

Shared experience of SEA implementation from Malta and Ireland:

Promoting best practices for environmental protection within
the context of island states



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Commonalities shaping implementation of the SEA Directive

- Peripheral
- Small
- Islands
- Open
- Biodiverse
- Post-colonial
- Rich in cultural heritage
- Vulnerable to climate change
- Rapid population and economic growth

Aim

Analyse best practice to promote in both countries the central role of SEA in environmental protection through exchange visits in 2023.

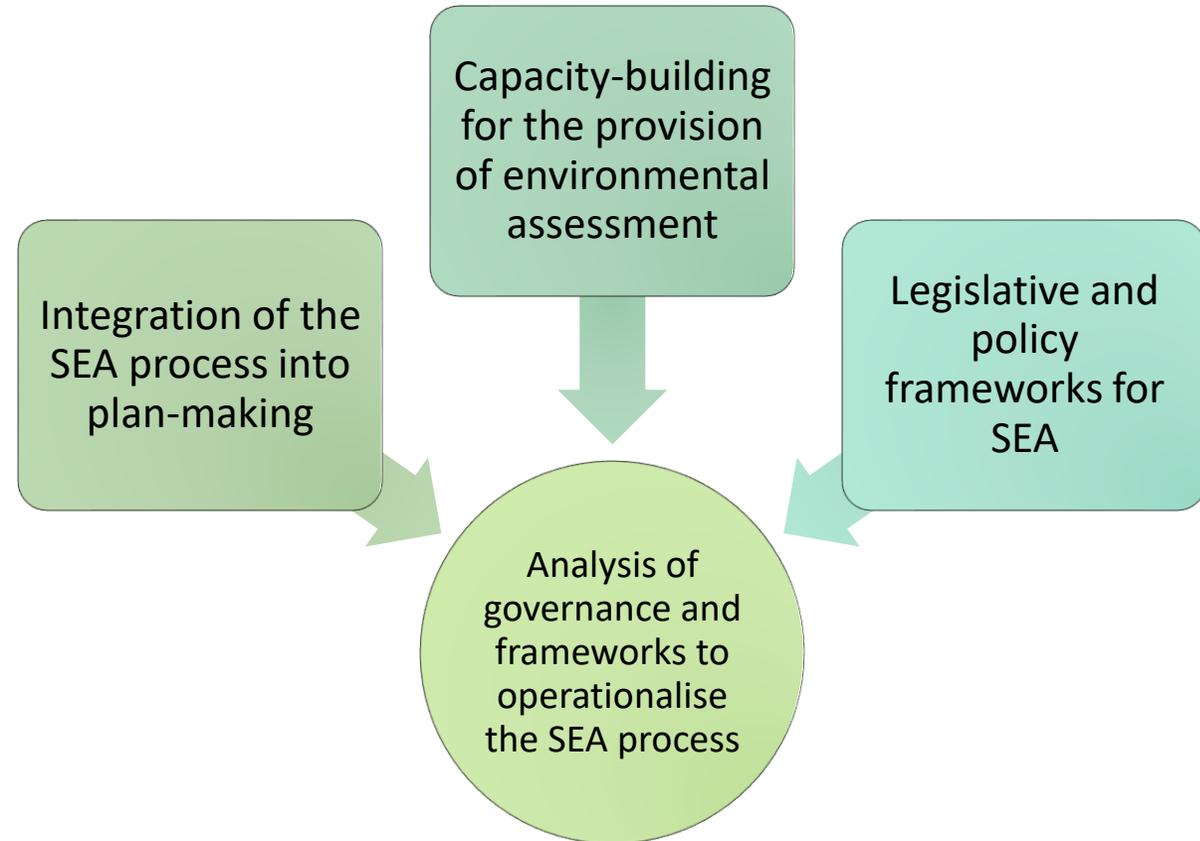
Ireland

Malta



Technical exchange process

- Expert visits to Ireland and Malta funded through EU TAIEX exchange in 2023
- Over 40 representatives from: Competent Authorities as regulatory agencies, plan-making Responsible Authorities, and national environmental Designated Authorities participated during each visit
- Production of report to European Commission and national governments

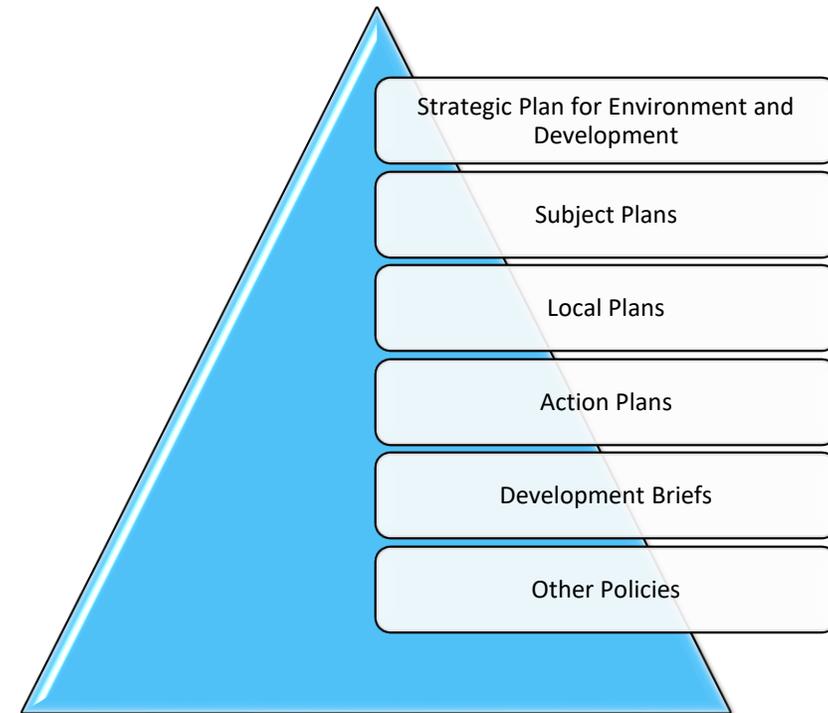


Comparison of planning systems

IRELAND



MALTA



Four key areas to advance best practice in SEA



Discussion

- Possible contradictions emerging from ‘openness’ and ‘closeness’ of island states emanating from the drive to develop and modernise, while at the same time holding on to island culture and values
- Challenges in addressing and increasing awareness of the SEA process
- Need for capacity-building for environmental assessment
- Entities can greatly benefit from such expert ‘learning’ sessions that provide much needed mutual support
- Improve the level of networking as a means of training .
- The need for cross-fertilisation of ideas and for more educational programmes
- Outcomes- improved awareness, strong and effective cooperation, and a positive outlook towards the future, that could be summarily described as a non-formal learning opportunity based on the sharing of experience for improved policy implementation.



Conclusions

- Awareness and implementation of SEA can benefit from the provision of opportunities for exchange of views.
- Such programmes can serve as a platform for increased awareness, enhanced cooperation, consolidation of environmental values, training and informal education for policy-makers.
- The evaluation of this expert exchange visit corroborates that informal settings can serve as a form of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for policy-makers.



Recommendations

for SEA implementation for the next 20 years within and between EU Member States:

- 1) Consolidation and strengthening of the SEA process through stakeholder exchanges and a more structured framework;
- 2) Training needs for the SEA Focal Point, Designated Authorities and Responsible Authorities;
- 3) Access to information and public participation in user-friendly and innovative ways to promote participation, understanding of issues and ownership.
- 4) Capacity-building techniques to overcome challenges in resources and procurement of expertise for SEA.

Proposed actions based on recommendations

- Establishment of a National SEA Forum
- Commissioning an SEA Effectiveness Review (SER)
- Preparing an SEA Action Plan
- Re-training and upskilling of experienced staff to increase in-house expertise
- Access to repositories for national and EU resources and SEA guidance
- Promotion of exchanges on SEA using TAIEX for EU networking improvement
- Further collaboration between Malta and Ireland on public participation
- ERA's SEA consultations recording mechanism and SEA FP Screening Template as best practice.
- The SEAWAY Project in Ireland can provide peer-reviewed research resources.
- Improved sharing of procurement frameworks and future exchanges may link to universities

Let's continue the conversation!

Post questions and comments in the IAIA24 app.

thank you

grazzi

go raibh maith agat



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