

## **Proposed Amendments to the BMW Regional OP 2007-13**

### **Assessment of the Effects of the Amendment Proposals on the Environment**

In accordance with Article 9 of S.I. 435/2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, I hereby notify that a Screening Report to determine the requirement to undertake a full Strategic Environmental Assessment into the proposed amendments to the BMW Regional OP, has been carried out.

The proposed physical changes in the Operational Programme are of a minor nature, the changes relate primarily to a re-prioritisation of the financial plan or structure of the OP and the inclusion of actions consistent with the existing approved actions, rather than the introduction of new areas of investment that were not subjected to an SEA assessment in 2006/07.

Taking the schedule of criteria of the above Regulations into account, it is considered by the BMW Regional Assembly that the environmental effects of the proposed modifications to the BMW Regional OP are minor and do not give rise to any additional significant effects on the environment over and above those assessed in the Environmental Report published in 2007 (as per Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004). Furthermore, any effects that may arise from the additional actions (positive and negative) have already been identified and assessed in the Environmental Report.

In addition, the Regional Assembly took into account the fact that selected additional water services projects will be consistent with approved River Basin Management Plans which are being subjected to a full SEA process. Similarly, additional actions in respect of the off-shore renewable energy strategy will also be subject to a separate SEA process led by the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources. Further to this, and in accordance with national and EU regulations, assessment screening under the Habitats Directive and/or under the Environmental Impact Assessment regulations will be applied to infrastructure projects, including roads projects, where required.

A draft Screening Report has been submitted to the designated environmental authorities who were given an opportunity to comment on whether or not they agree with this conclusion. The designated environmental authorities are:

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; and
- Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

### **Final Decision**

As no adverse responses were received, it is concluded by the BMW Regional Assembly on the basis of this Screening Statement, that a full Environmental Report into the proposed amendments to the BMW Regional OP is not required.

A copy of the Screening Report is available at this link:  
<http://www.bmwassembly.ie/news/reports/SEA%20Programme%20Amendment%202009-%20Final.pdf>

Gerry Finn, Director, BMW Regional Assembly

24<sup>th</sup> July 2009