

Annex E

## SEA QA/QC Checklist

The Sustainability Appraisal of the South East Plan has been assessed by the Sounding Board using the Quality Assurance Checklist, taken from App. 4 of the ODPM document *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (2005)*.

### Quality Assurance checklist

#### Objectives and context

- The plan's or programme's purpose and objectives are made clear.
- Environmental issues and constraints, including international and EC environmental protection objectives, are considered in developing objectives and targets.
- SEA objectives, where used, are clearly set out and linked to indicators and targets where appropriate.
- Links with other related plans, programmes and policies are identified and explained.
- Conflicts that exist between SEA objectives, between SEA and plan objectives and between SEA objectives and other plan objectives are identified and described.

#### Scoping

- Consultation Bodies are consulted in appropriate ways and at appropriate times on the content and scope of the Environmental Report.
- The assessment focuses on significant issues.
- Technical, procedural and other difficulties encountered are discussed; assumptions and uncertainties are made explicit.
- Reasons are given for eliminating issues from further consideration.

#### Alternatives

- Realistic alternatives are considered for key issues, and the reasons for choosing them are documented.
- Alternatives include 'do minimum' and/or 'business as usual' scenarios wherever relevant.
- The environmental effects (both adverse and beneficial) of each alternative are identified and compared.
- Inconsistencies between the alternatives and other relevant plans, programmes or policies are identified and explained.
- Reasons are given for selection or elimination of alternatives.

#### Baseline information

- Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and their likely evolution without the plan or programme are described.
- Environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected are described, including areas wider than the physical boundary of the plan area where it is likely to be affected by the plan.
- Difficulties such as deficiencies in information or methods are explained.

<p>Prediction and evaluation of likely significant environmental effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effects identified include the types listed in the Directive (biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climate factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape), as relevant; other likely environmental effects are also covered, as appropriate.</li> <li>• Both positive and negative effects are considered, and the duration of effects (short, medium or long-term) is addressed.</li> <li>• Likely secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects are identified where practicable.</li> <li>• Inter-relationships between effects are considered where practicable.</li> <li>• The prediction and evaluation of effects makes use of relevant accepted standards, regulations, and thresholds.</li> <li>• Methods used to evaluate the effects are described.</li> </ul>
<p>Mitigation measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the plan or programme are indicated.</li> <li>• Issues to be taken into account in project consents are identified.</li> </ul>
<p>The Environmental Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is clear and concise in its layout and presentation.</li> <li>• Uses simple, clear language and avoids or explains technical terms.</li> <li>• Uses maps and other illustrations where appropriate.</li> <li>• Explains the methodology used. • Explains who was consulted and what methods of consultation were used.</li> <li>• Identifies sources of information, including expert judgement and matters of opinion.</li> <li>• Contains a non-technical summary covering the overall approach to the SEA, the objectives of the plan, the main options considered, and any changes to the plan resulting from the SEA.</li> </ul>
<p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SEA is consulted on as an integral part of the plan-making process.</li> <li>• Consultation Bodies and the public likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the plan or programme are consulted in ways and at times which give them an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinions on the draft plan and Environmental Report.</li> </ul>
<p>Decision-making and information on the decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The environmental report and the opinions of those consulted are taken into account in finalising and adopting the plan or programme.</li> <li>• An explanation is given of how they have been taken into account.</li> <li>• Reasons are given for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered.</li> </ul>
<p>Monitoring measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures proposed for monitoring are clear, practicable and linked to the indicators and objectives used in the SEA.</li> <li>• Monitoring is used, where appropriate, during implementation of the plan or programme to make good deficiencies in baseline information in the SEA.</li> <li>• Monitoring enables unforeseen adverse effects to be identified at an early stage. (These effects may include predictions which prove to be incorrect.)</li> <li>• Proposals are made for action in response to significant adverse effects.</li> </ul>

