

Guide to Ecological Surveys and Their Purpose

December 2017

Survey Term	Purpose
Phase 1 Habitat Survey Fossitt Habitat Survey (Ireland)	<p>A widely recognised habitat classification system published by the UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Habitats are assigned to one of a specified list of categories, and maps produced using standard colour and/or letter codes.</p> <p>In Ireland, the Fossitt habitat classification is used with the Fossitt Level 3 survey being largely equivalent to a Phase 1 Habitat Survey.</p>
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey	<p>A survey which includes a Phase 1 Habitat Survey but also encompasses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the collection of specific information on a habitat beyond that which is required to assign it to Phase 1 habitat type, such as species composition, condition, management, vegetation structure, and age or permanence; and 2. an assessment of the suitability of the various habitats and other features present to support fauna (normally protected or notable species) – the species under consideration should be defined on a case-by-case basis. <p>This survey is often used as the basis for a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal or Ecological Impact Assessment.</p>
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)	<p>A rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site or the surrounding area (within the Zone of Influence for a proposed project). It normally comprises a desk study and a walkover survey, such as an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey. A PEA can be undertaken in a variety of contexts, often as a preliminary assessment of likely impacts of a development project. It can help the project proposer and planning authority in scoping the subsequent EclA or in concluding that ecological issues will not be significant in determining the application and no further survey work is required (see CIEEM's Guidelines on Preliminary Ecological Appraisal). The results of the PEA can be provided in a PEA Report (PEAR).</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, this can link with the NI Biodiversity Checklist.</p>

<p>Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)</p>	<p>An assessment of the likely significant ecological effects of a project, irrespective of the scale or type of project. The subsequent report is termed an EclA Report (see CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment).</p> <p>An EclA may form the ecological component of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), in which case the subsequent report will be termed an EIA Report, Environmental Statement or Environmental Impact Statement.</p>
<p>Phase 2 Survey</p>	<p>This term is sometimes used to describe further surveys (usually those undertaken after a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal) required to inform an EclA. What is required will vary depending on the location, nature and scale of the proposed development, the habitats present on site, and the resulting likely or potential impacts. They may include, for example, surveys to confirm the presence or likely absence of a protected species, or detailed botanical surveys of a potentially important habitat.</p>
<p>Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</p> <p>(In Scotland, referred to as Habitats Regulations Appraisal; and in Ireland, referred to as Appropriate Assessment)</p>	<p>A requirement under the provisions of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, where any proposal (including permitted development) may have a significant effect on a 'European Site'. In this context, 'significant' means any effect on the features for which the site has been designated, which could undermine the site's conservation objectives, and which cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information.</p> <p>In Ireland, the potential for significant effect is assessed via a Screening for Appropriate Assessment report. If an Appropriate Assessment is required then this is delivered through the provision of a Natura Impact Statement.</p>
<p>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</p>	<p>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process used to assess the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment in order to meet the requirements of Council Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by Council Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC and redrafted in a codified version Directive 2011/92/EU. The amended Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2014/52/EU entered into force in 2014 to simplify the rules for assessing the potential effects of projects on the environment and Member States have to apply these rules from May 2017.</p>