



Streamlining EIA

A Proportionate National Example

The UK's Proportionate EIA Strategy

EIALAW 2018

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Josh Fothergill

Founder & Director

Fothergill Training & Consulting Ltd



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

IEMA

Transforming the world
to sustainability



Public Health
England



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

FOOTHERGILL
& Consulting

The UK's Storey of (dis)proportionate EIA

- Context: Streamlining EIA (2104/52/EU)
- A brief history of UK EIA
- Disproportionate EIA
- Seeking a Solution
- UK Proportionate EIA Strategy
- Implementation: Action & Challenges

Q&A

Context – 2014/52/EU



Consistency
Quality
Streamlining

A brief history of... *EIA in the UK*

1987-1990: **Inception**

- ES generally <75 page
- Written by single author
- <3 topics covered

1998-2007: **Modernisation**

- ~600 ES / Year
- Specialists lead chapters
- Obesity concerns emerge

1990-1997: **Stabilisation**

- ~300 ES / year
- Glasson > EIA Quality
- Core topic guidance

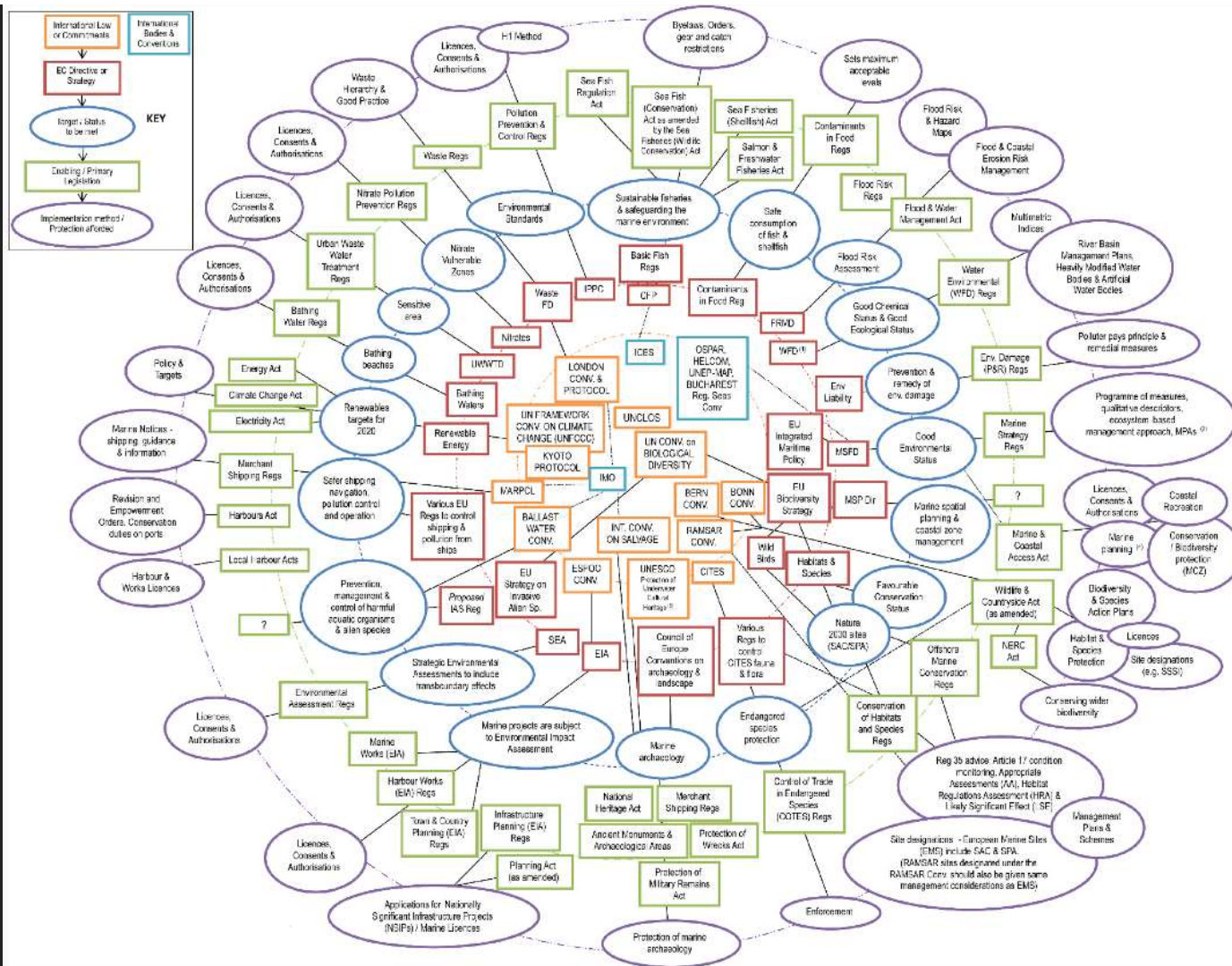
2008-2017: **Obesity**

- Avg. ES: >10 topic chapters
- Govt reviews raise concerns
- Multiple ES >30,000 pages

Disproportionate EIA

Length of UK Offshore ES 2007-2013





UK EIA is now at risk of **failing** to...

- Be a key voice for the environment in decision-making
- Add value to development design
- Engage the public in effective consultation
- Help manage risks to consenting
- Be more than an expensive exercise

EIA is still valued in the UK by Professionals, Government and wider stakeholders, but pressure is mounting and potential for significant change will be real *post-Brexit*...

Seeking a Solution



Responsive Action (2009-2015)

Treating the symptoms of
disproportionate EIA

iema
Institute of Environmental
Management & Assessment

eBrief

**JANUARY 2012
ISSUE**

EFFECTIVE NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Conveying the key findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a clear and concise format is not simple. However, a non-technical summary (NTS) must do just that to allow the public to understand a development proposal and its anticipated environmental outcomes. This e-brief is designed to improve the quality of NTS in EIA practice; however, the advice set out is also applicable more widely.

Murphy, Fothergill, Roll & Simmons (IEMA, 2012)

UK Proportionate EIA Summit

29 April 2016

- 75 delegates representing
- 13 Stakeholder Groups
- A focus on **identifying solutions** not assigning blame
- Sponsored by:

nationalgrid **ARUP** **JACOBS**

Systemic Collaborative Action

Responsive Action (2009-2015)

Treating the symptoms of
disproportionate EIA



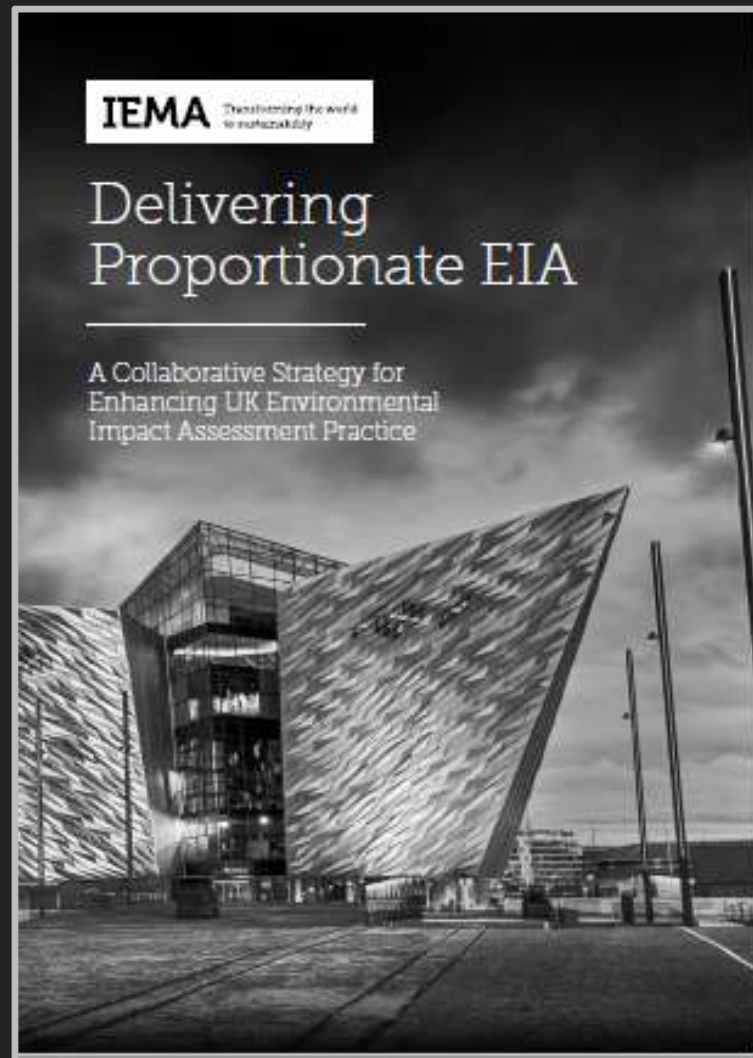
Proactive Action (2016 onwards)

Addressing the causes of
disproportionate EIA

Proportionate EIA

15 months later...

July 2017



One Strategy - Four Themes

Enhancing People

So that those involved in EIA have the skills, knowledge and confidence to avoid an overly precautionary approach.

Improving Scoping

To generate a more consistently focussed approach to this critical activity throughout the EIA process.

Sharing Responsibility

Recognising that disproportionate EIA is driven by many factors and that enabling proportionate assessment will require collaborative actions that work towards a shared goal.

Embracing Innovation & Digital

Modernising EIA to deliver effective and efficient assessment and reporting that adds value to projects and their interaction with the environment.

Enhancing People

EIA is disproportionate because of people and the systems they set up

Need to generate momentum around progressing Proportionate EIA

- Maintain broad alliance of stakeholders
- Need for more formal and informal training related to EIA
- Clarity of what we are coalescing around - better EIA, not fewer EIAs

Improving Scoping

Universal agreement on need to improve, but to do this need to enhance **COURAGE** of key actors in scoping, by improving:

- Base EIA Competence
- Justification in scoping opinion of why an issue is **scoped in** and what elements of it are scoped in
- Defensive approach of EIA's live scope through assessment avoid creep
- Justification in ES / EIA Report to verify why scoped out

Potentially:

Practice led **Industry Evidence Plans**, to agree common scope of EIA for specific development types – based on evidence and broad collaboration.

Shared Responsibility

The UK's disproportionate EIA challenges cannot be solved by an individual or organisation, **action across EIA Community will be essential.**

Key Relationships include:

- Between Professional Bodies (e.g. links to planning, joint guidance)
- Consultancies and LPA / Consent Authorities
- Between Competent Authorities (e.g. LA & MMO)
- **Role of Government in practice** (Scotland & Wales EIA Training)

Embracing Innovation & Digital

UK EIA community needs to review of its established practices and traditions to ensure it does not fall behind the times.

There is a need to focus on identifying areas that could be significantly improved through the **adoption of innovations in related fields** - lean, sprints, PRINCE2, etc.

Greater use of digital platforms and technology can help EIA modernise to overcome barriers that were previously insurmountable.

A Holistic Approach

National Grid Seeks to Incentivise Proportionate Practice

Richard Gwilliam & Timothy Bull (National Grid)

Promoting major infrastructure projects is an expensive business and the cost of EIA is not an insignificant contribution to the final bill. But when faced with the challenge of writing an extra report for an annex to an ES or repeating a survey just in case, caution often wins the day. After all, the risk of failure to get consent for a project all too often outweighs the cost of that additional report or survey, even when the need for it is likely to be marginal.

Regardless, National Grid remains a firm advocate of promoting proportionate practice in EIA and actively encourages its supply chain to adopt and promote proportionate principles in their assessments. As well as providing high level advice to its supply chain on proportionate EIA, the business is now testing alternative contracting strategies to incentivise proportionate behaviour.

Over recent years some encouraging practice has emerged: suppliers are beginning to proactively challenge scoping opinions from statutory bodies and are actively promoting the consideration of proportionality in their assessments. National Grid has also begun to work collaboratively with suppliers to look at how ESs can be restructured to make them more accessible and better use digital information including the use of navigable GIS systems to support applications for development consent.

Despite some good practice however, ESs still routinely go beyond the core purpose of reporting the likely significant effects of development. To more effectively embed this pragmatic approach to EIA, broad industry consensus as to what constitutes proportionate EIA is needed so that project promoters and practitioners can uphold more proportionate practice with confidence.

A Specific Approach

Landscape Institute Push for Proportionate Visualisations

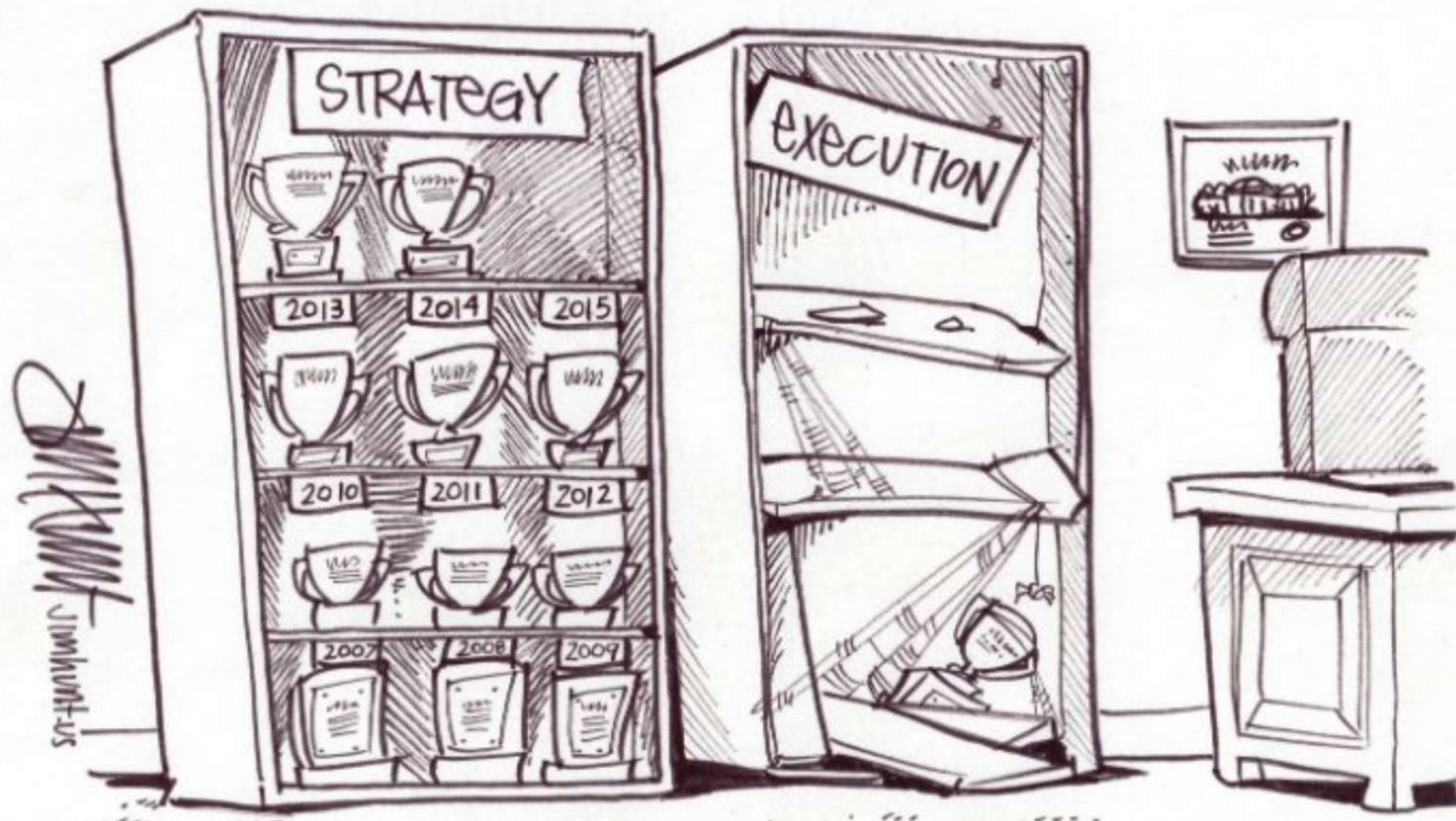
A personal perspective on proportionate assessment by Mary Fisher (LDA Design)

As a former process improvement consultant, I have always had an interest in efficiency and have been working to reduce our EIA chapter lengths and number of drawings, so I was pleased to be invited to join the team to develop the Landscape Institute Technical Note 02/17 which provides guidance on the proportional use of visualisations.

This is not an easy task as there are a wide range of techniques and technologies and there is not a one-size-fits-all answer. The guidance had to strike a balance between providing sufficient direction and being too restrictive, between the needs of decision-makers and the public to be adequately and accurately informed, and the aims of developers and professionals to provide cost-effective assessment.

Proportionate EIA needs chapter authors, consultants and decision-makers to all play their part with confidence to agree what makes an adequate assessment for a given project and I believe that this guidance is an important contribution to that goal.





The Strategy's Call to Action

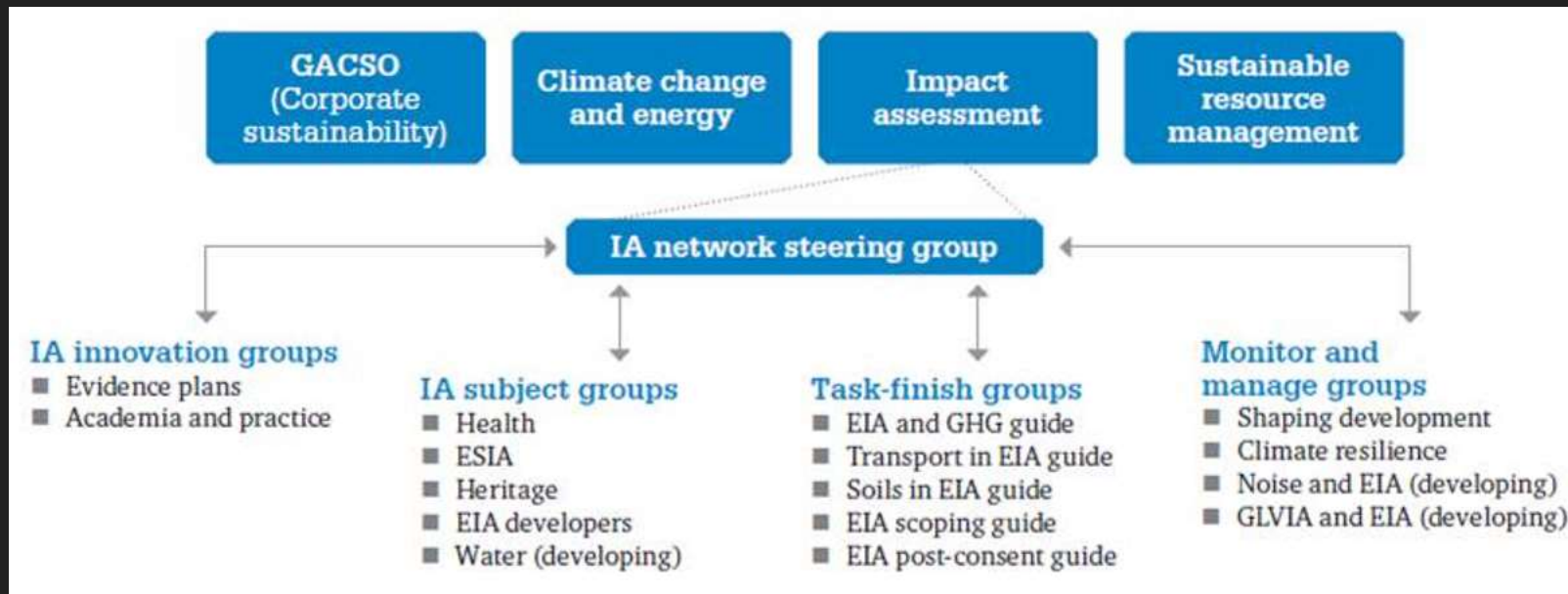
IEMA to

- Engage with key EIA stakeholders and representative bodies to collaboratively implement the strategy
- Catalyse actions and initiatives around the four key themes of People, Scoping, Collaboration and Innovation & Digital
- Launch Proportionate EIA Charter – positive & visible momentum
- Work with stakeholders to develop an *EIA Digital Strategy* to identify opportunities to deploy advances into UK EIA practice.

IEMA's Progress (July - Dec 2017)

- Engage with key EIA stakeholders and representative bodies
Mtg UK Government + Scotland and Wales Mtgs & Workshops
- Catalyse actions and initiatives around the four key themes of
IEMA's volunteer IA Network expected to lead this area
- Launch Proportionate EIA Charter
Drafted, consulted upon & finalised ready for launch
- Work with stakeholders to develop an *EIA Digital Strategy*
IEMA's volunteer IA Network expected to lead this area

Wider Progress



IEMA Challenges to Strategy Success (>Jan '18)

- Engage with key EIA stakeholders and representative bodies
No HQ led activity, volunteer IA Network expected to step up
- Catalyse actions and initiatives around the four key themes of
IEMA's IA Network expected to lead this area this area
- Launch Proportionate EIA Charter
On hold, no date / resources assigned for launch
- Work with stakeholders to develop an *EIA Digital Strategy*
IEMA's volunteers expected to lead this area this area

What Next for UK Proportionate EIA Strategy ? An Uncertain Future...



Kiitos!

Josh Fothergill

*Founder & Director
Fothergill Training &
Consulting*

Josh@fothergilltc.com

www.iema.net/policy/ia/proportionate-eia-guidance-2017.pdf



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