



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS,
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**ROINN CUMARSÁIDE, FUINNIMH
AGUS ACMHAINNÍ NÁDÚRTHA**

PUBLIC NOTICE

**NATIONAL BROADBAND SCHEME
ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE
NATIONAL BROADBAND SCHEME ON
THE ENVIRONMENT**

In accordance with Article 9(7) of the SI 435/2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 ("Regulations"), we hereby notify you that the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources has carried out an assessment of the Government's National Broadband Scheme ("NBS").

The purpose of such assessment was to ascertain whether the NBS is subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment ("SEA").

Having carefully considered the applicability of Article 9 of the above Regulations, it is considered that the Department is not obliged to undertake an SEA in respect of the NBS. Article 9(3) provides that "a competent authority shall determine whether plans and programmes other than those referred to in sub-article (1), which set the framework for future development consent of projects, are likely to have significant effects on the environment".

As the NBS does not fall for consideration under sub article (1) the Department has considered whether or not the NBS will set the framework for future development consent. Having consulted with the relevant authorities, the Department undertook environmental screening to assess whether or not the NBS sets the framework for development consent and whether it will have a significant effect on the environment.

The environmental screening report concludes that the NBS does not set the framework for development consent and therefore an SEA in the context of the Regulations is not required. This is because the NBS would not form the basis for relevant competent authorities to grant development consents. It is expected that in the context of applications for development consents (as distinct from the award of a contract to any successful bidder) the relevant authority (i.e. the local authority or An Bord Pleanála) will apply relevant planning and environmental legislation in the appropriate way. In addition, environmental guidelines have been prepared by the Department which must be adhered to by the successful bidder.

Also taking the Schedule 1 criteria of the Regulations into consideration the Department in its screening report concluded that the NBS does not currently have a significant effect on the environment.

Details of the NBS along with a copy of this notice and the environmental screening report are now available on the Department's website:

<http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Communications/Communications+Development/National+Broadband+Scheme.htm> and available for inspection at the Department's offices at 29-31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2 from Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4pm by contacting Hugh Clarke at Ph: 01- 6783175 or mail to: *hugh.clarke@dcenr.gov.ie*.

A copy of this notice and environmental screening report may be obtained by contacting Hugh Clarke at the above address.