

North Western - Neagh Bann CFRAM Study

Strategic Environmental Assessment - Scoping Report

Summary Leaflet

SEA SCOPING CONSULTATION

This summary leaflet outlines the main purpose and content of the SEA Scoping Report for the North Western - Neagh Bann (NWNB) CFRAM Study, which will be available for consultation until 19th October 2015. The full report will be available for download from the NWNB CFRAM study websites www.neaghbanncfframstudy.ie or www.northwestcfframstudy.ie.

BACKGROUND

Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Studies and their product – Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) – are at the core of national policy for flood risk management and the strategy for its implementation. These studies are required by The Floods Directive [2007/60/EC], which is being implemented in Ireland through the European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 [S.I.122/2010]. The Office of Public Works (OPW) is the Competent Authority for the FRMPs.

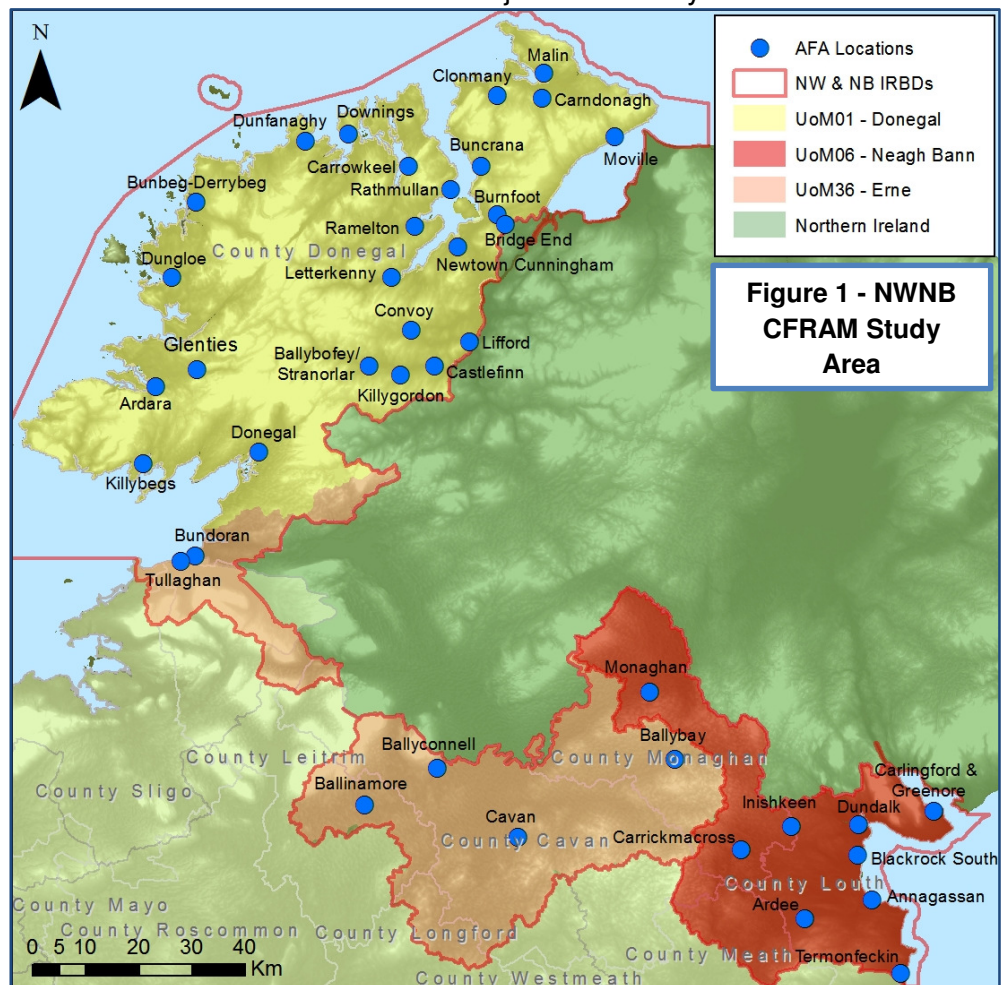
The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive [2001/42/EC] requires that certain Plans and Programmes, which are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, be subject to the SEA process. The CFRAM Studies in Ireland were deemed to be subject to SEA by the OPW in an SEA Screening Assessment carried out in 2011 (also available for download on the study website).

NWNB CFRAM STUDY

The NWNB CFRAM Study commenced in April 2012 and will run until the end of 2016.

There is a high level of fluvial and coastal flood risk within the NWNB study area.

Flood risk assessment and management efforts under the NWNB CFRAM Study are focused on 39 Areas for Further Assessment (AFA), which lie within three Units of Management (UoM). **Figure 1** illustrates the UoMs and the AFAs within the NWNB CFRAM study area.



STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

The SEA process provides for a high level of protection of the environment and promotes sustainable development by ensuring integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes. The main stages involved in the SEA process are listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Stages of SEA Process

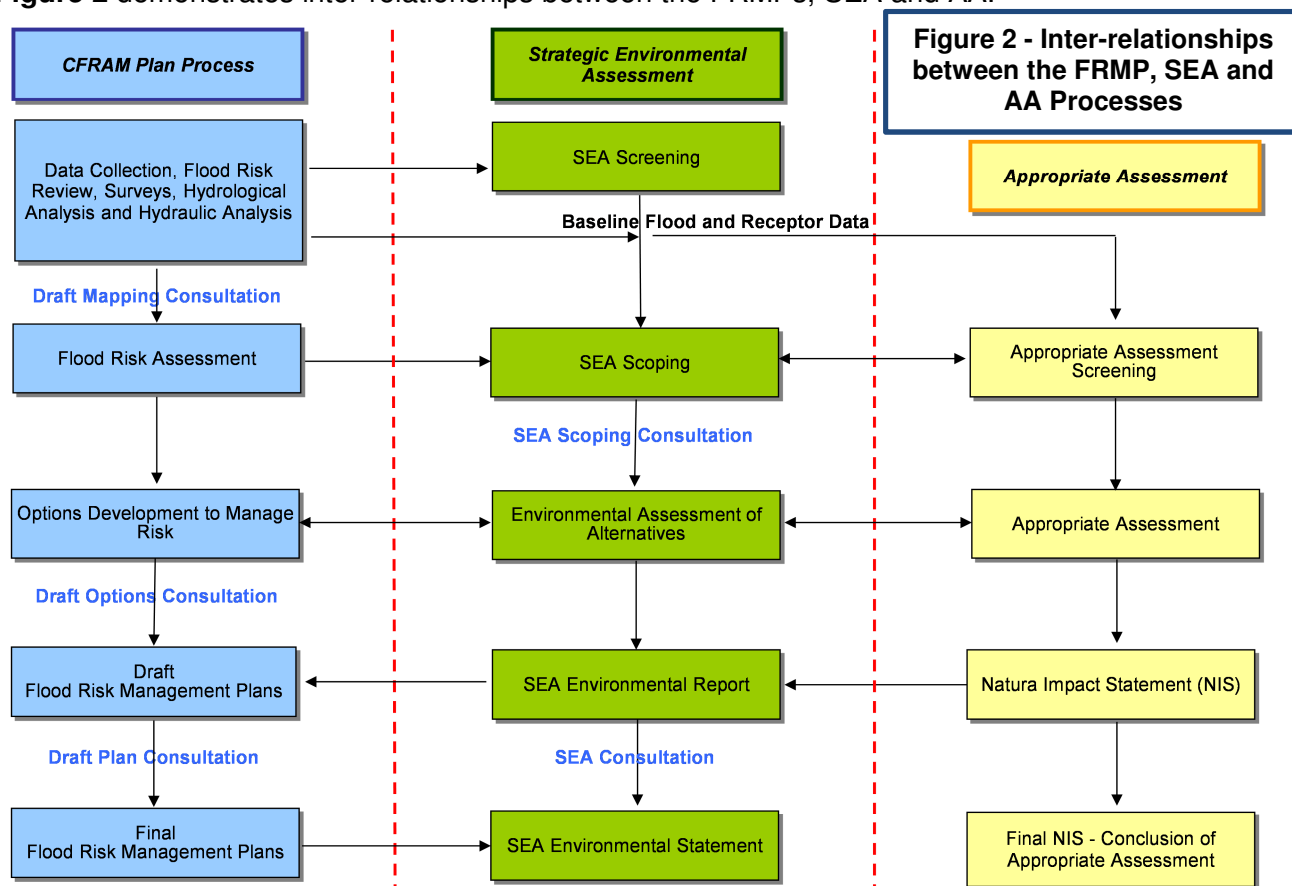
Stage	Description	Status
Screening	Determines whether SEA is required for a Plan / Programme	Completed in 2011
Scoping	Determines the scope and level of detail of the assessment for the SEA	Ongoing
Environmental Assessment	Assessment of the likely significant impacts on the environment as a result of implementing the Plan / Programme. Output = Environmental Report.	Anticipated Q3 2015
SEA Statement	Identifies how environmental considerations and consultations have been integrated into the final Plan / Programme.	Anticipated Q4 2016

The SEA for the NWNB CFRAM Study is currently at the Scoping Stage. The SEA Scoping Report is available for consultation until 19th October 2015

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT (AA)

Plans or projects with the potential to have significant effects on certain designated European Sites, i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protected Areas (SPAs), must undergo Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Appropriate Assessment of the NWNB FRMPs is being carried out in parallel with the SEA process.

Figure 2 demonstrates inter-relationships between the FRMPs, SEA and AA.



Each FRMP will have an associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement. The Natura Impact Statements will feed into and influence the SEA Environmental Report and both reports

will feed into and influence the draft FRMPs as they evolve. All of these documents will be published for consultation.

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE INFORMATION

The SEA Scoping Report contains a summary of environmental information for the NWNB CFRAM study area to be used in the SEA Environmental Report. Much of the information will be presented in the form of maps, diagrams and graphs and will focus on data directly relevant to the FRMPs.

Table 2 lists the data which is summarised in the SEA Scoping Report and which will be expanded upon in the SEA Environmental Report.

Table 2 - Summary of Proposed Environmental Baseline Data

Environmental Baseline Data
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna
Location and Condition of Designated Sites
Current threats to Biodiversity
Population & Human Health
Numbers of Population and Occupancy
Numbers and Locations of Health Care Services
Geology, Soils & Landuse
Soil and Geological Features
Landuse
Water – Surface water, Groundwater, Coastal & Estuarine
Locations, Status and Risk of Water Bodies
Climate
General climatic summary
Climatic change information
Material Assets & Infrastructure
Number and Type of Infrastructure
Energy and Renewable Energy Locations and Status
Cultural, Archaeological & Architectural Heritage
Location and Status of Protected Sites
Landscape & Visual Amenity
Landscape Character Areas and Sensitive Landscapes
Amenity, Tourism and Recreational Use
Location of Designated Sites
Locations of Amenities
Fisheries & Angling
Locations for Fishing and Species
Flood Related Social or Socio-economic Issues
Numbers and Locations of Educational Institutions
Numbers and Locations of Care Facilities

DEVELOPING OPTIONS AND ASSESSING THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

For each AFA, a long list of potential flood risk management *Methods* that could be implemented will be considered. These *Methods* will go through an initial screening to determine their technical and economic feasibility, along with their anticipated high level environmental impacts.

Methods that are found to be technically, economically and environmentally acceptable during the preliminary screening will then be combined into groups of *Options*, which will be subjected to detailed Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA), looking at technical, economic, social and environmental criteria.

The highest scoring *Option* for each AFA will then be put forward into the draft FRMP as the preferred *Measure*.

The SEA will be critical to all stages of this process as it provides the necessary information for the environmental and social inputs.



FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT METHODS

The SEA Scoping Report includes a list of flood risk management *Methods* that could be applied across all AFAs. These are summarised in **Table 3**.

Table 3 - Flood Risk Management Methods	
Method	Description
Do Nothing	Implement no new flood risk management measures and abandon any existing practices.
Maintain Existing Regime	Continue with any existing flood risk management practices, such as reactive maintenance.
Do Minimum	Implement additional minimal measures to reduce the flood risk in specific problem areas without introducing a comprehensive strategy, includes channel or flood defence maintenance works / programme.
Planning and Development Control	Zoning of land for flood risk appropriate development, prevention of inappropriate incremental development, review of existing Local Authority policies in relation to planning and development and of inter-jurisdictional co-operation within the catchment, etc.
Building regulations	Regulations relating to floor levels, flood-proofing, flood resilience, sustainable drainage systems, prevention of reconstruction or redevelopment in flood-risk areas, etc.
Catchment Wide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Implement SuDS on a catchment wide basis.
Land Use management (NFM)	Creation of wetlands, riparian buffer zones, etc.
Strategic Development Management	Necessary floodplain development (proactive integration of structural measures into development designs and zoning, regulation on developer-funded communal retention, drainage and / or protection systems, etc.)
Upstream Storage	Single or multiple site flood water storage, flood retardation, etc.
Improvement of Channel Conveyance	In-channel works, floodplain earthworks, removal of constraints / constrictions, channel / floodplain clearance, etc.
Hard Defences	Construct walls, embankments, demountable defences, Rehabilitate and / or improve existing defences, etc.
Relocation of Properties	Relocation of properties away from flood risk.
Diversion of Flow	Full diversion / bypass channel, flood relief channel, etc.
Other works	Minor raising of existing defences / levels, infilling gaps in defences, site specific localised protection works, etc.
Flood Warning / Forecasting	Installation of a flood forecasting and warning system and development of emergency flood response procedures.
Public Awareness Campaign	Targeted public awareness and preparedness campaign.
Individual Property Flood Resistance	Protection / flood-proofing and resilience.

DRAFT SEA OBJECTIVES

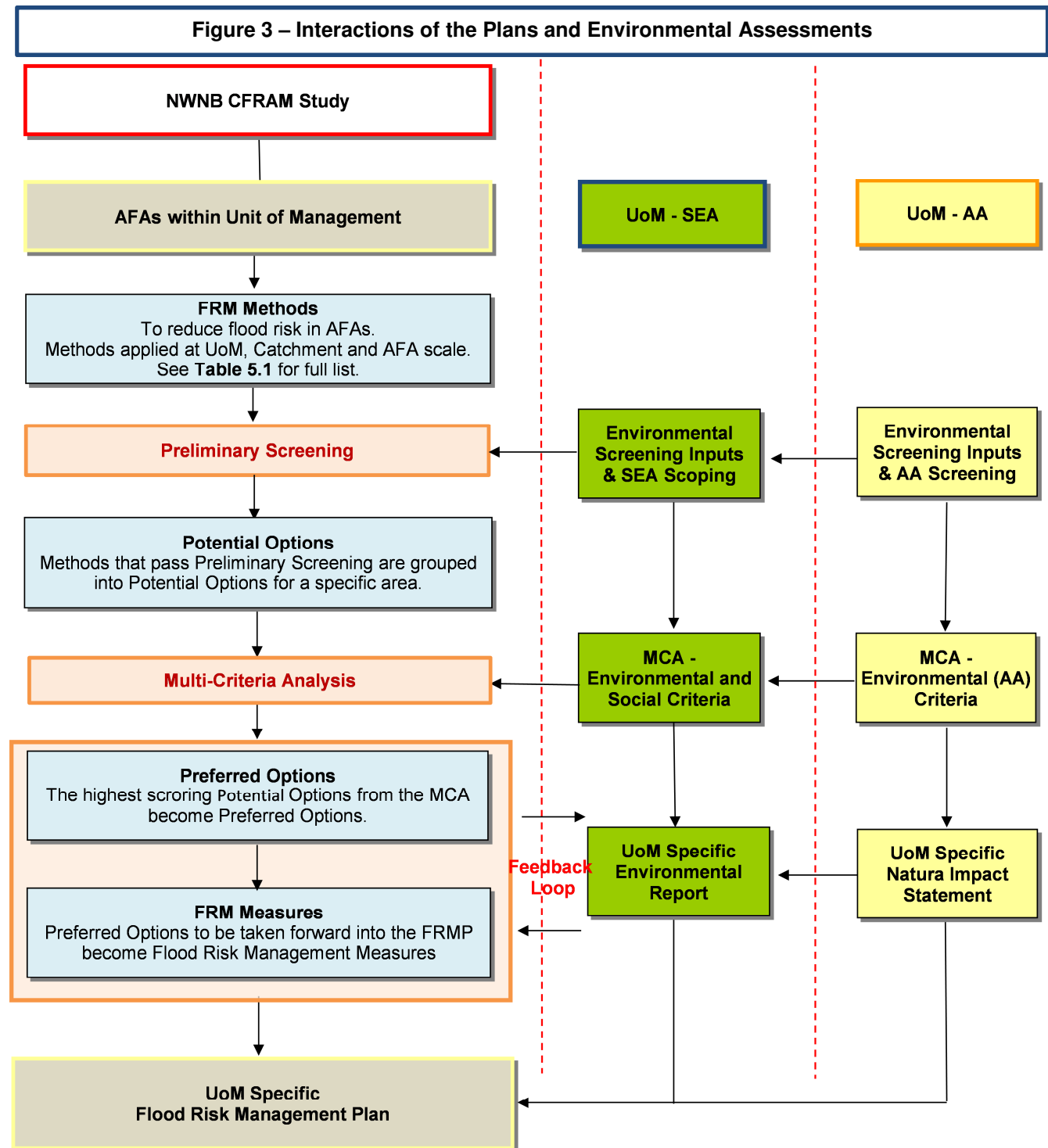
The flood risk management *Options* proposed for the FRMPs will be assessed against SEA Objectives to examine their likely significant environmental impacts. This assessment should be relatively strategic, with the aim of reporting likely impacts at the UoM level to reflect the scale at which the Plans are set. These SEA environmental and social objectives are included in the MCA alongside technical and economic objectives. The SEA Objectives and Sub-Objectives are listed in **Table 4**.

Table 4 – SEA Objectives

Criteria	Objective		Sub-Objective	
Social	A	Minimise risk to human health and life	i)	Minimise risk to human health and life of residents
			ii)	Minimise risk to high vulnerability properties
	B	Minimise risk to community	i)	Minimise risk to social infrastructure and amenity
			ii)	Minimise risk to local employment
Environmental	C	Support the objectives of the WFD	i)	Provide no impediment to the achievement of water body objectives and, if possible, contribute to the achievement of water body objectives.
	D	Support the objectives of the Habitats Directive	i)	Avoid detrimental effects to, and where possible enhance, Natura 2000 network, protected species and their key habitats, recognising relevant landscape features and stepping stones.
	E	Avoid damage to, and where possible enhance, the flora and fauna of the catchment	i)	Avoid damage to or loss of, and where possible enhance, nature conservation sites and protected species or other know species of conservation concern.
	F	Protect, and where possible enhance, fisheries resource within the catchment	i)	Maintain existing, and where possible create new, fisheries habitat including the maintenance or improvement of conditions that allow upstream migration for fish species.
	G	Protect, and where possible enhance, landscape character and visual amenity within the river corridor	i)	Protect, and where possible enhance, visual amenity, landscape protection zones and views into / from designated scenic areas within the river corridor.
			ii)	Avoid damage to or loss of features, institutions and collections of architectural value and their setting.
	H	Avoid damage to or loss of features, institutions and collections of cultural heritage importance and their setting	i)	Avoid damage to or loss of features, institutions and collections of architectural value and their setting.
			ii)	Avoid damage to or loss of features, institutions and collections of archaeological value and their setting.
	I	No increase in flood risk to other areas	i)	Avoid increase in flood risk to other areas due to flood risk management options taking the possible impacts of climate change into account
	J	Protect soil function	i)	Avoid loss of soil from erosion

INTERACTION OF THE PLAN AND SEA/AA

Figure 3 demonstrates how the flood risk management planning and environmental assessment processes interact.



NEXT STEPS

The draft anticipated milestones for the FRMPs, SEAs and AAs for the NWNB CFRAM study are given in **Table 5**.

Table 5 – Anticipated Milestones

NWNB FRMPs	Dates	Strategic Environmental Assessment / Appropriate Assessment
Development of FRMPs for NWNB CFRAM study	September 2015 – March 2016	Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. Writing of SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement
Public and statutory consultation on draft FRMPs for NWNB CFRAM study	May 2016 – August 2016	Statutory, Non Statutory and Public Consultation on SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement
Release of Final FRMPs for NWNB CFRAM study	Early 2017	SEA Environmental Statement

Scoping is a dynamic process and is expected to continue throughout the SEA process, up to the publication of the Environmental Report. This Scoping Report will be available on the OPW and NWNB CFRAM Study websites with the purpose of engaging the wider public in the ongoing consultation on these flood risk management plans.

The contact for any information regarding the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the proposed NWNB FRMPs is as follows:

By post	Richard Bingham NWNB CFRAM Study SEA RPS Enterprise Fund Business Centre Ballyraine Letterkenny Co Donegal Ireland
By email	nwnb@cfram.com
Via the national and NWNB CFRAM Study websites	www.cfram.ie www.northwestcframstudy.ie www.neaghbanncframstudy.ie Will be forwarded automatically to the communications coordinator
Via direct consultation with team members at events	The NWNB CFRAM Study communications coordinator and various relevant team members will be on hand at NWNB CFRAM Study events as well as national events.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The SEA Scoping Report for the NWNB CFRAM study is available for consultation until 19th October 2015 on the NWNB CFRAM study websites: www.neaghbanncframstudy.ie or www.northwestcframstudy.ie. Any responses from stakeholders or the public on the SEA Scoping Report would be greatly appreciated.