

Environmental impact assessments answer what kind of questions?

Dr Ivan Scrase, the RSPB

RGI Environment Workshop 16 June 2011, Glasgow

	SEA	EIA	AA
What?	'Strategic environmental assessment' (SEA Directive 2001)	'Environmental impact assessment' (EIA Directive 1985)	'Appropriate assessment' (Birds Directive 1979; Habitats Directive 1992)
Aim	To provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparations and adoption of <u>plans and programmes</u> with a view to promoting sustainable development.	To ensure that planning decisions are made with full knowledge of a project's likely significant environmental effects, and that any negative effects are prevented, reduced or offset, while positive effects are enhanced.	To avoid adverse effects of <u>plans, programmes and projects</u> on Natura 2000 sites and thereby maintain the integrity of the Natura 2000 network and its features.
When?	'Plan or programme' that an 'authority' is required to produce, and that is likely to have significant effects on the environment.	Projects in Annexes 1 (compulsory) or 2 of the EIA Directive: 1. "Construction of overhead electrical power lines with a voltage of 220 kV or more and a length of more than 15 km." 2. "Transmission of electrical energy by overhead cables"	Proposals likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.
Focus	Issues set out in Annex 1 of the SEA Directive including biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage and the interaction of the above factors.	Issues set out in Article 3 of the EIA Directive including the indirect and direct effects of a project on human beings, fauna and flora, soil, air, water, climate, landscape, material assets, cultural heritage and the interaction of the above factors.	The ecological features for which the site has been designated .
Effect	Provides information to be taken account in the decision on adoption of the plan or programme.	Consenting authority is required to have regard to the Environmental Statement, as well as to other material considerations.	If adverse effects cannot be ruled out then options: 1. Reject the plan/ project. 2. Consider alternative solutions. 3. Proceed if there are no alternative solutions, and 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest', and compensation measures for damage have been secured.