation. The projects assessed relate to land use, infrastructure development, land use activities, capacity building and/ or developing improved communication and co-ordination between attractions.

#### 4.4.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

The SEOs are methodological measures which have been developed for environmental protection which future environmental effects of the Plan can be measured. The environmental assessment is a qualitative assessment and uses GIS mapping to support the assessment, as appropriate.

In accordance with best practice methodology, the assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan was carried out using an accepted and commonly used methodology of creating an assessment matrix. The SEOs detailed in Table 4-2 are used as standards against which the provisions of the Plan and alternatives were evaluated in order to help identify areas in which likely significant positive and/ or adverse impacts are likely to occur on that SEO.

**Table 4-2 Strategic Environmental Objectives**

Environmental Factor	Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEO)
<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna (BFF)</b>	Protect, actively conserve, prevent damage and, where possible, restore biodiversity, particularly European designated sites, other nature conservation sites, protected and threatened habitats and species (including transboundary priority habitats and species), and support ecological corridors (including riparian zones and coastal areas), green and blue infrastructure.
<b>Population and Human Health (PHH)</b>	Protect, support and sustainably manage resources and tourism development, for the benefit of the society and the environment, and contribute towards the economic development of the population supporting positive health outcomes.
<b>Water (W)</b>	Protect, maintain and, where possible, improve water quality including surface water, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters and any wetlands, while preventing deterioration, supporting the achievement of good water quality status of all water bodies as required by the EU and national legislation, and increasing the resilience and adaptation of tourism sites/ activities to the effects of climate change including flood risk and coastal erosion.
<b>Air quality (AQ)</b>	Contribute to the reduction of air pollution and improvement in air quality resulting from the effective operation and management of sustainable tourism activities.
<b>Climate (C)</b>	Support and promote the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from tourism activities and the development of a climate resilient and adaptive tourism sector.

Environmental Factor	Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEO)
<b>Land and Soils (L&amp;S)</b>	Safeguard existing land and soil resources, protect and improve soil quality, conserve soil, and prevent soil contamination and erosion.
<b>Material Assets (MA)</b>	Sustainably manage, maintain and develop the necessary tourism supporting infrastructure (including water, wastewater, energy supplies, transportation and internet connectivity and associated capacities) and support the development of the circular economy.
<b>Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Heritage (AACH)</b>	Avoid, protect and/ or minimise impacts to designated archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage resources, including their setting and enhance and conserve heritage assets.
<b>Landscape (L)</b>	Avoid conflicts with the protection of designated and sensitive features of note in landscapes and sensitively manage landscape change through sustainable planning.

#### 4.4.2 Assessing the Draft Plan

The assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Draft Plan was carried out using the SEOs which are used to test the actions and/ or projects proposed in the Draft Plan. The assessment is undertaken using an assessment matrix with a commentary provided under the assessment to aid the reader in understanding the rationale for assigning the rating of potential positive, negative or neutral effects. This approach allows the assessment team to explicitly test the likely significant effects against the SEOs to identify which projects support the SEO and which, if any, contradict them. It can also identify uncertain, neutral and/ or not significant effects. Where likely significant effects on the environment are identified as part of the iterative process, additional mitigation measures are recommended in the form of changes to the plan text to be incorporated into the Plan, where necessary. Changes are also recommended to promote or further embed sustainability into the provisions of the Plan.

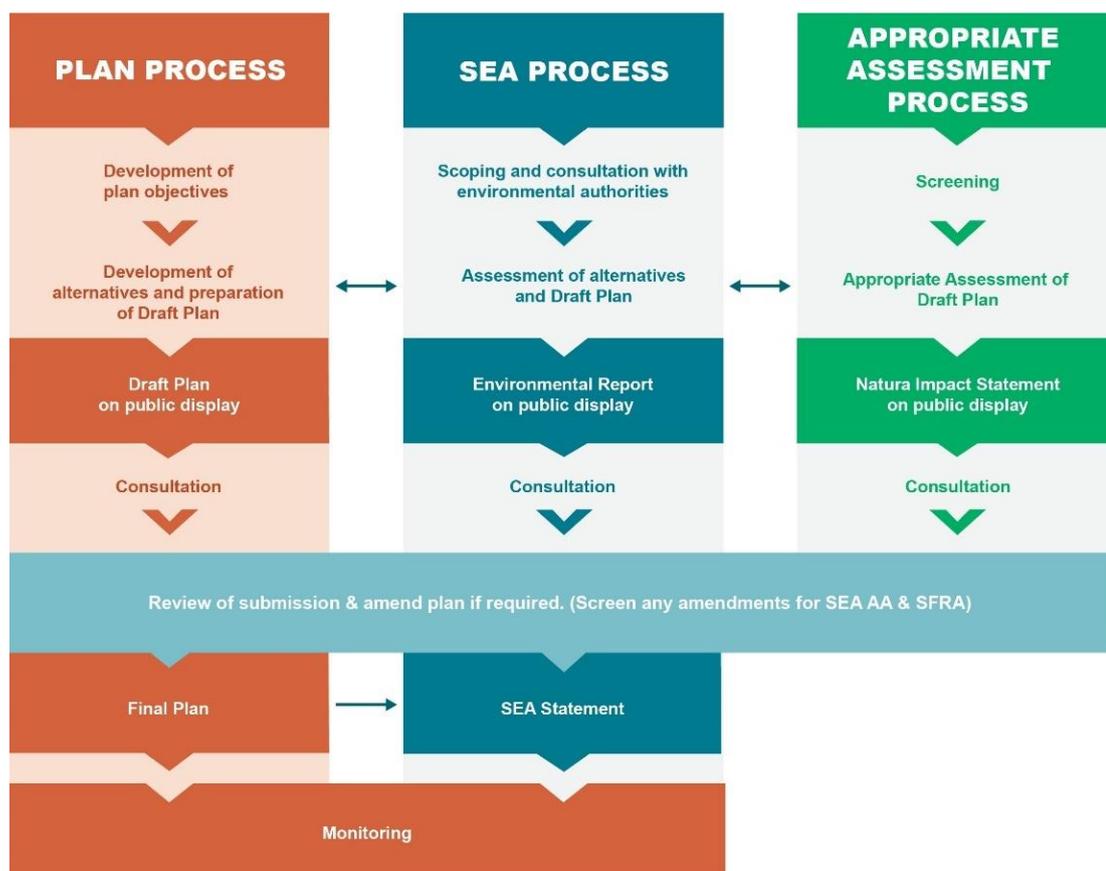
Fáilte Ireland and the plan team reviewed these recommendations, proposed edits, and decided whether to incorporate them into the Plan. The changes made to the Plan are, at this stage, known as embedded mitigation. The Plan text is then reassessed, and the assessment updated accordingly.

This process is detailed in the SEA ER (Section 9) and summarised in Section 6 of this Report illustrating the influence the SEA process had on the Plan.

Prior to finalising the Draft Plan for public consultation, Fáilte Ireland presented the Draft Plan to the Plan Implementation Group in Q1 2025 and responded to their feedback. Further to this, Wexford County Council signed off on the Draft Plan in Q1 2025.

#### 4.5 Integration between the SEA and AA Process

The SEA legislation and associated SEA guidelines indicate that there should be complete integration between the preparation of policy making or, in this case, the Plan and other environmental assessments that might be required. Figure 4-1 illustrates the key stages in the SEA, AA and the plan development processes highlighting the integration between the processes including key stages of consultation feedback as part of the preparation of the Plan.



**Figure 4-1 Integration of the preparation of the Plan with the key stages of the SEA and AA processes.**

An AA Screening was undertaken by ROD on behalf of Fáilte Ireland and found that while the Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site, tourism development and associated activities identified in the Plan have the potential, if unmitigated, to affect the integrity of European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

Therefore, the Draft Plan was subject to a Stage 2 AA, including the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS), providing Fáilte Ireland, as the competent authority, with the information upon which it will base its AA. Stage 2 of the AA considers whether the Plan, in-combination with other plans and projects, will adversely affect the integrity of one or more European site, and includes any mitigation measures to avoid or reduce negative impacts on the habitats and/ or species for which the Natura 2000 sites “screened in” for at Stage 1.

In view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the Conservation Objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites, the NIS for the Plan has determined that, given the full and proper implementation of the mitigation prescribed therein, that the Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

#### **4.6 Consultation on the Draft Plan, SEA ER and AA**

The Draft Plan was placed on public display for a period of 4 weeks. It was accompanied by the associated environmental assessments including the SEA ER and NIS and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The statutory environmental

authorities (listed in Section 4 of this report) were notified and the environmental reports issued to them for consultation.

#### 4.6.1 Submissions on the Draft Plan and Environmental Report

There were two submissions from the statutory environmental authorities namely the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage - Development Applications Unit (DAU) and EPA.

One submission was received from a member of the public, Susan Devane. The submissions are summarised in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4 with a response identifying the resulting changes to the Final Plan and the SEA, as appropriate.

**Table 4-3 Environmental Protection Agency**

Name	Summary of Submission	Response/ Changes to the Plan & SEA
<b>Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) received on the 8th of July 2025</b>		
<b>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage - Development Applications Unit (DAU)</b>	The DAU does not have any issues with the Architectural heritage in respect of the Draft DEDP. However, the DAU has requested updates be made to the Section 5.9 of the SEA ER.	Sections 5.9 of the updated SEA ER (September 2025) has been made to address these comments. The sections have also been reordered to match the heading of the section itself.
<b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received on the 8th of July 2025</b>		
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	EPA welcome a key objective of the Plan is to increase and promote environmentally sustainable tourism in accordance with the VICE model.	Comments received with thanks and are noted.
	<b>Biodiversity Considerations</b> Promoting key ecosystem services in the Plan area through eco-tourism and raising awareness about sustainable tourism can help protect the area's valuable environmental resources, including designated sites and protected species.	Appendix One of the Plan includes consideration of <i>Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem services</i> across all areas of the DEDP which includes eco-tourism.
	<b>Invasive Species Management and Control</b> It is suggested that the Plan could include a commitment to ensure the awareness of the need for management and control of invasive species within the Plan area. This is an important consideration, particularly in relation to promoting and developing or enhancing walking routes and marine activities. Awareness of biosecurity,	The spread of invasive species is considered in the SEA ER and identified as a potential negative effect as a result of the implementation of the Plan and included mitigation through the use of existing policies from the Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028 which address this issue included as part of the mitigation in section 9 of the SEA ER. The CDP Objectives

Name	Summary of Submission	Response/ Changes to the Plan & SEA
	<p>management, monitoring and control and the promotion of these key considerations, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should be a priority.</p>	<p>include NH03, NH19, NH22 NH23, NH24, NH25, NH26 and NH28.</p> <p>However, the SEA team agree that the Plan could specifically address this issue with more clarity, and it is recommended that a new section is included in Appendix One to address the EPAs comment.</p> <p>The Final plan includes a new section under <b>Control and Management of Invasive Species</b> (refer to Section 7.1.1 for text). This amendment was screened for SEA and no likely significant additional effects on the environment are predicted.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency</b></p>	<p>Link between the SEA and the Plan where relevant, and as appropriate, the requirements of the EIA and Habitats Directives should be taken into account. The potential for cumulative effects that may arise from multiple tourism initiatives needs to be a key consideration also. Preparation of environmental management plans to ensure that important natural and cultural resources are afforded the required protection, where appropriate,</p>	<p>Comments are noted and the issues raised are already considered in the DEDP as part of Appendix One and considered in the SEA ER. No changes to the Plan, SEA or AA required.</p>
	<p>The EPA state the DEDP recognises the issues relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in visitor numbers and potential disturbance or damage.</li> <li>• Provision of adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure provision underpinning sustainable development.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are noted and issues raised are considered in the SEA ER and included in the plan as part of Appendix One. No changes to the Plan, SEA or AA required.</p>
	<p>Traffic management The need for effective traffic management including enhancing sustainable modes of travel. The EPA state the DEDP could consider</p>	<p>Comments are noted and issues raised are considered in the DEDP under Strategic Objectives 5 namely, <i>“Develop and encourage increased</i></p>

Name	Summary of Submission	Response/ Changes to the Plan & SEA
	supporting and promoting opportunities for greater use of EVs for tourism related travel and the provision of associated charging infrastructure.	<i>consideration of sustainable transport options.”</i>
	Content of the Environmental report <i>Mitigation Measures</i> Where the potential for likely significant effects is identified, the SEA ER should provide appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimise these. Additionally, the Plan should include clear commitments to implement the mitigation measures identified in the SEA ER.	This recommended mitigation measures have been considered by the Plan team and additions added. This SEA Statement includes the rationale for not incorporating all recommended mitigation changes in Section 6.3. The Environmental Monitoring Programme is sufficient to address likely significant negative effects as a result of the Plan. Furthermore, mitigation measures (policies, plans etc) at the national, regional and local level plans will address identified potential effects resulting from the tourism sector.
	Future amendments to the plan should be screened for likely significant effects.	Any changes to the final plan were screened for likely significant effects and are detailed in the SEA Statement.
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	The contents of what an SEA Statement is required to included is detailed and the list of environmental authorities that need to be consulted.	Noted and included as part of the preparation of this SEA Statement. The environmental authorities have been issued with the SEA Statement.

**Table 4-4 Other Consultation Responses**

Name	Summary of Submission	Response
<b>Susan Devane on the 14th of June 2025</b>		
<b>Susan Devane</b>	The submission suggests making use of existing accommodation rather than building hotels is more sustainable. Their opinion is that AirBnBs attract visitors from all areas of the globe and continue to expand the market for flexible, sustainable, affordable accommodation. These accommodations also generate income and jobs for local communities.	The submission is received with thanks, and the contents of the submission is noted. FI provided a separate response to this submission.

	<p>Many property owners have built small businesses around short-term letting (STR). The author criticises recent legislative changes, including the extension of Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) and the lack of exemption guidelines. They oppose the County Plan's ban on converting granny flats and unused spaces into STRs.</p> <p>The author states that towns like New Ross have many derelict heritage buildings. The author believes STR could help revitalise these areas and reduce over-occupancy by long-term tenants. A diverse mix of accommodation types has historically supported tourism in Wexford.</p> <p>The author has operated Fáilte Ireland-approved farm cottages for 23 years with positive guest feedback. They argue that prohibiting STR would harm the tourism ecosystem and local economy.</p> <p>It requests that Fáilte Ireland should encourage the Department of Enterprise and Tourism to defend the STR sector. Emphasis is placed on the sector's contribution to tourism and its support for a predominantly female workforce.</p>	<p>The DEDP does not have any role in legislation, RPZs or policies within the Development Plan. No changes are made to the Plan or the SEA.</p> <p>Noted. No changes are made to the Plan or the SEA.</p> <p>Noted. No changes are made to the Plan or the SEA.</p> <p>Noted. No changes have been made to the Plan or the SEA.</p>
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#### 4.7 SEA Statement

The SEA Statement provides information on the decision-making process and documents how environmental considerations have been taken into account in the Plan. The SEA Statement is required to report on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan - highlighting the main changes to the Plan from the SEA process;
- How the ER and consultations have been taken into account - summarising the key issues raised in consultations and indicating what action, if any, was taken in response; and
- The reasons for choosing the Plan in light of other reasonable alternatives.

If any material modifications to the Draft Plan are made after the consultation period, these are required to be screened for significant environmental effects by the SEA and AA teams.

## 5. ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with Schedule 2 of S.I.435 of 2004 (as amended), the SEA is required to provide: “an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.” This section presents the reasons for choosing the Plan in light of the other reasonable alternatives considered.

### 5.1 Description of Alternatives

Alternatives are required to be reasonable, realistic and capable of implementation. They must also be set at the appropriate level at which the Plan will be implemented, operating within the planning hierarchy i.e., the higher the level, the more strategic the options are likely to be. Reasonable alternatives were considered by Wexford County Council, taking into account the objectives and geographic scope of the Draft Plan.

The alternatives considered by Fáilte Ireland are:

- (1) Alternative 1: Do-nothing – Continue without the development of a plan.
- (2) Alternative 2A: Do-something – Prepare a plan without environmental consideration.
- (3) Alternative 2B: Do-something – Prepare a plan with environmental consideration.

#### 5.1.1 Alternative 1: Do-Nothing

The socio-economic benefits of tourism in Wexford have yet to be fully realised. Most tourism in Wexford is concentrated in key towns, mainly Wexford Town. This current direction of development is likely to continue in the absence of a plan.

Tourism-related development would continue in a business-as-usual approach, with planning and consent obtained through existing statutory planning and consent framework under the local authority development plan process. Potential negative impacts on environmental factors would continue to be mitigated through that process. In the absence of a plan, tourism numbers are expected to increase during peak seasons, concentrated in popular locations within the county, namely Wexford Town and known visitor destinations.

The option continues to support and realise the objectives set in the *Wexford County Tourism Strategy 2019-2023* and the WCDP, but neglects to address the environmental impacts of the implementation of these plans. The do-nothing option does not provide additional or specialised training and guidance for the development of tourism in Wexford.

#### 5.1.2 Alternative 2A: Do-Something

The do-something option, preparation of a plan without specific environmental considerations, involves implementing some changes to tourism planning in Wexford. This alternative would result in the development of a tourism plan involving coordination with various stakeholders, including local authorities, government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors, to better manage and plan for tourism in the county.

The Draft Plan would explore and propose solutions to the following development challenges:

- Increase tourism employment across the county.

- Unifying Wexford's tourism destinations to create a destination hot spot.
- Support on-going tourism in Wexford, in part by providing year-round attractions.

A Plan would help to promote new experiences, relieving some pressure from existing sites but leading to land use changes as a result of such developments which would not be strategically assessed in advance of being proposed. Notwithstanding this, the existing statutory planning and consent framework would address this issue, however, the promotion of tourism experiences without adequately considering the environment in advance of the planning consent process could lead to delays in projects.

Alternative 2A details plans for the development of tourism across the county and towards the objectives of the Draft Plan without specific inclusion of environmental mitigation as part of the plan making process. Alternative 2A would therefore, not offer any environmental mitigation strategies outside of consent-granting framework requirements.

### 5.1.3 Alternative 2B: Do-something

Alternative 2B includes the consideration of environmental mitigation as part of the Draft Plan. Under this option, Fáilte Ireland would require stakeholders to develop projects in a coordinated manner considering environmental protection, environmental management, and sustainable development from the outset. Environmental requirements would include requirements under existing legislation, plans and policies but would also consider the assessment of existing environmental pressures and threats which in turn, informs the development of the Plan and specific projects.

This alternative would have a more robust procedure where the Plan is developed to consider environmental protection and sustainability in a holistic manner and from the outset. Projects would be developed in a coordinated approach to ensure adequate environmental considerations and mitigation is applied, where necessary, including those outside of the planning system. These include:

- Embedded mitigation (changes to the plan/text itself).
- Development of visitor management strategies.
- Integration of blue and green infrastructure and ecosystem services.

## 5.2 Alternatives Assessment Methodology

The assessment of the alternatives is undertaken with regard to all of the SEOs detailed in Table 4-2. The assessment identifies and compares the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing each alternative. It identifies which alternative has the greatest potential to have negative impacts (-) and potential positive impacts (+) on the environment, while also achieving the Plan objectives.

The assessment considers that the implementation of each alternative is undertaken alongside the necessary environmental assessments and consent applications for relevant plans and projects, limiting the degree to which impacts can be predicted at this stage. The environmental assessment of the alternatives is undertaken for all SEOs.

## 5.3 Reason for choosing the Plan

When comparing the alternatives summarised in Table 5-1 below, Alternative 1 is likely to have a blend of some positive and negative environmental impacts. However, as there is no plan, it is assumed tourism growth will continue in the current ad-hoc pattern and expand, primarily in areas of current high tourism visitor areas, increasing pressure

in existing tourism sites and on supporting infrastructure in these areas. This is likely to lead to potential negative impacts on the environment.

The development of a tourism plan presented by Alternates 2A and 2B will result in a more co-ordinated approach to tourism development. Alternative 2A, without the additional environmental mitigation and management, is likely to deliver on the Draft Plan objectives by promoting tourism development and economic growth, but as it does not explicitly consider environmental protection or management, it has the potential to result in more significant negative effects on the environment than the other alternatives and/ or lead to delays in the implementation phase or the delivery of the Plan itself at planning stage.

Alternative 2B is likely to deliver a more effective and sustainable tourism development approach in County Wexford, providing both the necessary economic growth and environmental protection. On that basis, Alternative 2B has been selected as the preferred option. Alternative 2B meets the Draft Plan objectives, contains the most environmental mitigation opportunities and is likely to result in more significant positive effects and fewer negative effects than Alternatives 1 and 2A.

**Table 5-1 Assessment of Alternatives**

Alternative	Description	Environmental Assessment of All SEOs	Environmental Evaluation
Alternative 1: <b>Do-nothing</b>	No plan is developed; tourism development would continue business as usual. Tourism development would follow the WCDP.	+/-	This alternative would lead to uncoordinated tourism development across the county. With no plan, the objectives of the Draft Plan and the full economic potential for tourism across the county and throughout the year <b>would likely not be realised</b> .  Furthermore, the potential environmental effects of this alternative are expected to result in <b>more negative environmental effects than positive</b> .
Alternative 2A: Prepare a plan <b>without</b> Environmental Consideration	Tourism in County Wexford will be actioned through the preparation of a plan, <b>without</b> environmental considerations.	+/- ?	Alternative 2A will deliver on many aspects of the Draft Plan objectives, especially those related to expanding regional tourism, creating new experiences and opportunities for visitors, and encouraging longer stays.  This alternative may also give rise to unexpected environmental effects, uncertain, positive, or negative effects from a lack of environmental consideration.  It is likely this Alternative will have more negative effects on the environment than the other alternatives and/ or result in delays to new proposals in areas that may not be suitable or prepared for development without mitigation.
Alternative 2B: Prepare a plan <b>with</b>	Tourism in County Wexford will be actioned through the preparation of a	+/-	Alternative 2B supports the objectives of the Draft Plan by encouraging the

Alternative	Description	Environmental Assessment of All SEOs	Environmental Evaluation
Environmental Consideration	plan, <b>with</b> environmental considerations.		sustainable growth of tourism and economic potential of Wexford. It is anticipated that Alternative 2B will result in more positive than negative environmental effects. This is due to the considerations of environmental effects as part of the preparation of the Plan and opportunity for mitigation and monitoring of effects. Alternative 2B is <b>the preferred option</b> from an environmental perspective and delivery of the Draft Plan objectives.

## 6. CHANGES TO THE PLAN AS A RESULT OF THE SEA PROCESS

The SEA is an iterative process and throughout the process it has suggested amendments and/ or recommended additions to the text of the Draft Plan, resulting in the Draft Plan being updated. After the text in the Draft Plan was updated, the text was reassessed and the assessment in the SEA Matrix revised to identify any new or residual effects. In many instances, the assessment of the revised text resulted in the avoidance of potential negative effects and/ or strengthened or supported sustainability or likely beneficial effects across the SEOs.

While not all suggested edits and recommendations were included in the Final Plan overall, it has resulted in integration of environmental protection and sustainability into the Plan. The key changes as a result of the SEA process and how it influenced the Final Plan include:

- Changes to text of projects to explicitly address environmental protection and sustainability considerations;
- General changes to the text in the Draft Plan to improve legibility of the Plan;
- Changes to embed sustainability considerations throughout the text of the Draft Plan, and;
- Inclusion of the environmental monitoring programme in the Final Plan to monitor significant environmental effects as part of the next stage in the process.

### 6.1 Changes to text of projects at SEA ER stage

Key changes to projects as a result of the SEA process presented in the Draft Plan are summarised in the bullet points below.

Under the **Wexford DEDP Catalyst Projects** and the **Wexford DEDP Destination Enabling Projects**, the SEA team recommended the incorporation of sustainability as part of the Projects, as seen below:

- **Project 4.1 - Forth Mountain Activity Centre:** Develop the Forth Mountain Activity Centre as a regional **sustainable** adventure education activity centre combining existing facilities with new opportunities such as biking, extended walking activity infrastructure and water activities.
- **Project 6.3 - Coastal Tourism Centre of Excellence Coastal Experiences:** Examine the requirements to create a coastal activity cluster to include Hook Head Peninsula, Curracloe, Rosslare and Courtown with a focus on developing the **sustainable** coastal tourism activity base for Wexford.
- **Project 7.3 - Wexford Attractions Network:** Identify commercial partners within Wexford visitor attractions to develop a collaborative network with a collective focus on **sustainably** growing the value of international visitors to Wexford.
- **Project 9.2 - Wexford Accommodation Growth:** Build on the County Wexford Accommodation Audit to develop **and sustainably manage** accommodation stock levels across the county and with an immediate focus on New Ross and Wexford Town.
- **Project 12.1 - Wexford Food in Tourism Plan implementation:** Implement the actions from the Wexford Food in Tourism plan to **sustainably** grow the number of food, drink and agrifood experiences accessible throughout the county.
- **Project 13.1 - International Sales Focus:** Develop an international sales training programme for the Wexford tourism industry to develop their capabilities to become

market ready and develop sales plans to **sustainably** grow the value of international visitors to Wexford.

## 6.2 Amendments to the Plan as a result of the SEA process

The SEA process resulted in feedback being provided to the plan team to include general recommendations, these included feedback on formatting to improve legibility, minor text edits some of which were actioned by the plan team. Key amendments included:

- Use of consistent terminology throughout the Plan, for example: Projects are now consistently referred to as “*Destination Enabling Projects*” rather than ‘Enabler Projects’ or other references.

The consistent terminology provides clarity to all and assisted the SEA team to assess the Plan. It will also assist in the SEA monitoring as part of the next stage in the process.

### **Appendix One Environmental**

The SEA team provided significant input in developing Appendix One of the Plan which summarises the SEA and AA process as part of the plan preparation, including the key findings from the processes, the identification of key mitigation and monitoring measures, and the inclusion of the environmental monitoring programme developed and finalised as part of the Final Plan and this SEA Statement stage.

The **requirements for environmental protection** were included as a section in the Appendix One of the Plan. This section includes a summary of the considerations and requirements for environmental protection to be considered by project promoters when actions are being developed. These requirements are replicated in Section 7.1.1 of this report as they form part of the key embedded mitigation measures.

The SEA process resulted in the inclusion of the following into the Plan:

### ***Guiding Principles for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism***

The SEA process recommended including the United Nations Sustainable Tourism Principles<sup>1</sup> which are included in the Plan in Appendix One detailed below:

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance.
3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

### ***Implementation and Consent***

Under the ‘Implementation and Consent’ section of the Plan. The SEA recommended including a number of key planning and environmental policies with which the Plan

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<sup>1</sup> [Sustainable development](#) (United Nations Tourism)

(and any projects developed under the Plan) must take cognisance. The text included is summarised below and ensures that all stakeholders are aware of the policy and planning requirements should these be required as part of the implementation phase.

As previously stated, the Plan is a non-statutory tourism plan, it does not provide consent, and/ or establish a framework for granting consent. Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships.

The Plan has been informed by and is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management.

Implementing the Plan will involve Fáilte Ireland working collaboratively to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, tourism operators, communities and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans.

In order to be realised, projects included in the Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes. (including requirements for project level Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

Such legislation, policies, plans and programmes include:

- Compliance with statutory higher-level plans and policies including but not limited to:
  - National Planning Framework (NPF) (and any revisions);
  - Climate Action Plan (CAP) - updated annually
  - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSESs) for the Southern Region, and
  - Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Local Area Plans in the county.
- Compliance with statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision making and consent granting framework and requirement for project level environmental assessment, including EIA, AA & SSFRA, as required.

### ***Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan***

Appendix One 'Environmental' the SEA process results are summaries and provides guidance to promoters. Under the section resulted, 'Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan', the SEA process recommended mitigation measures are included in the Plan relating to ensuring the sustainable development of the tourism sector and any subsequent Projects that are developed under the Plan.

Key considerations for the sustainable development of the tourism sector and plans include:

- Ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure capacity at destination sites;
- Visitor management plans are developed for sites experiencing high demand and future sites;

- Control and management of invasive species are considered for proposals and the development of Visitor Management Plans; and
- Developers/ promoters protect and provide opportunities for the sustainable development of green and blue infrastructure while also delivering ecosystem services.

These elements are further detailed in Section 7 of this report, which identifies the key mitigation measures embedded into the Plan as a result of the SEA process.

### 6.3 Changes as a result of the SEA process at Final Plan Stage

#### Environmental Monitoring Programme

Despite the SEA team recommending that the Draft Plan include the Draft SEA Environmental Monitoring Programme, it was not included. However, the Final Plan now includes the SEA Environmental Monitoring Programme in **Appendix One** of the Plan. The inclusion of the monitoring programme is in line with best practice and SEA guidance. The environmental monitoring programme will ensure monitoring of significant environmental effects is undertaken as part of the implementation phase of the Plan. The final environmental monitoring programme is replicated in Section 7.4 of this report.

#### Sustainable Tourism Guidance

The SEA team recommended referencing existing sustainable tourism guidance into the Plan so that project promoters can take cognisance of this guidance when developing projects. This was suggested during the Draft Plan stage, however, it was not included. After consultation phase, the plan team included the sustainable tourism guidance in the Final Plan. The recommended Fáilte Ireland guidance documents that were added are detailed in **Appendix One** of the Plan and includes:

- Fáilte Ireland Climate Action Programme.
- Development Guidelines for Tourism Destination Towns.
- Tourist Accommodation Quality Assured – code of ethics.
- Sustainable Festival Guidelines 2023, developed by Fáilte Ireland.

#### Control and Management of Invasive Species

As part of the SEA consultation process, the EPA suggested additional text is included in the final Plan to address the control and management of invasive species. Additional text was added in **Appendix One** under a new section, **Control and Management of Invasive Species** (refer to Section 7.1.1 of this report for the additional text).

All of the amendments to the Plan were screened for likely significant effects on the environment. No likely significant effects were identified, over and above those already identified at the SEA ER stage. The amendments ensure further environmental protection and management is built into the Plan and will be carried forward at the implementation stage.

### 6.4 Additional Projects/Actions not included in the Final Plan

The SEA team identified some additional Projects/Actions to be included in the Draft Plan under the relevant Catalyst and Enabler Project, which were not incorporated into

the Final Plan. A summary of the actions and rationale provided by Fáilte Ireland for not included is provided in the sections below.

## 1. Availability of Accommodation

As a result of implementing the Plan, there is a potential for reduced availability and affordability of housing accommodation affecting local and tourist populations. While the availability of accommodation for tourists and the general public is recognised as a national issue and will be relevant to all tourism plans/ strategies, it will also need to be addressed at local level, as appropriate. The SEA process has identified that additional mitigation is deemed to be required related to addressing the availability of accommodation in order for the Plan's objectives to be achieved. The additional measures are included under the new Project/ Action suggested below.

Under '**Destination Enabling Project 9: Accommodation Growth**', to address potential additional pressure on accommodation resulting from the Plan, the SEA team recommended two new Actions under this Enabling Project, as identified in the tables below. The implementation of accommodation registers and plans will facilitate availability of accommodation, balancing the needs of residents and tourists.

<b>Accommodation register</b>	Implement and review Fáilte Ireland's Short Term Tourist Letting (STTL) Register for all short term tourist accommodation in Ireland, which will align with the EU regulation for Short Term Rentals.
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Responsibility: Fáilte Ireland, local authority and the Department.

The national online registration system will require all proprietors who offer Short Term Tourist Lettings to register their property/ properties annually. Fáilte Ireland will be able to provide a picture of all short term tourist accommodation providers across the country, with a view to ensuring that adequate housing accommodation for tourists is balanced with the availability for residential accommodation for the general population.

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** Fáilte Ireland did not incorporate these Actions as part of the Final Pla as they will be covered as part of the Wexford Accommodation Audit and ongoing work by Fáilte Ireland Accommodation Development Team.

<b>National accommodation plans</b>	Implement and review Wexford County Council Housing Delivery Action Plan and the actions in the Governments Housing for All (and any subsequent updates) as it relates to the tourism industry.
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Responsibility: Fáilte Ireland, local authority and the Department.

The *Housing for All – A New Housing Plan (2021)* for Ireland states: it is required to implement revised regulatory controls in this area with a view to ensuring the availability of residential accommodation for the general population, balanced with the needs of the tourism sector, as appropriate.

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** Fáilte Ireland stated that these recommendations are more appropriately aligned with national housing policy and regulatory frameworks thus will not be included in this tourism development plan.

## 2. Sustainable Guidelines

Under ‘**Destination Enabling Project 10: Festival & Events**’, to ensure Actions/Projects as a result of the Plan are in line with sustainable guidelines, the SEA team recommended one new Action under this Enabling Project, as identified in green text below.

<b>Compliance with Sustainable Festival Guidelines</b>	All project promoters receiving funding from FI to demonstrate compliance with The Sustainable Festival Guidelines developed by Fáilte Ireland (2023) when planning festivals and large events.
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Responsibility: Fáilte Ireland, local authority.

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** This Action was not integrated as part of the Final Plan because this is covered in the Letter of Offer Terms & Conditions on an individual festival basis, and therefore, is not required.

### 3. Climate Change Effects

Under ‘**Destination Enabling Project 11: Climate Action & Sustainable Tourism**’, to address potential transport-related carbon emissions resulting from the Plan, SEA team recommended two new Actions under this Enabling Project, as identified in the tables below.

<b>Sustainable Tourist Transport Strategy</b>	Develop a sustainable tourist transport strategy/ plan to aid visitors to plan their trips using sustainable modes of transport. This could include sustainable travel promotional material for each key destination site and work with stakeholders and partners to provide sustainable modes of transport to the site.
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Responsibility: Fáilte Ireland, local authority and the Department.

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** This Action was not integrated as part of the Final Plan and the rationale provided by Fáilte Ireland is that they will be included as part of the broader National Plan and are not specific to Wexford.

<b>Tourist Transport Strategy/Plan – Key destination sites</b>	Ensure the development of the tourist transport strategy/ plan contains an inventory of the key destination sites in the county together with a plan to increase the available critical infrastructure capacity including access to transport infrastructure and services.
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Responsibility: Fáilte Ireland, local authority and the Department.

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** This Action was not integrated as part of the Final Plan and the rationale provided was that the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and services, particularly those involving national stakeholders, such as TII, NTA, and OPW, falls under the remit of national or local transport authorities.

Under the same Enabling Project, the SEA team recommended two additional Actions identified in the tables below. The integration of Climate Action and Adaptation within businesses will encourage a reduction of carbon emissions within the tourism sector.

<p><b>Climate Programme</b></p>	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>Support the sustainable tourism by promoting businesses to participate in the Fáilte Ireland Climate Action Programme. The programme could provide support to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• businesses to reduce carbon emissions; and</li> <li>• visitors to offset carbon emissions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Climate adaptation in Tourism Sector</b></p>	<p>a) Work with partners to implement the relevant actions in the National Adaptation Framework.</p> <p>b) Implement the relevant actions in the Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Tourism Sector (once developed).</p>

**Rationale for not including in the Final Plan:** These Actions were not integrated as part of the Final Plan. The rationale provided by Fáilte Ireland is that they will be covered at national or regional level. Some would also be included as part of the Fáilte Ireland National Programme of supports, such as the Climate Action Plan, Employer Excellence Programme, Digital that Delivers, etc.

**SEA team assessment of actions/mitigation that were not included in the Final Plan:** While the SEA team recommended the inclusion of the above mitigation measures at the DEDP level, this was primarily to support consistency across national, regional, and local planning frameworks. The recommendations were also intended to also serve as 'signposts' to help guide project promoters in aligning with existing sustainability and environmental protection requirements required at higher policy levels.

The SEA team acknowledges that the DEDP is a non-statutory plan, and it must remain consistent with relevant national, regional and statutory local policies, plans, and programmes. In this context, the potential negative effects identified are expected to be addressed through existing mitigation measures at those higher levels.

Therefore, the SEA team considers it acceptable that the recommended mitigation measures are not included in the DEDP, as the existing frameworks and the existing Environmental Monitoring Programme included as part of the Final Plan adequately mitigates and address the likely significant environmental effects.

## 7. MITIGATION AND MONITORING MEASURES

Article 10 of the SEA Directive requires monitoring to be carried out for likely significant environmental effects directly related to the implementation of the Plan “*in order to, inter alia, identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.*” It is a key part to ensuring the Plan does not negatively impact the receiving environment, and to assess whether current mitigation measures are appropriately compensating any anticipated environmental impacts.

Monitoring of the Plan is focused on monitoring the identified potential significant negative effects on the environment as a result of implementing the Plan.

### 7.1 Embedded Mitigation

Changes to the Plan made during the SEA process are known as embedded mitigation - mitigation that is incorporated into the text of the plan to prevent, reduce, offset and monitor any significant environmental effects. The Plan has benefitted from iterative feedback with stakeholders and the SEA team providing feedback to inform the draft as presented for public consultation. **Appendix One** of the Plan details some of these measures to include:

Having completed the SEA process on the Plan, environmental protection has been integrated into the Plan itself. This was done collaboratively by the SEA and AA team, and the Plan preparation team at Fáilte Ireland. The SEA process helped to identify relevant potential environmental effects and mitigate the effects where possible through alterations to the Plan text. This process also highlighted areas of positive environmental effects and built upon those opportunities including through the requirements for Projects to develop visitor management plans, project level environmental assessments and sustainable tourism education and training. Other embedded mitigation as part of the Plan include:

- Mandatory compliance with all relevant legislation and policy;
- Requirements for environmental assessments at the project/ plan level;
- Compliance with the Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Preparation of Visitor Management Plans;
- Consideration of the critical infrastructure capacity at key tourism sites; and
- Promotion of blue and green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions where appropriate.

#### 7.1.1 Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection

The Plan includes key considerations for project promoters to consider when developing the Projects under the Plan, these include compliance with statutory plans and policy and also considerations relating to:

- Infrastructure capacity;
- Visitor management;
- Control and management of invasive species; and
- Green infrastructure and ecosystem services.

### **Infrastructure Capacity**

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) the potential environmental impacts associated with increase visitor numbers and increase pressure on capacities of existing infrastructure (including accommodation) will require careful planning and assessment. The potential environmental effects of the likely increase in tourism volumes resulting from the relevant projects in this plan will need to be considered at project level and mitigated as appropriate. This aspect should be linked to the development of visitor management plans as appropriate. The promotion of developing visitor friendly supporting infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

### **Visitor Management**

Partners tasked with progressing actions and projects shall seek to sustainably manage existing and any increase in visitor numbers and/ or any change in visitor behaviour to avoid significant effects on the environment including loss of habitat and/ or disturbance to sensitive species (including human beings and biodiversity), where relevant. This shall include, for example, ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor management plans will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

### **Control and Management of Invasive Species**

Proposals and the development of Visitor Management plans shall consider the control and management of invasive species having regard to existing objectives contained with the County Development Plan to include:

- Developers and managers of existing tourism or recreational sites and/ or future development should adhere to best practice and facilitate the development of appropriate facilities to minimise the spread of invasive species including along blueways and greenways.
- Further information and resources on “Check, Clean, Dry, Disinfect” should be sought on [invasives.ie](http://invasives.ie). Fáilte Ireland shall work with partners to encourage greater awareness of potential threats caused by invasive species and how they can spread.

### **Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services**

Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

## **7.2 Monitoring Indicators and Targets**

As far as practicable, monitoring is based on existing quantitative measures or indicators that can be recorded over time relating to the various SEOs. Each indicator that is monitored has an accompanying target. The SEA Directive indicates that “*existing monitoring arrangements may be used if appropriate, with a view to avoiding duplication of monitoring.*”

While not a statutory document, the Plan has been prepared to compliment and be consistent with other national, regional and local planning and development plans including, but not limited to, the NPF, the RSES, the Wexford County Council Development Plan and Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy, all of which have been subject to SEA. Consequently, the SEA monitoring measures identified in those plans have been used as a guide in the development of this monitoring programme, with some being the same or have been modified to reflect the needs of this Plan. This consistency across the hierarchy of planning documents will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring.

Indicators and monitoring sources for the Plan were also developed with reference to annual reports by Fáilte Ireland, and Wexford County Council, such as the Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan. These sources determine the frequency at which continuous monitoring is possible for the Plan.

Table 7-1 identifies the indicators and targets that have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan. The source of data collection and frequency is also identified. Proposed remedial measures are identified to address any potential negative effects. Monitoring is an ongoing process, and the programme allows for flexibility and further refinement of indicators and targets including additional sources of data, as appropriate.

#### **7.2.1 Reporting and Responsibility**

The monitoring process will be undertaken by Fáilte Ireland including preparation of evaluation reports and corrective actions, if required. The steering group that will be formed to implement the Plan (that includes key stakeholders responsible for project ownership and/ or partnering in the delivery of the Plan) will be a key source of monitoring data and any remedial measures, as appropriate. The findings of monitoring will be reported periodically with frequencies to be determined during implementation stage.

### **7.3 Environmental Monitoring Programme**

The draft environmental monitoring programme presented at the ER stage was refined further to include minor amendments and sources of data. The environmental monitoring programme that will be used to monitor the likely significant environmental effects of the Plan is detailed in Table 7-1 below.

**Table 7-1 Environmental Monitoring Programme**

Environmental Factor and SEO	Indicator	Target	Source and Frequency	Remedial Measures
<p><b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna (BFF)</b> Protect, actively conserve, prevent damage and, where possible, restore biodiversity, particularly European designated sites, other nature conservation sites, protected and threatened habitats and species (including transboundary priority habitats and species), and support ecological corridors (including riparian zones and coastal areas), green and blue infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>BFF1:</b> Compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 sites and Annex I habitats and species and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.</p> <p><b>BFF2:</b> Decline in habitat (quantity or quality) and/or loss of functional connectivity without remediation resulting from projects arising from the Plan.</p>	<p><b>BFF1:</b> Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under National and International legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan.</p> <p><b>BFF2:</b> No habitats or ecological networks, or parts thereof to be impacted/ lost without remediation resulting from projects arising from the Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every six years)</li> <li>• DHLGH National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every three years).</li> <li>• Local authority/ An Bord Pleanála planning application project decisions relating to projects under the plan.</li> <li>• Data from any relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programme relevant to the project/area.</li> <li>• Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Mitigation Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing - project specific).</li> <li>• CORINE mapping resurvey (every five years).</li> <li>• Local authority (LA) or An Bord Pleanála (ABP) planning application project environmental assessments &amp; decisions.</li> <li>• Data from any relevant Fáilte Ireland monitoring programme relevant to the project/area.</li> <li>• Visitor management plan relating to project(s).</li> <li>• National Biodiversity Data Centre, The Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WEBS).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal systems or the Plan and make changes, as necessary.</li> <li>• Where adverse effects are identified undertake investigation as per the Fáilte Ireland Tourism Related Environmental Damage Resolution Procedure and act on recommendations based on the profiling of the environmental damage.</li> <li>• Review or update the visitor management plan to address any ecological loss or degradation caused by tourism activities.</li> </ul>

Environmental Factor and SEO	Indicator	Target	Source and Frequency	Remedial Measures
<p><b>Population and Human Health (PHH)</b> Protect, support and sustainably manage resources and tourism development, for the benefit of the society and the environment, and contribute towards the economic development of the population supporting positive health outcomes.</p>	<p><b>PHH1(a):</b> Percentage increase in visitor number to the site/ area over time. <b>PHH1(b):</b> Development and implementation of visitor management plan from projects arising from the Plan. <b>PHH1(c):</b> Reduction in safety incidences at sites under the Plan.</p>	<p><b>PHH1:</b> Sustainably manage visitors to the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing).</li> <li>• Visitor management plan relating to projects.</li> <li>• Fáilte Ireland (annual review): Tourism performance reports, visitor surveys, monitoring programmes, tourism research &amp; reports.</li> <li>• Central Statistics Office.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>• Promote sustainable tourism practices, at the site through the preparation of site-specific campaigns to assist in remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>PHH2:</b> Improved accessibility to recreational areas and public health amenities (e.g., parks, coastal areas, greenways, blueways, other trails).</p>	<p><b>PHH2:</b> Ensure that visitors have appropriate access to recreational areas and public health amenities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing).</li> <li>• Visitor management plan relating to project(s)</li> <li>• Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the plan.</li> <li>• Local Authority reports (annual review).</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Water (W)</b> Protect, maintain and, where possible, improve water quality including surface water, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters and any wetlands, while preventing deterioration, supporting the achievement of good water quality status of all water bodies as required by the EU and national legislation, and increasing the resilience and adaptation of tourism sites/ activities to the effects of climate change including flood risk and coastal erosion.</p>	<p><b>W1:</b> The change in water quality status of surface water, groundwater, transitional, and coastal waters (i.e. Water Framework Directive (WFD) water quality status).</p>	<p><b>W1:</b> Objectives of WFD are met for all waterbodies in accordance with the latest River Basin Management Plan and Programme of Measures (POM).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WFD monitoring data on ecological and chemical status of water bodies (RBMP) (every six years).</li> <li>• Irish Water (annual review): Drinking water quality reports.</li> <li>• Local Authority (annual review): Monitoring of local water bodies.</li> <li>• EPA Remedial Action List (regarding drinking water quality).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>• Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>W2:</b> Overall trend in the mandatory and guide values as set by the EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Bathing Water Quality Regulations (SI No. 79 of 2008).</p>	<p><b>W2:</b> No deterioration in the value of bathing waters or adverse effect upon the ability of any bathing water to achieve mandatory values and, where possible, guide values as a result of the Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPA through Local Authority (annual review): Monitoring of local water bodies.</li> <li>• EPA Water Quality in Ireland report (annual).</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>W3:</b> Compliance with regards to Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p>	<p><b>W3:</b> Compliance with statutory plans and decision-making process relating to developments in flood risk zones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the Plan.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Air Quality (AQ)</b> Contribute to the reduction of air pollution and improvement in air quality resulting from the effective operation and management of sustainable tourism activities.</p>	<p><b>AQ:</b> Trends in emissions from ambient air quality monitoring (NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>).</p>	<p><b>AQ:</b> Maintain air quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPA air quality monitoring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Climate (C)</b> Support and promote the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from tourism activities and the development of a climate resilient and adaptive tourism sector.</p>	<p><b>C1(a):</b> Demonstrate compliance with provisions relating to climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation have been integrated into the plan/project, as appropriate.</p> <p><b>C1(b):</b> Evidence that beneficiaries of funding are working to reduce emissions e.g. promoting energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable travel options to customers through marketing/promotional material.</p>	<p><b>C1:</b> Monitor and reduce emissions associated with tourism activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing - project specific).</li> <li>EPA - GHG emissions data and projections.</li> <li>Government Climate Action Plan (annual review).</li> <li>Met Eireann (annual statistics).</li> <li>Transport for Ireland - Local Link network statistics.</li> <li>Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>C2:</b> Number of projects participating in Fáilte Ireland Climate Action Programme (FI CAP) or similar under the Plan.</p>	<p><b>C2:</b> All tourism activities/promoters to have a link to FI CAP (or similar) to demonstrate climate change resilience and adaptation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FI CAP accreditation (annual review).</li> <li>Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.</li> <li>FI Sustainable tourism programmes (annual reviews).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>C3:</b> Improve provision of public transport links in the region and 'last mile' transport links in partnership with National Transport Authority together with improved e-car charging infrastructure.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p><b>C3:</b> Reduction in transport emissions emanating from the tourism sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fáilte Ireland – Ireland's Ancient East KPI 5. (Data from National Transport Authority &amp; Local Link a strategic part of visitor orientation)</li> <li>Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.</li> <li>National Transport Authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land and Soils (S)</b> Safeguard existing land and soil resources, protect and improve soil quality, conserve soil, and prevent soil</p>	<p><b>S1:</b> The area of soil that is sealed or artificialised in square km.<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>S1:</b> Contribute to NPF target to limit the rate of increase of land that is sealed or artificialised and promote the reversal of this in suitable areas e.g., flood zones, high density areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORINE land cover mapping (CORINE every 6 years (due 2024).</li> <li>Land use national land cover map (Fáilte Éireann - every five years).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the site selection process/ assessment of alternatives (if undertaken) where projects occur in greenfield sites in favour of infill/ brownfield sites.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Note: C3 monitoring indicator is taken from (KPI 5 from Ireland's Ancient East RDS 2023-2027).

<sup>3</sup> Note S1 indicator and target stems from the Revised & updated National Planning Framework SEA ER Monitoring.

contamination and erosion.	<b>S2:</b> Soil erosion/ degradation, landslides without remediation resulting from projects developed under the plan.	<b>S2:</b> No projects contributing to soil erosion, degradation or landslides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing - project specific).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets (M)</b> Sustainably manage, maintain and develop the necessary tourism supporting infrastructure (including water, wastewater, energy supplies, transportation, internet connectivity and associated capacities) and support the development of the circular economy.	<b>M1:</b> Locations where additional tourists are directed by beneficiaries of funding towards areas where critical infrastructure is adequate to sustainably provide for visitors (e.g. water, wastewater capacity, electricity, transport, carparking, etc.) resulting from projects developed under the Plan.	<b>M1:</b> Locations have adequate critical infrastructure available to sustainably provide for tourists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from beneficiaries provided in funding applications as required under Section 9 of the SEA ER. (Frequency: ongoing - project specific).</li> <li>Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the Plan.</li> <li>Visitor management plan relating to projects.</li> <li>Fáilte Ireland (annual review): Tourism performance reports, visitor surveys, any relevant monitoring programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>Consult with Irish Water or the local authority regarding water and WWtF.</li> <li>Consult with TII local authority or transport providers regarding sustainable transport infrastructure.</li> <li>Consult utility and energy providers as appropriate.</li> </ul>
	<b>M2:</b> Incidences of significant negative effects on the use of, or access to, public assets and infrastructure from projects developed under the Plan.	<b>M2:</b> No significant negative effects on the use of or access to public assets and infrastructure from projects developed under the Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fáilte Ireland (annual review): Tourism performance reports, visitor surveys, any relevant monitoring programme.</li> <li>Local authority reports (annual review).</li> </ul>	
<b>Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage (AACH)</b> Avoid, protect and/ or minimise impacts to designated archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage resources, including their setting and enhance and conserve heritage assets.	<b>AACH:</b> Changes to Record of Protected Structures (RPS), and Record of Monuments and Places (RMPs) being protected and/ or negatively impacted resulting from projects developed under the Plan.	<b>AACH:</b> No negative or unauthorised effects on any entities listed on the RPS and RMPs from any projects developed under the Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the Plan.</li> <li>Visitor management plan relating to projects.</li> <li>Fáilte Ireland (annual review): Tourism performance reports, visitor surveys, any relevant monitoring programme.</li> <li>Local Authority Development Plans record of protected structures (RPS) (updated every six years).</li> <li>Record of Monuments and Places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary</li> <li>Project promoter to consult with the Conservation Officer or Heritage Officer for Wexford County Council, if required.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Landscape (L)</b> Avoid conflicts with the protection of designated and sensitive features of note in landscapes and sensitively manage landscape change through sustainable planning.</p>	<p><b>L:</b> Number of negative landscape or visual impacts resulting from projects developed under the Plan.</p>	<p><b>L:</b> Avoid negative landscape and visual impacts on the environment, particularly protected landscapes or protected views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor management plan relating to projects.</li> <li>• Fáilte Ireland (annual review): Tourism performance reports, visitor surveys, any relevant monitoring programme.</li> <li>• Local authority/ ABP planning application decisions relating to projects developed under the Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal systems and, if necessary, the Plan.</li> <li>• Promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, and have campaigns prepared to assist remedial action, if necessary.</li> </ul>
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