



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

Environmental Services Training Group

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE
2017

Protecting the Environment for Future Generations

Minella Hotel, Clonmel Wednesday 24th. May 2017.

Protecting the Environment for Future Generations

Environmental Challenges in Ireland

Gerard O'Leary

Director

Environmental Protection Agency

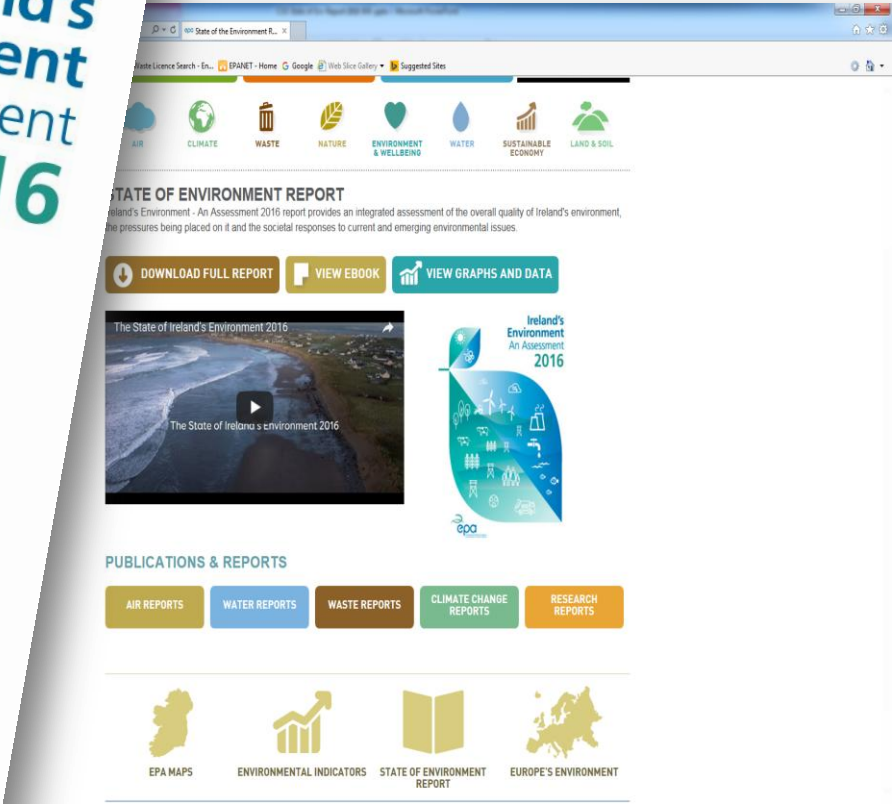


Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

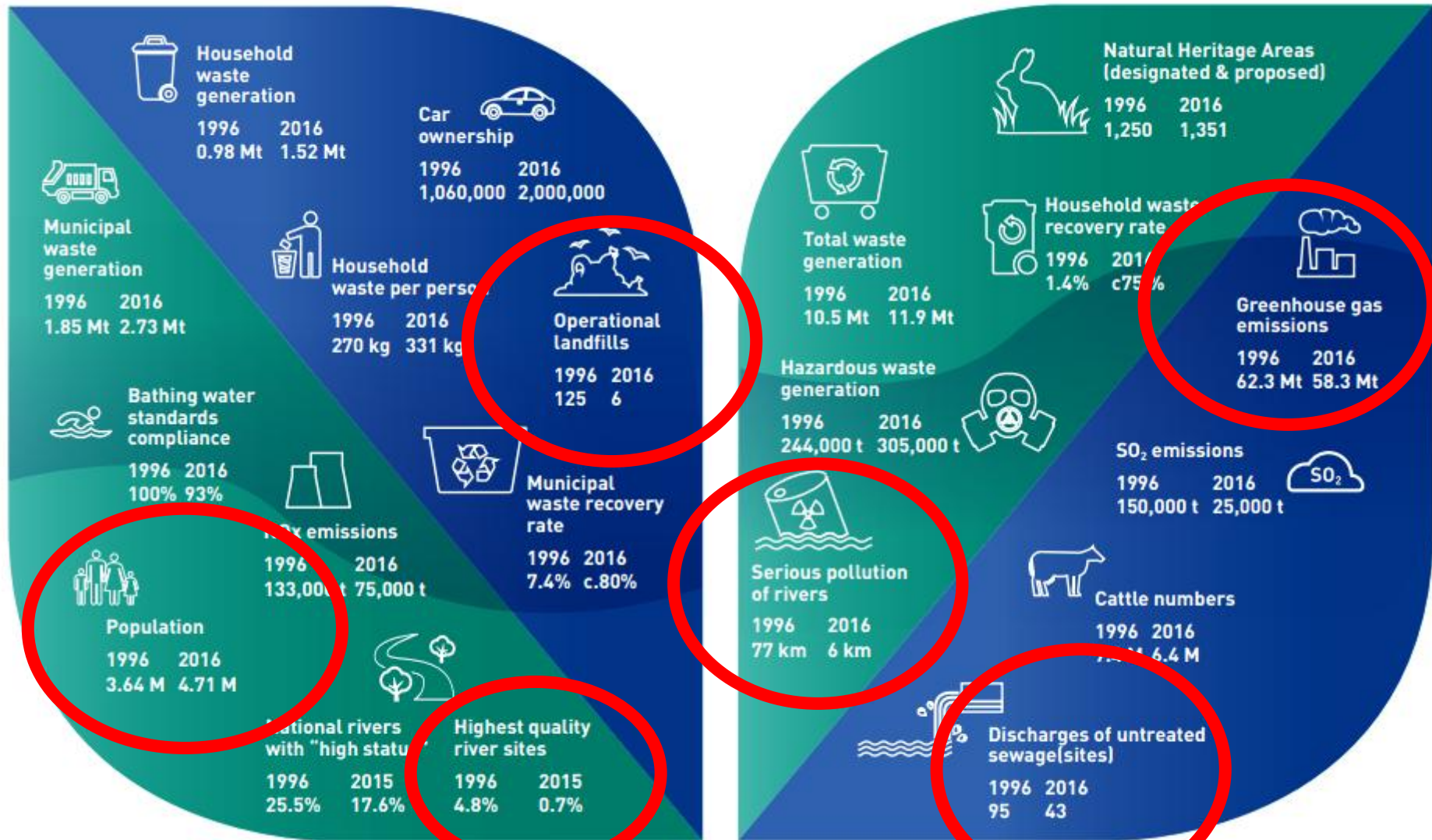
Outline

- State of the Environment in Ireland:
 - Key messages
- EU Commission Environmental Implementation Reviews 2017:
 - Key messages for Ireland
- Upcoming Local Authority Enforcement Report
 - Framework

State of the Environment 2016



20 years of SOE 1996-2016



Headline findings

- ❑ Climate change the defining environmental issue of our times
- ❑ Ireland's environment generally "good" - but serious underlying signals of concern
- ❑ While the worst of the worst rivers have improved, we have lost the best of the best
- ❑ Localised problems such as poor air quality and water pollution masked by national figures
- ❑ Species such as the corncrake and curlew almost extinct in Ireland
- ❑ Environmental protection legislation keeps us safer and healthier and needs to be implemented

SOE Reporting :Systems and Topic messages

SYSTEMIC MESSAGES



Environment and Health & Wellbeing

Recognition of the benefits of a good quality environment to health and wellbeing.



Climate Change

Accelerate mitigation actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement adaptation measures to increase our resilience in dealing with adverse climate impacts.



Implementation of Legislation

Improve the tracking of plans and policies and the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation to protect the environment.

TOPIC MESSAGES



Restore & Protect Water Quality

Implement measures that achieve ongoing improvements in the environmental status of water bodies from source to the sea.



Nature & Wild Places

Protect pristine and wild places that act as biodiversity hubs, contribute to health and wellbeing and provide sustainable tourism opportunities.



Sustainable Economic Activities

Integrate resource efficiency and environmental sustainability ideas and performance accounting across all economic sectors.



Community Engagement

Inform, engage and support communities in the protection and improvement of the environment.

EU: Environmental Implementation Review

- the EU Commission launched on 6 February 2017 the first **Environmental Implementation Review**
- **28 country reports:** Snapshot of main implementation gaps; success stories; suggested actions
- The EIR is a two-yearly cycle of analysis, dialogue and concrete collaboration to boost environmental implementation
- All documents available on the EIR website:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm
- **“Successful practices”** in Ireland others in Europe could learn from:
 - LEMA, and
 - NIECE network

Main Challenges: Ireland

The main challenges Ireland faces with regard to implementing EU environmental policy and law are:

- ❑ The need to complete the Natura 2000 designation process, with clearly defined conservation objectives, for terrestrial and marine sites.
- ❑ Protecting the raised and blanket bogs.
- ❑ Maintaining the important investments required for water services, given the urgent need to invest in water infrastructure.

EIR main points

- ❑ Management of municipal waste is crucial for our health and wellbeing, but has posed problems in many Member States. Six Member States have not managed to limit the landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste (EU target: 50% by 2009)
- ❑ Three Member States are struggling with applying appropriate assessment procedures to determine the effect of new projects on Natura 2000 sites.
- ❑ 16 Member States are facing legal action for exceeding PM10 limit values, and 12 Member States for NO2 exceedances
- ❑ On urban wastewater, most Member States struggle to reach full implementation and 13 face EU legal action.
- ❑ Ineffective enforcement and fragmentation of responsibility for the environment at regional level have been identified in a few Member States.

Ireland: Opportunities and Points of Excellence

Opportunities

- ❑ Making better use of the significant potential in nature for tourism by better managing and protecting natural sites.

Points of Excellence

- ❑major reform of its waste sector, closed illegal landfills and financed costly clean-up and remediation works.....established the Network for Ireland's Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (NIECE) to ensure an effective, national approach to enforcing environmental legislation.
- ❑ Ireland has taken a proactive approach towards managing complaints in the environmental sector, in cooperation with the Commission.

Local Authority governance...

HOW IT WORKS



INDICATORS MEASURING



WATER



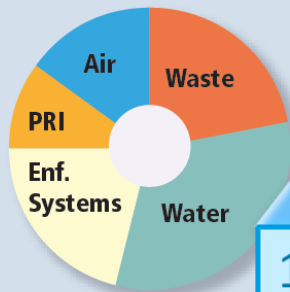
AIR



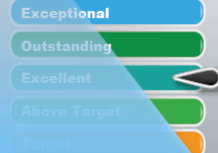
WASTE & PRI



ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS



Enforcement A
WEIGHTING



1. Smoky Coal
2. Deco Paints
3. Solvents
4. Petroleum vapours



Aggregated into single result for AIR

Acknowledgement & Thank you

Brendan Wall, EPA