



**Department of the Marine
and Natural Resources**

Roinn na Mara agus Acmhainní Nádurtha

Making the Most of Ireland's Marine and Natural Resources

Strategy Statement 2001 - 2003

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MINISTERIAL FOREWORD



Frank Fahey TD
*Minister for the Marine
and Natural Resources*



Hugh Byrne TD
Minister of State

A Department's Strategy Statement is the keystone of its business planning processes. It sets out the overall goals and objectives and the principal actions proposed to achieve them. It acts also as the reference point for evaluating progress in achieving strategic aims and targets.

This Strategy Statement for the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources for the period 2001-2003 was drawn up following an intensive and highly participative process of analysis and review which considered both policy and organisational issues. I believe that it establishes a clear vision of what the Department needs to do in the coming years to deliver on key mandates and to ensure that its own structures and systems are in line with changing circumstances and requirements.

Underlying the Strategy Statement are the central aims of ensuring that the Department provides high quality customer services and that it works as effectively as possible to promote the development of Ireland's marine and natural resources. Another key responsibility will be to ensure the effective management of the wide range of sectoral, infrastructural and research measures under the National Development Plan for which the Department is responsible.

The agenda set by the Strategy Statement is demanding. I am confident, however, that the aims and objectives which it defines will be pursued with continued commitment and dedication by the Department's management and staff.

Frank Fahey TD
Minister for the Marine and Natural Resources

INTRODUCTION



Tom Carroll
Secretary General

This is the second Strategy Statement published by the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources. It builds on our previous Strategy Statement, which covered the period 1998-2000, and takes account also of developments in the meantime as reflected in the Department's Annual Reports, as well as changes in the general sectoral and policy environment in which the Department operates.

The process of preparing our new Strategy Statement included:

- the drawing up on a partnership basis at Divisional level of SWOT analyses of each Division and its sphere of responsibility, followed by revised Business Plans covering the period 2001-2003;
- the involvement of a Strategy Innovation Group, chaired by the Secretary General and with membership chosen from volunteers across the Department, which looked at the organisation in its wider context and the challenges it faces;
- the assistance of an external consultancy team;
- two major seminars involving all key participants. The first meeting, which included representatives of the Department's Partnership Committee, focused on identifying and analysing the key issues in the Department's internal and external environments which the Strategy Statement would have to address. The second meeting, led by the Minister, was directed at clarifying the major organisational and policy challenges which have to be dealt with over the medium term.

Section 1 gives an overview of the Department.

Section 2 sets the scene in terms of the context and environment in which the Department will have to pursue its goals over the medium term.

Section 3 summarises our mission, mandate and values.

Section 4 sets out key high level sectoral goals, objectives, strategies, outputs and performance indicators, while Section 5 charts the way forward in delivering on our organisational and operational goals. Finally, in Section 6, we describe the process for implementing the strategy.

The Department has successfully delivered major programmes of reform and change in recent years, right across the range of its responsibilities. The organisation, its capacities, and its range of functions have grown significantly. Our analysis of the rapidly changing external and organisational environments (Section 2) points to the need for a fundamental review of our structures and functions with a view to streamlining and enhancing core business delivery, customer service and organisational efficiency and effectiveness.

The review, which will be undertaken in partnership with staff and with external assistance, will involve a comprehensive objective analysis of the changes needed to refocus businesses and structures, including an examination of the scope for devolution of functions and responsibilities to existing or new agencies where appropriate. The objective in the medium term is to deliver the structural changes which will shift the organisation from many of the doing/operational functions it currently discharges and allow it focus more on policy development, programme evaluation, corporate governance and international relations.

The review will complement parallel work on an integrated legislative and planning framework for coastal zone and natural resources management, and the ongoing work to devolve management of the Fishery Harbour Centres. It will also address the challenges, in legislative, service delivery and human resources terms, of change, and the management of change delivery, through an open and inclusive partnership process.

The next Irish Presidency of the European Union, in 2004, will be of major importance to the Department in view of the significant role which the EU plays in many of the areas for which we are responsible. Preparation for the effective discharge of our Presidency responsibilities will be an integral element of our work in the coming years.

We acknowledge the exceptional support of our staff at all levels and look forward to maintaining that support in the implementation of this Strategy Statement in partnership.

Tom Carroll
Secretary General

July 2001



Management Advisory Committee

Back Row L-R: Michael Guilfoyle, Joe Ryan

Front Row L-R: Noreen O'Mahony (Secretary), Tom Carroll (Secretary General), Sara White, Tom Power

Inset: Tony Fitzpatrick

SECTION 1 THE DEPARTMENT – AN OVERVIEW

THE DEPARTMENT'S HISTORY

The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources was established in mid-1997. It brought together all the functions of the former Department of the Marine, which had a comprehensive range of responsibilities for marine matters, with the forestry functions of the former Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the earth resources (mining and hydrocarbons) functions of the former Department of Transport, Energy and Communications.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

The Department has a wide range of roles and functions in the areas of maritime transport, public safety, environmental protection and coastal zone and natural resources management and development. Key responsibilities include:

- Development of maritime transport and port services;
- Marine safety promotion and enforcement and emergency response provision;
- Protection of the marine environment;
- Management and development of the marine coastal zone;
- Management and development of the seafood and inland fisheries sectors;
- Development of marine tourism and leisure;
- Promotion of minerals and hydrocarbons exploration and development;
- Development of the forestry sector;
- Marine and natural resources research, technology, development and innovation.

The Department's goals and the related objectives, strategies and outputs for each of these areas of responsibility are addressed in Section 4.

ORGANISATION AND STAFFING

The Department has 442 staff, of whom 283 are employed in administrative grades and 159 in professional/technical grades. About 365 of the Department's staff work in Dublin, Castlebar or Wexford. The remainder, including engineering staff, harbour staff, Radio Officers, Sea Fisheries Officers and Forestry Inspectors, work at a variety of locations throughout the country. An outline of the Department's organisational and senior management structure is set out in Appendix 1.

BUDGET

The Department is responsible in 2001, through its Vote, for gross expenditure of over £228 million. Of this, almost £22 million is accounted for by the Department's Administrative Budget, some 68 percent of which consists of pay costs. Major areas of expenditure for which the Department is responsible are detailed in Appendix 2.

Investment of almost €1.7 billion (IR£1.3 billion) has been provided in the National Development Plan 2000-2006 in respect of the marine and natural resources sectors. This investment is spread across 38 measures under the three sectoral Operational Programmes, the two Regional Programmes,

the CAP Rural Development Plan and the Cross-Border Initiatives. A summary of the NDP measures for which the Department has overall responsibility is set out in Appendix 3.

BODIES UNDER THE DEPARTMENT'S AEGIS

The Department oversees the work of 12 State agencies, 8 Port Companies and 15 Harbour Authorities, as outlined below:

BODY	MAIN ROLE
Central Fisheries Board	Promotion, support and co-ordination of inland fisheries conservation and development and co-ordination of the activities of the regional fisheries boards
Regional Fisheries Boards (7)	Conservation, protection and development of inland fisheries
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Promotion and development of the sea fishing and aquaculture industries
Coillte Teo	Commercial Forestry Company
Marine Institute	Undertaking, co-ordinating and promoting marine research and development in Ireland
Arramara Teo	Harvesting, drying and milling of seaweed (commercial company)
Port Companies (8)	Management and development of main commercial ports, under Harbours Acts, 1996 and 2000
Harbour Authorities (15)	Management and development of harbours under Harbours Acts, 1946 to 2000

The overall effectiveness of public action in relation to the marine and natural resources sectors is critically dependent on good working relations and clear lines of communication, responsibility and accountability between the Department and bodies under its aegis. Accordingly, the Department is committed to the development, as an integral part of the overall process of public service modernisation, of more structured processes of corporate governance for the bodies concerned.

The Department also has a close working relationship with:

- **Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)***
CIL is responsible for the provision and maintenance of aids to navigation around the island of Ireland.
- **Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC)***
The FCILC (Loughs Agency), which is an Implementation Body under the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999, is responsible for fisheries and marine tourism and leisure promotion in the Foyle and Carlingford areas.

* The Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) are to be incorporated into the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC). The transfer of functions from the CIL to the FCILC cannot be effected until certain amendments have been made to UK Merchant Shipping legislation.

- **Royal National Lifeboat Institution (Ireland) (RNLI)**
The RNLI's function is to save lives at sea. It maintains lifeboat stations around the coast of Ireland and the service is staffed by volunteers.
- **Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)**
The GSI is the national geoscience agency and operates under the aegis of the Department of Public Enterprise. Its role is to acquire data and to provide information and advice as they relate to Ireland's earth resources. Its customers include central and local government, industry, universities and other third level colleges and the general public.
- **Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)**
The Department operates through a service contract with the FSAI in the exercise of certain functions relating to fish and shellfish food safety.
- **National Council for Forest Research and Development (COFORD)**
COFORD is charged with co-ordinating and providing funding for forest research in Ireland.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

The Department, like Government Departments generally, has a multi-dimensional relationship with the Department of Finance, on matters such as EU Funds and Initiatives, the Estimates process, management of the Department's finances and human resources issues. It also has important linkages and interactions with a range of other Departments, some of which are illustrated in the following Table:

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	LINKAGES
Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of natural and archaeological heritage in the context of the development of the marine coastal zone and the marine and natural resources sectors • Provision and enhancement of landing places in Gaeltacht areas, and facilitation of electricity links to islands • Integrated Coastal Zone Management
Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea Fisheries Protection • Marine search and rescue
Environment and Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and Social Infrastructure Operational Programme • Sectoral environmental issues • Water quality • "Environmental network" of Government Departments • Integrated Coastal Zone Management • Sustainable Development • National Spatial Strategy

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	LINKAGES
Enterprise, Trade and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Human Resources and Productive Sector Operational Programmes
Tourism, Sport and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of marine tourism
Public Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport policy • Marine radio communications and international submarine communications links • Hydrocarbons development • Production and supply of gas and offshore electricity
Agriculture, Food and Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAP Rural Development Plan
Attorney General's Office and Chief State Solicitor's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal issues and drafting of legislation
Office of Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision and maintenance of accommodation

The Department is committed to effective co-operation with the other Departments and offices concerned on issues of a cross-departmental nature. Formal liaison arrangements, in the form of an interdepartmental group, are already in place in respect of sea fisheries protection, and comparable arrangements will be instituted for other areas as necessary.

SECTION 2 SETTING THE SCENE – THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS WORKING ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The goals, objectives, strategies and outputs set out in this Statement have been formulated to reflect and deliver on policies and priorities as set by the Minister and the Government. Account has been taken, in particular, of the Government's overall economic, fiscal and social objectives, and of the specific objectives and priorities for the marine and natural resources sectors set out in the Government's policy document "An Action Programme for the Millennium" (as reviewed in November, 1999). Details of the elements of that document specifically relevant to the Department's remit are set out in Appendix 4.

Other key policy initiatives and issues relevant to the Department's remit and operations are outlined below.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The National Development Plan provides for a total expenditure of almost €1.7 billion (£1.3 billion) on the marine and natural resources sectors over the period 2000-2006 – details of the allocations are given in Appendix 3.

Effective delivery of these major investment programmes is a key responsibility of the Department, in conjunction with its agencies, during the period of this Statement.

PROGRAMME FOR PROSPERITY AND FAIRNESS

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) sets out a number of targets and objectives for sectoral issues of relevance to the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources, as outlined in Appendix 4. These matters will be addressed as an integral part of implementing this Statement, along with the specific modernisation objectives for the Civil Service set out in the PPF.

NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Department, through its wide-ranging responsibilities for the marine and natural resources sectors, has a key role in supporting and facilitating sustainable economic development, particularly in rural and peripheral coastal areas. A key concern in the implementation of this Statement will be to ensure that the Department's activities support the implementation of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy and of the Government's rural development objectives. To that end, the Department will work closely on an ongoing basis with the Departments of Social, Community and Family Affairs and Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

NORTH-SOUTH/EAST-WEST RELATIONS

The Department's remit encompasses responsibility for a wide range of all-island and trans-Irish Sea issues, in fields including fisheries, marine safety and environmental protection. Existing close co-operation with our counterparts in Northern Ireland and Great Britain will be developed and expanded in the framework of the institutional arrangements established under the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999.

EQUALITY

The Department is firmly committed to the principles of equality as enunciated in recent years through key initiatives including the Employment Equality Act, 1998, the Equal Status Act, 2000, and the Government's Gender Equality Policy. It will reflect this commitment on an ongoing basis through the way in which it conducts its dealings with external and internal customers.

THE DEPARTMENT'S EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

While there are global and national uncertainties and pressures, the prospect of continued economic growth in the coming years creates a favourable macro-economic context for the Department to promote the sustainable use and development of Ireland's marine and natural resources. It will also assist the Department in its ongoing work of supporting improvement of sectoral structures in the interests of international competitiveness. The positive growth prospects also reinforce the importance of improving competitiveness in the maritime transport sector, and of ensuring that the various regulatory procedures for which the Department is responsible are capable of dealing expeditiously with development proposals (including major infrastructural projects).

Ireland's economic growth is also, however, giving rise to significant pressures in certain segments of the labour market, including the seafood sector. These labour supply issues are being addressed as part of the Department's ongoing programme for supporting the development of that sector.

There are growing development pressures in the marine coastal zone, in consequence of current and projected rates of economic growth and expansion. It is essential, therefore, to put in place a modern and streamlined legislative framework which facilitates an integrated approach to the management of the coastal zone and can adjudicate between the competing claims of different forms of development and of developmental and conservationist interests.

Economic growth and growing prosperity are also bringing about increasing leisure use of the marine coastal zone and creating a growing demand for marine and natural resources public services, particularly in the sphere of public safety.

Environmental issues will, given the nature of the Department's remit, exercise considerable influence over its plans and programmes for the coming years. For example, projected global warming and anticipated increases in storm frequency and intensity will influence overall coastal zone management policy and the nature of the response to coastal erosion. Similarly, afforestation has a critical role to play in the abatement of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, overcapacity and overfishing by the EU fishing fleet pose a major risk to fish stocks, which must be addressed as an integral part of overall policy for the sector. Issues of this kind, and the overall need to ensure that development is sustainable in character, are integral elements of the sectoral policy goals in [Section 4](#).

The Department's business and operations are influenced also by the increasingly high standards of service expected by our customers, by the growing demand for choice in the means of service delivery, and by the rapid pace of technological change and development. These issues will be addressed through our Customer Service Action Plan and our Information Systems Strategy.

EU AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The European Union plays key policy, legislative and financial roles in a number of areas falling within the Department's remit, including fisheries, forestry, maritime transport, marine environmental protection, marine safety and mining. The maintenance of effective working relationships with the EU institutions and ensuring that EU policies and programmes take appropriate account of Irish interests and circumstances are, therefore, key organisational objectives.

The Department is also involved with other international bodies including the International Maritime Organisation, the OSPAR Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, the International Lead and Zinc Study Group of the UN, and the UN Forum on Forests. Effective participation in these and other relevant international fora, and the development of a stronger and more focused approach to law of the sea matters, are central Departmental priorities.

THE DEPARTMENT – ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES AND FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

The Department's record over the last three years is one of considerable achievement in delivering on major policy and programme initiatives. We have also made considerable progress in improving the quality of service to our customers by eliminating and reducing many backlogs and arrears. This is due in considerable part to the commitment and dedication of our staff, and to effective interdisciplinary teamwork and communication. Nevertheless, key policy and legislative gaps remain, and there is scope for further improvement in the quality of customer service. The Department will therefore face considerable organisational and operational challenges in the coming years, and particularly in an environment of rising customer demands and expectations and rapid technological change.

A key organisational imperative over the next three years will be to ensure the optimal utilisation of the human and financial resources available to the Department. We will do so by:

- the ongoing development of strategically-focused business planning, management and review processes (incorporating the Performance Management and Development System);
- the development of a pro-active human resources strategy; and
- the strategic development and implementation of Information and Communications Technology systems and capabilities as a key underpinning for the Department's operations.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that there are imbalances between the Department's mandates and the resources to deliver on them, which are exacerbated by current difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. This is likely to require an ongoing process of programme review, adjustment and prioritisation over the period covered by this Statement.

The Department is also confronted by fundamental structural and organisational issues arising essentially from the current range and mix of functions it is required to discharge. The Department is at this stage relatively untypical of central Government Departments generally in terms of the service provision and regulatory, property and quasi-planning functions for which it is directly responsible. These functions include, for example, the licensing of aquaculture developments and fishing vessels, the granting of leases and licences under the Foreshore Acts and permitting under the Dumping at Sea Act, the management of fishery harbours, the permitting of hydrocarbon and mining operations and the delivery of engineering and inspectorial services.

The degree of direct involvement in executive and regulatory functions is a strain on resources and inhibits the ability of the Department to deal with "core" business including policy analysis, legislative action, programme evaluation, corporate governance and international relations. We are initiating a major review of organisational structures, including the scope for appropriate devolution or assignment to agencies of operational and executive functions. This is addressed further in Section 5.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

We have identified the following critical success factors for the Department, on the basis of our analysis of the policy context and the overall environment in which the Department operates.

- **Organisational change**
The Department must be capable of adapting and responding to changing circumstances, and must therefore put in place organisational structures and an allocation of responsibilities which facilitate the most effective discharge of its remit, going forward.
- **Human Resources**
The commitment of all of our staff is essential for meeting our manifold responsibilities effectively. We are therefore developing, as a priority, a pro-active human resources strategy. This will have as its central purpose the development of a working environment which allows all our staff to contribute optimally to organisational goals and objectives, while realising their potential for personal development.

Recruitment and retention of staff present particular difficulties in the current employment market, and will be a central issue for the human resources strategy. The strategy will also address the measures necessary to ensure that the full range of technical, analytical and management skills appropriate to its remit are available to the Department.
- **Information and Communications Technologies**
Effective information and communication systems and capabilities are essential for the discharge of the Department's responsibilities, and for the move towards e-Government in accordance with the Government's Action Plan for implementing the Information Society in Ireland. A comprehensive strategy for Information Systems development is now in place, and strategy delivery will be driven by the Department's newly-established Information Systems Division.
- **Customer Service**
A continuing focus on customer service is central to the delivery of services of the highest quality to all our customers, and will be addressed through our new Customer Service Action Plan.

- **Strong capability in the EU and other international arenas**

Because of the significant EU and international dimensions to most aspects of the Marine and Natural Resources portfolio of responsibilities, it is critical that the Department maintains and continually develops a strong policy and negotiating capability at international level.

- **Teamwork and Communications**

Continued effective teamwork between Divisions of the Department and across administrative and technical functions is essential, as is effective co-operation and exchange of information between the Department and its agencies. The Department is committed also to close co-operation with other Government Departments and public bodies with which it has significant policy or operational linkages, and with representative groups and sectoral organisations.

SECTION 3 OUR MISSION, MANDATES AND VALUES

OUR MISSION

Our mission is:

"MAKING THE MOST OF IRELAND'S MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES"

To promote and manage the safe and sustainable use and development of Ireland's marine and natural resources in support of national, coastal and rural development policy objectives.

MANDATES

Our Mission Statement is designed to encompass the wide range of roles and functions, sectoral policies and objectives which the Department is mandated to pursue, either directly or through its associated agencies and companies.

Our mandates include a mixture of roles in the fields of sectoral development, regulation, public resource management and corporate governance and can be summarised as follows:

MARITIME TRANSPORT

- To support and facilitate the availability of efficient and competitive maritime transport and port services, and the development of a competitive Irish flagged shipping sector.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- To prevent, as far as possible, the loss of life at sea and on inland waters, by establishing and enforcing high safety standards and providing effective emergency response services.

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

- To preserve and protect the quality of the marine environment.

COASTAL ZONE AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- To support the sustainable management and development of Ireland's marine territory.
- To maximise the long-term contribution of the seafood sector to the national economy.
- To conserve the inland fisheries resource and maximise its economic and social contribution at regional and national levels.
- To promote the safe and sustainable development of marine tourism and leisure.
- To promote minerals and hydrocarbons exploration and development for the optimum benefit of the Irish economy, consistent with the highest standards of safety and environmental protection.
- To support the sustainable and environmentally friendly development of the forestry sector.

RESEARCH

- To support and facilitate the development of the marine and natural resources sectors by promoting effective research, technology, development and innovation.

The sectoral goals deriving from these mandates are detailed in Section 4. Effective delivery in respect of these goals over the next three years represents a significant challenge for the Department and makes it essential that we operate as efficiently and as effectively as possible. Accordingly, [Section 5](#) sets out the key organisational and operational goals for that period. Their underlying theme is a focused process of change and adaptation aimed at delivering systems and structures which will ensure the best possible use of our resources.

VALUES

Our work in delivering on the Department's mandates will be guided by a set of core organisational principles or values. We are, in particular, committed to providing services to our customers as efficiently as possible, and on the basis of equality of treatment, courtesy and helpfulness. [Section 5](#) sets out our specific goals and objectives in respect of customer service. We will also conduct our business openly and transparently, so that it is seen to be carried out equitably, impartially and with integrity. Our dealings with customers, other public bodies and other interests, including representative bodies, non-governmental organisations and community organisations, will also be characterised by a spirit of co-operation and partnership.

SECTION 4 SECTORAL POLICY GOALS

INTRODUCTION

The sectoral policy goals arising from the mandates outlined in [Section 3](#) are addressed in this Section, along with the objectives, strategies, outputs and performance indicators which relate to them.

This Section is not a detailed analysis of the sectors for which the Department is responsible. Instead it highlights some of the salient issues which face these sectors in the years ahead and indicates, through the strategies and outputs specified in respect of each of the overall sectoral goals, the key actions to be taken by the Department in delivering on its mandates. The outputs and performance indicators specified in respect of the sectoral goals will be the key measures of progress, and will be reported on in the Department's Annual Reports under the Public Service Management Act, 1997.

We intend also to undertake, as part of our ongoing work to improve the Department's internal management systems and processes, a comprehensive review of performance indicators. The aim will be to ensure that we continue to have, going forward, relevant and appropriate reference points for assessing the effectiveness of the Department's work and operations.

The relative priority of the individual outputs in this challenging agenda, and the need for modifications and adjustments to the overall work programme, will have to be kept under review on an ongoing basis through the mechanisms outlined in [Section 6](#). This review process will take account of factors including the resources available to the Department for programme delivery, the results of programme expenditure reviews and any relevant changes over time in the Department's working environment as described in [Section 2](#).

MARITIME TRANSPORT (ACCESS)

Maritime transport has a crucial role in Irish commercial life, given both the openness of the Irish economy and Ireland's position as the only EU Member State without a land bridge to its main markets. Sea transport and port services must, therefore, be efficient, adequate, responsive and competitive.

The Department is the regulatory and development authority for the maritime transport sector, as well as the governing authority for the State's commercial ports.

Measured by volume, 99% of Ireland's external trade passes through seaports. The weight of goods handled increased by almost 60% in the 1990s. All-time record levels of throughput, at some 46 million tonnes, were reached in 2000. The shipping sector has coped well with the increase in trade, with an expansion of services and the introduction of new generation vessels.

Growth is forecast to continue and it is estimated that trade through the ports will increase by over 50% in volume terms by 2007.

While existing capacity is adequate, deficits are forecast by 2007 at specific ports including Cork, Dublin and Rosslare. Consequently, ports need to invest in infrastructure to cope with future demand. However, the impact of transport to and from ports in major cities on traffic congestion is a growing concern.

Port companies have adapted well to new commercial structures and mandates introduced in 1997. Each of eight port companies have recently been subject to statutory performance audits by independent consultants on their first three years of trading.

OVERALL GOAL

To support and facilitate the availability of efficient and competitive maritime transport and port services.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate the availability of commercial port services which are effective, competitive and cost efficient.
- To ensure adequate infrastructure at ports to cope with growing throughput and facilitate competitive shipping services.
- To facilitate the co-ordination and integration of maritime transport within the total transport chain.
- To develop and implement a general strategic development framework for State regional ports and harbours.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Setting, through a challenging corporate governance process, rigorous performance and efficiency targets for ports.
- Monitoring infrastructural needs and proposals and provision of financial support under NDP programmes for strategic and other seaport infrastructural investment needs.
- Ensuring close co-operation between the State ports on common issues.
- Working closely with the Departments of the Environment and Local Government and Public Enterprise, port companies, harbour authorities, local authorities and sectoral interests to promote the integrated development of the total transport chain.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Updated corporate governance regime, incorporating findings of performance audit process, to deliver commercial port services which are effective, competitive and cost efficient.
- Ensuring, through corporate governance mechanisms, delivery of quality customer service at ports, and putting in place liaison structures to allow port users' views to feed into policy/corporate governance.
- Ongoing systematic reviews of:
 - costs and ports charges;
 - seaport capacity;
 - port throughput;
 - quality (adequacy, reliability and regularity) of port and shipping services.
- Specific reviews of:
 - the future role of ports in contributing to the optimum development of the maritime transport sector in Ireland, including appraisal of different management/ownership models;

- transport logistics in connection with ports so as to reduce congestion, make greater use of the rail network, and a better distribution of trade across seaports;
- the management of the property assets/estates of ports.
- Further elaboration of policy in relation to the future management and development of declining sub-regional ports.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Trends in investment in port infrastructure, and adequacy of port capacity.
- Trends in port charges, turnover, costs and profitability.
- Trends in shipping services, charges and levels of competition in the sector.
- Efficiency of intermodal links.
- Development patterns in sub-regional ports.

MARITIME TRANSPORT (SHIPPING SECTOR)

The development and expansion of the Irish based shipping and shipping services sector is an important policy objective. Expansion of the Irish registered fleet, development of the shipping services sector, increased commercial employment of Irish seafarers and shore based personnel and increased maritime activity are the principal focuses of policy for the sector.

The Department has overall responsibility for the regulation and development of the sector, and discharges this role in association with the Irish Maritime Development Office, the sector's dedicated development agency within the Marine Institute.

OVERALL GOAL

To support and facilitate the development of a competitive Irish flagged shipping sector, shipping services and short sea shipping, while maximising training and employment opportunities for Irish seafarers and shore based personnel.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To increase market share for Irish-based shipping services.
- To increase demand for, and supply of, well trained Irish seafarers.
- To maintain and increase the pool of commercial maritime expertise based in Ireland.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- The establishment of a competitive fiscal regime for the Irish shipping sector and for Irish seafarers.
- Support for maritime sector training.
- Ongoing review, in consultation with the Irish Maritime Development Office and the shipping and shipping services sector, of the development and employment potential of the sector.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Targeted fiscal incentives, in line with those in other EU Member States.
- Administration of financial support scheme for maritime training.
- Management of the Shipping Register.
- Completion of review of the Mercantile Marine Office's operations and functions, including ship registration.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Size of Irish-registered fleet.
- Market share for Irish based shipping services.
- New shipping/shipping service business in Ireland.
- Level of seafarers' training and employment.

MARINE SAFETY

While the sea is an important economic and recreational resource, it can also be a hostile and dangerous environment. It is essential, therefore, to aim for the highest level of safety at sea, and on inland waters, through an appropriate combination of statutory regulation and safety awareness promotion. While the primary focus is on accident prevention, it is essential also to ensure that there is effective capability for responding to marine emergencies.

The Department is the regulatory authority in Ireland for marine safety, co-ordinates marine emergency response, and is also responsible for providing marine information and communication networks.

Marine safety policy and service delivery must adapt to a rapidly changing environment in which the volume and complexity of activity at sea is growing and the international legal framework continues to develop. Equally, there are growing demands for improved and expanded public safety services.

Improved structures, increased regionalisation and increased resources are needed to meet these demands, and to address the extension of the remit of the Irish Coast Guard to include inland and mountain rescue functions. A realignment of safety functions for the marine leisure sector is also required, so that they are discharged as an integral element of overall marine safety policy.

OVERALL GOAL

To prevent, as far as possible, the loss of life at sea and on inland waters, by establishing and enforcing high safety standards and providing effective emergency response services.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that vessels meet accepted international and domestic safety standards, and operate in accordance with appropriate standards of behaviour.
- To improve the marine safety culture and awareness.
- To ensure the provision of an efficient and effective Marine Emergency Service.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Adopting and implementing updated safety rules and regulations in accordance with accepted international standards and conventions.
- Supporting the adoption of high international safety standards by the IMO, the EU and other international organisations.
- Developing and using the services of the Marine Survey Office to survey vessels and to prepare and enforce marine safety and pollution prevention legislation.
- Providing an examination structure to ensure crew competence on merchant and fishing vessels.
- Promoting marine safety, in association with other safety agencies and sectoral and voluntary groups.
- Providing a Marine Emergency Service through public and voluntary bodies, co-ordinating those services and co-operating with other States in the operation of emergency services.
- Co-ordinating with other services, including the Gardai, hospitals, etc., in relation to major accident response plans.
- Provision and maintenance of a range of navigational aids and an effective alerting and response communications network.
- Effective operation of Port State Control (i.e. ensuring compliance with the State's vessel inspection obligations under the international Port State Control regime).

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Services provided by the Marine Survey Office to vessel owners and operators.
- Statutory regulatory regime to carry out all inspections/surveys required by law.
- Effective promotional measures, arrangements and information (including guidelines) for raising safety awareness and developing a safety culture.
- Co-operation with other marine safety agencies (especially CIL and RNLI) in extending and developing their safety infrastructures.
- Professional contributions to international negotiations on marine safety.
- Coast Guard services and communications networks.
- Primary and secondary legislation. (See Table below).

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME	TARGET DATE
All relevant safety conventions (IMO)	2001–2003
Passenger boats	End 2001
Fishing Boats	2001
RO–RO ferries and high speed craft	2001
Port State Control	2001
Passenger Ships	2001–2002
Radio Installations	2001–2002
Law of the Sea (Repression of Piracy)	2001–2002

POLICY REVIEWS/INITIATIVES

Particular attention will be given in the period 2001-2003 to:

- establishing a new Marine Safety Directorate within the Department, enhancing its resources and addressing the development of regionalised structures;
- finalising the development of the fishing vessel safety regime;
- establishing and resourcing the new Marine Casualty Investigation Board as provided for in the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act, 2000;
- enhancing the current Marine Emergency Helicopter Service;
- completion of the Irish Coast Guard Study and implementation of its recommendations (including new legislation, as necessary);
- completing and implementing a communications and operational study for Inland Search and Rescue;
- a review of Ireland's marine radio navigation policy, against a background of a high level of uncertainty in Europe about the future of the Loran C radio navigation system; and
- developing a safety awareness programme targeted at the fishing industry.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Standards of safety on vessels.
- Levels of awareness of marine safety.
- Effectiveness of Marine Emergency response, navigational aids and communication networks.
- Level and trend in marine casualties.

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The high quality of our marine environment is an important element of Ireland's natural endowment, both for its intrinsic value and as a major resource for marine tourism and leisure and the marine food sector. Protection of the marine environment is, therefore, a key Departmental priority.

The Department has overall responsibility for the marine environment, including the co-ordination of emergency response to marine pollution incidents.

While the overall policy and legal framework at international and national levels is keeping pace with the growing emphasis on protecting the marine environment, the development of this element of the Coast Guard's capabilities and resources has lagged behind the development of its search and rescue role. Addressing this deficit will be a key objective during the period of this Strategy Statement.

OVERALL GOAL

To preserve and protect the quality of the marine environment.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To preserve and protect the quality of the marine environment.
- To prevent marine pollution from vessels.
- To ensure efficient and effective response to marine pollution incidents.
- To secure the adoption of appropriate measures at national, EU and international level to protect and enhance the marine environment.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Close monitoring of the status of the marine environment, working in cooperation with authorities in other countries.
- Maintenance and development of marine emergency intervention and prevention capabilities.
- Development of the capacity of the Coast Guard to deal with pollution incidents.
- Adoption and implementation of updated marine pollution prevention legislation and measures in accordance with accepted international standards and national requirements.
- Full participation in the activities of relevant EU and international organisations.
- Establishment of an Irish Pollution Preparedness Response and Co-operation Forum (IPPRCF).

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Provision and maintenance of 24 hour marine pollution notification centres at three marine rescue centres.
- Development and implementation of a national pollution plan to deal with all aspects of pollution of the sea and coastal areas.
- Development of approved pollution response plans in all harbours and ports, oil handling facilities, maritime local authorities and off-shore installations.
- Provision and maintenance of a national stockpile of pollution equipment.
- Provision, subject to budgetary constraints, of Emergency Towing capability on the East Coast and the South-West Approaches.
- Development of aerial pollution surveillance resources.
- Ongoing exercising and testing of national and local pollution response plans.
- Enactment and implementation of the following legislative programme:
 - Amendment of Oil Pollution of the Sea (Civil Liability and Compensation) Acts (to give effect to proposed increases in compensation levels and other likely developments).
 - Amendment of the Sea Pollution Acts (to give effect to the Protocol to the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-Operation, 1990).
 - Sea Pollution (Hazardous and Noxious Substances) (Civil Liability and Compensation) Bill, 2000.

- Regulations under the Sea Pollution Act, 1991 to give effect to parts of the MARPOL Convention.
- Regulations to give effect to the EU Directive on port reception facilities for ship generated waste and cargo residues.
- Preparation of environmental guidelines for offshore oil and gas exploration and development.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Status of the marine environment.
- Number and scale of marine pollution incidents.
- Effectiveness of the response to pollution incidents.

MARINE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

Ireland's marine resource encompasses almost ten times the land area. This marine zone is a valuable resource in its own right, and is also, particularly in its foreshore element, an important location for a range of economic activities and recreational uses.

The Department has general responsibility (through, for example, foreshore licensing and dumping at sea permitting) for regulation and management of the marine coastal zone. It is also responsible for coast protection policy.

Growing development pressures in the marine coastal zone underline the need for a comprehensive integrated framework for the sustainable management and development of this area. Accordingly, the Department is committed to developing, as a priority, in cooperation with other relevant Departments, an integrated coastal zone management strategy and legislative framework.

OVERALL GOAL

To ensure the sustainable management and development of Ireland's marine territory.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To develop an integrated legislative and planning framework for coastal zone and natural resources management.
- To secure a fair commercial return from the State's foreshore estate.
- To facilitate the necessary upgrading of national infrastructure and the sustainable development of aquaculture, offshore electricity generation and other resources, with due regard to impacts on the environment and other interests.
- To progressively reduce arrears in the processing of licence applications.
- To minimise the dumping of dredged material at sea.
- To develop and support national seaweed development strategies and actions.
- To discharge corporate governance function in relation to Arramara Teoranta.
- To identify and address priority coastal protection requirements.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- To work closely with the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and the other main authorities in progressing the development of integrated coastal zone management.
- To put in place consolidated and streamlined systems for management of the marine coastal zone and natural resources.
- To develop and adopt, in the context of the elaboration of coastal zone management policy, and taking account of the likely effects of climate change, an overall strategy for targeted coast protection.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Legislative proposals for integrated management and administration of the marine coastal zone and natural resources, and proposals for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
- Licences, etc. granted under foreshore, aquaculture and dumping at sea legislation.
- Implementation of NDP measures for coast protection, including a programme of research and development.
- Development and implementation of strategic options for future of Arramara Teoranta.
- Articulation and implementation of a national seaweed development strategy.
- Strategic studies of (i) the implications of offshore sand and gravel extraction, and (ii) the requirements for the long-term development of Dublin Bay.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Progress in the development of proposals for marine coastal zone management and administration and for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
- Progress in clearing arrears of applications for foreshore and aquaculture licences and in dealing with new applications of strategic importance.
- Level and trend in receipts from management of the foreshore estate.
- Progress on implementation of coast protection programmes.
- Progress in implementation of strategy to secure the future of Arramara Teoranta.

SEAFOOD SECTOR

The Irish seafood sector operates in the context of the EU Common Fisheries Policy. The catching and processing sectors and ancillary service industries are important contributors to jobs and economic activity in the coastal regions. The economic future of the industry depends on the long term sustainability of fish stocks, improved efficiency of the catching sector and the competitiveness of the processing sector in Ireland.

The Department has overall responsibility for the regulation, management, protection and development of the Irish sea fisheries industry.

Global and EU concerns continue to mount over the status of many key fish stocks and the ability of the European Union to address the fundamental structural problems of the catching sector. The National CFP Strategy Review Group has comprehensively reported on future directions for the CFP and their work will continue to inform national positions. The Commission's Green Paper (published March, 2001) is intended to initiate a wide debate on the future of the CFP after 2002. Influencing that debate is a key imperative.

Declining stocks, cost and labour market pressures, serious imbalances between available capacity and catching opportunities, and a general lack of confidence in, and support for, the enforcement machinery due, in part, to a perceived lack of even-handedness in the implementation of controls, pose serious policy and operational challenges both at national and EU level.

OVERALL GOAL

To maximise the long-term contribution of the seafood sector to the national economy and coastal regions.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To maximise sustainable fishing opportunities for the Irish catching sector in the context of the ongoing evolution of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- To ensure efficient and effective conservation of fish stocks and management and control of fishing activities.
- To improve the structures, operational efficiency and safety of the fishing fleet.
- To improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the seafood processing sector.
- To protect public health through ensuring compliance with high standards of food safety for fish and shellfish.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Maintenance of a strong capability, working closely with the industry, to effectively represent Ireland's interests in fisheries negotiations at EU and international level.
- Setting and implementation of transparent and equitable rules and regulations for the management of the Irish fishing industry, consistent with national policy objectives and EU obligations.
- Using the fishery protection services, including the services of the Navy and Air Corps, to ensure high quality, effective and even-handed enforcement in the Irish fishing control zone, at sea and on land.
- Implementation (principally by BIM) of integrated investment support strategies for the development of the fleet, processing, marketing, training and innovation and sustainability within the sector.
- Supporting the availability of adequate onshore infrastructure, and the completion of devolved arrangements for the management of the Fishery Harbour Centres.
- Implementation, under the aegis of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, of an inspectorial and standards system to ensure adherence to food safety requirements.

KEY INITIATIVES

- Development (through the Ministerial Foresight Group) of an overall strategic vision of the Irish seafood industry to 2015.
- Negotiation of the 2002 Review of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Administering the investment support schemes for the seafood sector under the National Development Plan.
- Negotiating and administering fish stock recovery programmes under the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Completion of a comprehensive review of vessel licensing and fleet policy.
- Finalisation of new arrangements for future management and operation of the Fishery Harbour Centres.
- Implementation of integrated development, conservation and management strategies for the inshore fisheries sector.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Contributions to, and results of, the EU and international fisheries negotiation process.
- Ongoing measures to manage and conserve fish stocks and allocate fishing opportunities.
- Implementation of the Seafood Sector schemes under the National Development Plan.
- Implementation of Fishery Harbours Development Programme.
- Fleet licensing and registration.
- Fisheries protection.
- Food safety inspections/approvals.
- Corporate governance of BIM.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- State of fish stocks in the Irish control zone.
- Fishing opportunities available to the Irish catching sector and trends in volume and value of landings.
- Trends (output, value added, exports) in the seafood processing and marketing sectors.
- Trends in the development of the fishing fleet.
- Effectiveness of fishery protection as indicated by patrol levels, boardings, inspections, warnings and offences detected.
- Food safety status of Irish seafood.

INLAND FISHERIES

While the prime economic value of the Irish inland fisheries resource is in the tourism angling product, there is an ecological imperative to conserve and protect this unique resource in its own right. The resource also makes a qualitative contribution to local life as a recreational activity and a traditional socio-economic contribution to local communities in terms of commercial fishing for salmon, trout and eels.

The sector is characterised by complex issues of ownership, reliance on State funding and tensions between different segments of the industry. Fish habitats are under threat from a variety of adverse environmental and water quality pressures. Against this backdrop, the development of effective strategies which attract a broad degree of consensus is essential. In this context, the recently implemented reforms of the structure and mandates of the Fisheries Boards and the work of the National Salmon Commission are key elements of the framework for going forward.

The Department has overall policy responsibility for the conservation, management, regulation and development of the resource. The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards are responsible for policy advice, co-ordination, services and implementation.

OVERALL GOAL

To conserve the inland fisheries resource in its own right and to maximise its long term economic and social contribution at national and local community level.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the efficient and effective protection and conservation of fish stocks.
- To maintain and improve the status of fish habitats.
- To develop the tourism angling product and increase the level of expenditure and tourist angling numbers.
- To manage the commercial and recreational fishing effort effectively and to develop the commercial potential of other species.
- To deliver efficient, effective and value for money inland fisheries services.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Implementation of enhanced conservation and management regimes for salmon, trout and coarse fish stocks.
- Efficient, effective and co-ordinated deployment of Fisheries Boards resources.
- Effective and co-ordinated national pollution prevention, response and remedial action programmes.
- Implementation of Tourism and Recreational Angling Measure under the NDP.

POLICY REVIEW/INITIATIVES

- Implement enhanced salmon conservation and management strategies on a consensus basis in conjunction with the National Salmon Commission.
- Develop and implement strategy for incentivised reduction of commercial salmon fishing effort.
- Establish a sea trout Review Group.
- Expansion of catchment management projects driven at local and regional level.
- Continue development of improved management information systems for enhanced corporate governance of the Fisheries Boards and the FCILC (Loughs Agency).
- Develop structured linkages with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and the Department of the Environment and Local Government on water quality.
- Enactment of Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission Bill.
- Preparation of new medium term development plan for inland fisheries.
- Build co-operation and alliances between angling organisations.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Annual conservation and management regulations/framework for salmon, trout, coarse fish and eels.
- Delivery of investment programme under the National Development Plan.
- Human Resource Strategy for Central and Regional Fisheries Boards.
- Annual fisheries protection programme for inland fisheries (sea, estuarial and land).
- Corporate governance of Central and Regional Fisheries Boards and FCILC (Loughs Agency).

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Status of salmon, trout and coarse fishstocks.
- Status of fish habitats (rivers and lakes).
- Numbers and trends in angling tourism visitors and levels of expenditure.
- Trends in commercial fishing.
- Compliance levels with fishery regulations.

AQUACULTURE POLICY

The Irish aquaculture sector now accounts for over 30% of total fish production, reflecting global trends. It has considerable potential to support further growth in jobs and economic activity in coastal communities and is increasingly important as a raw material supplier to the fish processing sector with significant added value and export opportunities given world-wide demand for seafood.

The Department is responsible for the strategic and economic development, as well as the regulation, of the aquaculture sector within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy and the Fisheries Acts. [Aquaculture policy and development functions are exercised separately from licensing/regulatory responsibilities, which are handled as an integral part of coastal zone management. The policy and licensing functions are complementary.]

Following the completion in 2000 of a major review, the medium term strategic directions for the aquaculture sector have been set. The key objectives, if the Irish industry is to succeed in the very competitive global market for high quality seafood products, are the achievement of critical mass in production, diversification into new species and the attainment of best practice in line with stringent environmental guidelines and high standards of quality assurance. Investment Support Programmes under the National Development Plan will support the achievement of these objectives.

The aim is to establish Ireland as the premier producer of aquaculture-based foods for the international market that fully satisfy changing consumer demands. The State agencies, in partnership with the industry, will continue to push for the highest standards, to underpin the realisation of achievable potential.

The Department will continue to work with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to deliver on best practice in aquaculture from a food safety perspective. The National Biotoxins Monitoring Programme, operated by the Marine Institute on behalf of the Department, will continue to be expanded and upgraded.

OVERALL GOAL

To support the sustainable development of the Irish aquaculture sector in order to maximise its contribution to jobs and growth in coastal communities and to the national economy.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To create a sustainable critical mass for further expansion of the sector.
- To increase economic activity, jobs, output value and exports in the sector on a sustainable basis.
- To secure improved competitiveness, technology, quality, value added and diversification in the sector.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Targeted investment support under the Regional Operational Programmes of the NDP.
- Pursuit of measures and actions beneficial to the Irish aquaculture industry at EU level (fish health, prices, markets).

- Regular meetings of the Aquaculture Forum to facilitate communication and co-ordination between the industry and State agencies.
- Establishment of a national fish health policy framework in an overall EU context.
- Promotion of research and development programmes to support quality, diversification and improved production and husbandry techniques.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Delivery of investment programmes under the Regional Operational Programmes of the NDP.
- National regime to ensure compliance with relevant EU Fish Health and Environmental Directives.
- National fish health policy framework in place.
- Enhanced quality, fish health and hygiene monitoring programmes in place.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Numbers/trends in employment, output and exports.
- Structural trends in sector.
- Fish health/consumer health status.

MARINE TOURISM AND LEISURE

The marine tourism and leisure sector, while dynamic and largely market driven, has considerable scope for further development. While the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation has overall policy and developmental responsibility for the tourism sector, the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources has a key supporting role to play in promoting the sustainable and safe development of the marine tourism and leisure sector.

Continuing rapid growth in the sector poses challenges in terms of developmental and safety issues. From the development perspective, there is a need to ensure coherence between the multiplicity of agencies involved, as well as ensuring that policy instruments are focused on pursuit of consistent and sustainable objectives. Growing participation in water-based sports and activities, and growing demands for increased safety regulation, both occurring against the background of pressures on resources, require the adoption of safety regulation mechanisms which involve devolution/sharing of responsibilities at local and sectoral levels.

OVERALL GOAL

To promote the sustainable and safe development of the marine tourism and leisure sector.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To support and facilitate the sustainable development of the marine-based tourism and leisure sector in Ireland.
- To develop, promote and implement high safety standards for the marine tourism and leisure sector.

- To monitor and evaluate sectoral development strategies through the Marine Institute and in consultation with the sector and other State agencies.
- To facilitate marine tourism and leisure projects through coastal zone management and port/harbour corporate governance.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Targeted support for development of access infrastructure and facilities.
- Formulation, taking account of the results of research, of long term strategies for the sustainable development of the sector.
- Developing and implementing, in consultation with the sector, updated safety rules and regulations to ensure the safe operation of pleasure craft and adventure centre activities.
- Promoting marine safety in association with other safety agencies and sectoral and voluntary groups.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Ongoing analysis of sectoral requirements.
- Provision of support for access infrastructure and facilities through the NDP Marine Tourism measure.
- Adoption and implementation of legislation on the safe operation of pleasure craft and adventure activity centres.
- Ongoing education and communication on marine leisure safety issues (in conjunction with other relevant safety bodies).

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Trends in scale and structure of marine tourism and leisure sector.
- Safety status of sector.

MINERALS EXPLORATION AND MINING

The Department regulates and promotes two related areas of the Minerals Industry: Exploration and Mining. While the exploration sector is small in a world-wide context with approximately £8 million a year being spent in Ireland at present, it is nevertheless of critical importance if new economic deposits are to be found. Ireland continues to face intense competition both from other European countries and globally for inward minerals investment. In these circumstances, the maintenance of Ireland's relative position in the mining sector in the medium term will require increased marketing efforts and fine-tuning of the fiscal and permitting framework, including examination, in the context of new legislation, of the scope for deregulation of some low value minerals.

There is also increasing pressure from conservation and environmental interests seeking more stringent controls on mining developments in the EU, which are inevitably on greenfield sites. It is vital, therefore, that, in promoting and regulating the sector through the Minerals Development Acts, the Department insists on, and fosters, sustainable, environmentally responsible mining including the rehabilitation of sites.

OVERALL GOAL

To stimulate discovery of economic mineral deposits and to maximise the contribution of the mining sector to the national economy, with due regard to its impact on the environment.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To maximise the level of exploration.
- To ensure responsible development of the State's minerals deposits.
- To secure fair financial benefits for the State and to maximise the opportunities for Irish business/institutions to service the needs of the sector.
- To ensure the safety and rehabilitation of the sites of former mines.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Publishing clear statements of the requirements for prospecting licences and mining facilities and setting terms which balance the State's interest with those of developers.
- Pursuing appropriate co-ordination with the Geological Survey of Ireland, the various permitting authorities, including the Environmental Protection Agency and local planning authorities, and development agencies, so as to facilitate responsible minerals development.
- Ensuring that high quality information in the form of maps, data, etc. is readily available to explorationists and potential developers.
- Marketing the legislative and policy framework, investment climate and mineral potential of Ireland internationally.
- Monitoring of exploration and mining activities.
- Examining the potential for mining offshore.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Prospecting licences issued and renewed and mining facilities issued.
- Promotional products for stimulating mineral development.
- Review and amendment, as necessary, of State terms, in light of outcome of current comparative study of fiscal terms in other significant mining jurisdictions.
- Updated minerals legislation.
- Ensuring maintenance of the safety of former mines and mitigation of environmental effects.
- Administration of a number of mining related tourism/heritage grants.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Level and trend in exploration activity and expenditure in Ireland vis-à-vis worldwide activity.
- The level and trend of development and production of minerals.
- Income to the State from Leases and Licences.

PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION

The Department is responsible for promotion, regulation and monitoring of exploration for and development of oil and gas in onshore and offshore Ireland. This involves the promotion of acreage, either through open access or by a Round system, agreeing appropriate work programmes and the allocation of acreage to exploration companies under various types of licences.

The Department acts as co-ordinator of all the State's requirements relating to the operations of exploration and production (E&P) companies in Ireland. As licensing authority it is concerned to ensure that the hydrocarbon potential is effectively evaluated and exploited and that an inclusive and effective safety regime and appropriate management systems are in place. It must be satisfied also that all operations are conducted with due regard to the protection of the environment, in accordance with agreed national and international standards and procedures. It promotes and co-ordinates investment by the E&P industry in infrastructure, research and joint-industry projects related to all aspects of oil and gas exploration and production in Ireland.

While the strong recovery in oil prices, taken together with major restructuring in the sector worldwide and the discovery of the Corrib Gas Field, are positive factors, Ireland remains unexplored, and despite a progressive licensing system, competitive fiscal terms and a stable political/business environment, is attracting very limited interest from the E&P industry. The challenge at this point is to sustain interest in the Irish offshore with a view to establishing the presence of hydrocarbons on a significant scale, while at the same time managing an acreage release policy which best balances short and long-term strategic considerations. This will require continued strong marketing, and stability and competitiveness of the fiscal and licensing framework. A related key objective is to maximise the potential opportunities for the use of Irish goods and services on a value for money basis.

OVERALL GOAL

To maximise the benefits to the national economy from exploration for, and production of, indigenous oil and gas resources, while ensuring that activities are conducted safely and with due regard to their impact on the environment and other land/sea users.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To maximise the area of Continental Shelf jurisdiction.
- To maintain the number of Exploration Licences at the highest possible level, given the prevailing climate of the E&P industry and taking account of long-term strategic considerations.
- To maximise the opportunities for Irish business/institutions to service the needs of the E&P sector in Ireland.
- To optimise the returns to the State from E&P operations.
- To ensure that E&P operations are efficient and effective and are carried out in accordance with best practices.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Completing the acquisition of necessary data for the preparation of an effective case for submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, to establish an undisputed outer limit of the Continental Shelf.
- Maintaining clear licensing terms which secure optimal levels of exploration and development activity and balance the interests of the State and the E&P sector.
- Providing effective promotion and appropriate licensing opportunities.
- Developing mechanisms for research in support of exploration in higher potential frontier basins.
- Continuing to work with E&P companies to ensure that opportunities in the sector for Irish businesses/institutions are maximised.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Proposals for submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf relating to the outer limit of the Continental Shelf.
- Promotional measures including the provision of data to the industry – new release mechanisms, effective data bases, new core store, conferences/workshops and promotional reports.
- Approved exploration work programmes, production operations and resources depletion.
- E&P regulatory review and updating of the legislative framework.
- Assessment of applications for Plans of Development to be completed in 2001, including the Corrib Gasfield and the Kinsale storage project.
- Ongoing industry support, through the Petroleum Infrastructure Programme, for infrastructure development and joint industry research and data gathering.
- Ongoing work to promote and maximise opportunities for Irish business.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- The level, quality and geographic spread of petroleum exploration in Ireland, adjusted to take account of external factors and trends.
- The number of exploration and production companies operating in, or actively considering operating in, the Irish exploration, appraisal and development sectors, given external factors and trends.
- Level and trends in income to the State from leases, licences and data sales.
- Volume/trends of business in the sector secured by Irish enterprises.

FORESTRY

At present, 9.4% of Irish land is under forestry, compared to an EU average of 33%. The Strategic Plan, "Growing for the Future", published in 1996, provides a long-term framework for the development of the sector from nurseries through to timber product industries. It also addresses a range of related issues such as the fostering of sustainable development, the creation of added-value, the development of new competences and skills and the generation of multiple benefit returns. It provides for increasing the national forest estate to 17% of available land by 2030.

All forest operations are carried out in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management (SFM), which reflect the economic, social and environmental objectives underlying forestry development.

The Department is the regulatory and developmental authority for forestry and is the governing authority for Coillte Teoranta.

Maintaining and increasing the rate of afforestation is crucial to the achievement of a number of key national objectives, including meeting Ireland's Kyoto commitments in relation to the abatement of greenhouse gas emissions, the continued restructuring of the agricultural sector and the development of the long-term base for a major internationally competitive wood products sector.

While a high rate of afforestation is being maintained, it is nevertheless significantly below the challenging targets set in 1996. The level and structure of incentives have accordingly been revised to encourage an increased planting rate. This matter will require to be kept under regular review.

Notwithstanding the positive environmental benefits of afforestation, concerns remain about its potential local impacts. To address these concerns, the framework and guidelines for environmental assessment of afforestation proposals have been overhauled. The new guidelines now in place are recognised as exemplary in international terms.

Following discussions with the European Commission and the Department of the Environment and Local Government, a number of new measures are being introduced to ensure effective implementation of an EU Directive relating to environmental impact assessment. The new procedures will involve:

- the development of regional forest plans
- wider consultation with prescribed bodies and with the general public
- an appeals procedure.

OVERALL GOAL

To support the development of forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to national economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To foster efficient and sustainable development of forestry, including increased quality planting and the promotion of diverse species.
- To support the attainment of Ireland's Kyoto objectives.

- To increase the level of farmer participation in forestry.
- To protect the national forest estate against potentially damaging pests and diseases.
- To promote the development of an internationally competitive integrated wood products sector in Ireland.
- To support, as shareholder, the ongoing corporate development of Coillte Teoranta with a view to further reviewing strategic options for the company in the medium-term.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- The Strategic Plan (1996) for the development of the forestry sector in Ireland sets out a detailed strategy for the development of the forestry sector to 2035.
- The National Development Plan (NDP) provides a framework of support for development of the sector over the period 2000-2006 at national and regional level.
- Implementing forest protection policies.
- Supporting research into all aspects of forestry through COFORD (the National Council for Forest Research and Development).
- Supporting public and private providers of training services for the sector.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Implementation of the Irish National Forest Standard.
- Forestry grants and premium payments.
- Ongoing development of computerised grant and premium administration system (GPAS).
- Revised forestry legislation and development of an appeals system.
- Classification of all landscapes according to their sensitivity to forestry development.
- Maintenance of forests' disease-free status by rigorous enforcement of the Department's forest protection policy.
- Grants for downstream activities.
- Grants for research and development and training.
- Corporate governance of Coillte Teoranta.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Rate and diversity of afforestation.
- Compliance with sustainable forest management (SFM) principles.
- Incidence of disease in the national forest estate.
- Performance of Coillte Teoranta.
- Development of the downstream sector.

RESEARCH

MARINE RESEARCH

Co-ordinated national marine research programmes critically inform policy objectives and management and development strategies for marine resources. Focused marine research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI), in partnership with the industry, underpins delivery on the potential of the marine sector. Marine RTDI policy is set firmly in the context of overall Government policy for science and innovation.

The Department has overall responsibility for marine research. The Marine Institute is responsible for the implementation of marine RTDI policy, and marine research service delivery.

The framework for the further development of marine RTDI policy is set out in the Government approved plan "A Marine Research, Technology, Development and Innovation Strategy", which was published in 1998. The implementation of this strategy will be supported through the Marine RTDI measure and other measures under the National Development Plan. The primary objectives of the Marine RTDI measure are:

- the provision of enhanced research vessel capacity to cover outer Continental Shelf activities;
- upgrading of key national marine laboratories and facilities to provide necessary capacity and infrastructure to support planned activities;
- the establishment of a Marine RTDI Fund to support project based RTDI in targeted areas.

OVERALL GOAL

To ensure that the national marine research effort matches the needs and potential of the marine resource sector.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that the marine RTDI effort is prioritised in accordance with an overall national perspective on the needs and potential of the marine sector, within the context of the national framework for science and innovation.
- To ensure that the State's marine regulatory and development programmes are underpinned by high quality marine research services.
- To ensure that high quality marine RTDI services are available to support marine sector development at enterprise level.
- To ensure that marine RTDI is supported by an adequate basic research programme.
- To ensure that, as far as possible, marine RTDI services are developed and provided on a commercial basis.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Ongoing review of marine RTDI needs and priorities in consultation with clients and stakeholders.
- Ongoing specification for the Marine Institute of the services and standards of services to be delivered to the Department, its agencies and the sector.
- Supporting, through State and EU funding, targeted marine RTDI research, services and infrastructure.
- Ensuring, through the Marine Institute, a co-ordinated and partnership approach to marine RTDI delivery with marine research institutions and marine enterprises.
- Giving a clear mandate to the Marine Institute to develop for itself, and to encourage others to develop, a commercial approach to the provision of marine RTDI services.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Efficient co-operation with the Geological Survey of Ireland in the delivery of the Seabed Research Survey.
- Implementation of the marine research components of the NDP.
- Ensuring provision of high quality technical services, and especially biotoxin testing, to the marine sector.
- Successful completion on schedule of the relocation of Marine Institute to Galway, while maintaining service standards.
- Successful delivery and operation of additional research vessel for Marine Institute.
- Corporate governance of Marine Institute.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Number of projects completed/results transferred to sector.
- National pool of marine science expertise.
- Number of EU and commercial research contracts.
- Level of research vessel activity.

FORESTRY RESEARCH

Co-ordinated and focused forest research underpins the considerable national investment that is taking place in afforestation and is important for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan – "Growing for the Future". Forest research projects are developed with industrial partners and research organisations, which share in developing new products and services that help to secure the future competitiveness of the Irish forest industry.

In recent years, research in areas such as sustainable forest management, biodiversity, wood product development, wood harvesting and wood transport systems and logistics has been undertaken by COFORD (the National Council for Forest Research and Development).

Forest research carried out by COFORD over the period to 2006 will be funded under the Productive Sector Operational Programme of the National Development Plan. A sum of €13 million has been allocated for this programme.

The emphasis of the research programme will be on ensuring that the forest industry remains viable, internationally competitive, environmentally compatible and consistent with the principles of sustainable development. It will also develop new competences and a critical mass of forest research in Ireland, to encourage both innovation and market development.

OVERALL GOAL

To promote research and development focused on the strengths of the Irish forestry sector, with particular emphasis on market demands, industrial needs, environmental concerns and cost efficiency.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To implement a forest research and development programme that will help to develop the full potential of the Irish forestry sector.
- To ensure that the Forest Service planting grant schemes and regulations are based on the most up-to-date and cost effective technologies.
- To encourage and foster industry support of focused, cost-effective research and development.
- To support the development of the forestry sector in an environmentally sustainable manner.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Involvement of research, education and industry interests in the development and ownership of forest research.
- Provide support for, and direction to, the work of COFORD in the provision of information and research services.
- Funding of forest research and development.
- Development of international linkages in forest research.

MAIN OUTPUTS

Implementation of the Forestry RTDI measure of the Productive Sector Operational Programme with a particular emphasis on:

- development of better and more cost-effective ways of growing broadleaf trees in nurseries;
- development of improved methods of growing broadleaves to maturity;
- development of technologies to provide logistic support to harvesting and transportation of wood from forests;
- examination of economic potential of wood for combined heat and power generation;
- estimation of Carbon stocks in Irish forests;
- examination of potential for Carbon trading;

- development of new forest products;
- examination of sociological implications of new afforestation programme;
- examining the impact of forest operations on water quality (joint COFORD/EPA study); and
- research on conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in forests (jointly with EPA).

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Dissemination of results of forest research and development to the forest industry.
- New products and services developed from R&D effort.
- Technical and financial performance of COFORD.

PETROLEUM RESEARCH

Since its establishment in June, 1997, the Petroleum Infrastructure Programme (PIP) has proven to be an excellent model for co-operation between operators and their partners in exploration, a valuable source of funds for developing support services for the offshore sector in Ireland and an effective mechanism for gathering new data on many aspects of the Irish offshore. Total expenditure under the programme over its period of operation will amount to €6.23 million.

PIP has focused on major research projects, including data acquisition, and associated scholarships. Non-research activities, such as industry-based training and equipment purchase, have also been included in the Programme.

OVERALL GOAL

To promote hydrocarbon exploration activities in Ireland by strengthening local support structures, funding data gathering and research and by providing a forum for co-operation.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To identify and promote research which is designed to facilitate successful petroleum exploration and production programmes in the medium to long term.
- To identify and promote opportunities and mechanisms for funding by the industry of education and training in petroleum-related matters at operational, graduate and post-graduate levels.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Ongoing operation of the three groups within the PIP i.e. the Offshore Support Group (OSG), the Rockall Studies Group (RSG) and the Porcupine Studies Group (PSG).
- Using the data acquired to inform decisions by the industry on exploration, and to support the promotion by the Department of exploration opportunities.
- Promoting schemes under which the industry funds education and training, either directly or through the Department.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Projects funded through the Petroleum Infrastructure Programme.
- Data and technical information, for the industry to make informed decisions on exploration and for the Department to use in the promotion of exploration opportunities in the Irish offshore.
- Additional Irish personnel who have internationally recognised education and training in petroleum-related disciplines.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Number and quality of research projects funded under PIP.
- Level of involvement of Irish researchers in projects.
- Number of additional qualified Irish personnel available to the industry.
- Enhanced capability of the goods and services sector to service exploration and development.

SECTION 5 CHANGE AND RENEWAL – OUR ORGANISATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL GOALS

INTRODUCTION

As indicated in [Section 2](#), the critical success factors for the Department over the next three years include the need for significant organisational change and adaptation, a comprehensive Human Resources strategy, the development of information and communications technology, a continued commitment to high quality customer service and effective teamwork and communications, both internally and externally. Arising from this analysis of crucial issues, we have set five overall organisational and operational goals for the Department. These are:

ORGANISATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL GOALS

- To develop and implement a programme of organisational change and adaptation which will streamline and modernise organisational structures and the allocation of functions.
- To deliver top quality services which meet customer demands and needs as cost-effectively as possible.
- To underpin achievement of the Department's business and organisational objectives, and to meet individual needs, through effective and strategic human resource management and development.
- To implement more effective internal organisation and management systems, including financial management and information and communications technology.
- To develop effective teamwork and communications in internal and external business.

These goals take account also of the programme for public service modernisation included in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE/RESTRUCTURING

As indicated in [Section 2](#), we will initiate a review of our business structures and the scope for devolution or assignment to agencies of operational and executive functions where appropriate. The objective is to ensure more focused and efficient delivery of services while enabling the Department to concentrate more on policy development, review of legislation, programme evaluation, corporate governance and international relations. The review will be a wide ranging examination of all our businesses in line with that overall objective drawing, inter alia, on the work already undertaken or planned in relation to public safety functions. It will take a long term perspective on how best to organise and deliver the many public resource management, licensing, property and related functions at present discharged directly by the Department.

The review will also take account of the need for a comprehensive independent appeals framework and the need for consolidation and integration of the legislative framework for coastal zone and natural resources management. It will be moved forward in tandem with the articulation of an integrated coastal zone management strategy and legislative framework.

The review will be undertaken on a partnership basis and with the assistance of outside experts. It is envisaged that the review will be completed in 2002 with a view to implementing agreed programmes of structural and legislative change thereafter.

The review of marine and natural resources administrative frameworks is a logical development of the trend since 1987 of bringing marine and natural resources functions together "under one roof" and creating a strategic capability for the optimum long-term integrated management of those resources.

OVERALL GOAL

To develop and implement a programme of change and adaptation which will streamline and modernise organisational structures and the allocation of functions.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To identify the optimum organisational arrangements for the future management and development of the marine and natural resources sectors.
- To ensure delivery through organisational, legislative and other necessary actions of new structures and operational arrangements consistent with the Department's strategy.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- To complete a comprehensive review of business structures by 2002.
- To timetable and implement agreed programmes of structural and legislative change arising from the review.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Review completed on a partnership basis by 2002.
- Change process, including legislative change, timetabled and commenced 2002/2003.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Department has made considerable progress over the past three years in improving the quality of service to our customers, taking account, inter alia, of the recommendations of the All Party Oireachtas Committee on SMI in relation to Quality Customer Service for the Sea Fishing sector. We have eliminated or significantly reduced arrears in key areas of the Department's operations. Nevertheless, there is scope for further improvement and enhancement of customer service.

We remain committed to delivering top quality services to our customers, both internal and external. To this end we are putting in place a Customer Service Action Plan covering the three years 2001 to 2004. The Plan will set out planned progress on implementation of the 12 Principles of Quality Customer Service as approved by Government in July, 2000, including the three new principles in the areas of equality/diversity, official languages equality and internal customer service. The Plan will contain specific objectives, targets and performance indicators. A key element of the Plan will be to ensure that our regulatory processes are as simple, straightforward and efficient as possible. Progress in achieving the targets in the Plan will be reported on in the Department's Annual Reports.

OVERALL GOAL

To deliver top quality services which meet customer demands and needs as cost-effectively as possible.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To deliver services to the highest standards.
- To develop a strong customer service ethos throughout the Department.
- To establish among our customers a strong reputation for quality service.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Prepare and publish a Customer Service Action Plan covering the three year period 2001-2004.
- Implement the measures outlined in the Customer Service Action Plan 2001-2004.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Customer Service Action Plan.
- High-quality, user-friendly guides to all Department's services, in printed form and on the Department's website.
- Feedback mechanisms for customer reaction, and means of redress for dissatisfied customers.
- Comprehensive review of Department's regulatory processes.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Achievement of standards and objectives specified in the Customer Service Action Plan, and numbers and trends in customer complaints.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The staff of the Department are the organisation's most important asset. We are committed to the ongoing development of an organisational culture which supports, develops and motivates all staff and underpins successful achievement of the Department's business goals through continuous performance improvement.

The Department is working to deliver enhanced organisational performance in a public service environment which poses major challenges (for example, the competitive labour market) as well as significant opportunities (the wider HRM reform agenda). Matching our resources, skills, performance and structures to our goals, programmes and quality service aims is a key imperative for the organisation and our staff. Building on progress to date and recognising the need for accelerated HRM change, we aim to create a working environment which is predicated on equality of opportunity, partnership, high standards of health, safety and welfare, teamworking, effective internal communications and flexibility. *The development and roll out of a fully integrated human resources strategy will reinforce and support our organisational objectives, while also addressing individual needs.*

Equality legislation prohibits discrimination in the work place on nine distinct grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community. The Department is fully committed to the principles of equality in its relationships with its customers and treatment of its staff. The Department will take a number of positive actions over the period of the Strategy Statement in furtherance of these principles.

OVERALL GOAL

To underpin achievement of the Department's business and organisational objectives, and to meet individual needs, through effective and strategic human resource management and development.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the appropriate level and quality of human resources in the context of our business goals and priorities.
- To foster an organisational culture which supports, motivates and develops all staff and enhances organisational capability.
- To create a working environment which reflects best practice in equality, partnership, employment practices and procedures and health, safety and welfare.
- To develop and implement, in partnership, an integrated Human Resource Management and Development Strategic Framework.
- To complete the successful roll out of the Performance Management and Development System.
- To endeavour to improve the ratios of male/female representation in the grades of Principal and Assistant Principal, subject to the number of vacancies which arise, with the objective of achieving the following targets:

Principal Officer:	from 14% to 21% in five years.
Assistant Principal Officer:	from 30% to 35% in five years.
- To endeavour to improve the ratios of male/female representation in the professional/technical grades over the next five years having due regard to the gender composition of qualified candidates externally.
- To promote a culture in the Department which ensures that all staff work in an environment free from harassment and bullying.
- To facilitate disabled staff to achieve their full potential.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Formal HRM Strategic Framework and Action Plans covering:
 - Values
 - Strategic objectives
 - Planning and Forecasting
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Recruitment/Selection/Placement/Induction/Probation
 - Training
 - Performance Management and Development
 - Mobility/Promotion
 - Internal Communications
 - Devolution of HRM to line management
 - Working Arrangements
 - Equality
 - Code of Standards
 - Employee Support
 - Customer Service
 - Grievances and discipline.
- Transformation of Personnel into a Human Resource Management function providing quality service, and with a professional approach and a strategic planning and policy focus.

- Ongoing integration of HR strategies with business strategy formulation.
- Establish an intensive Equality Sub-Group of the Partnership Committee to prepare a comprehensive Equality Statement for the Department.
- Adopt for internal promotions through competitive process, competency based interviewing techniques.
- Ensure that all interviewers are adequately trained and aware of equality issues in this context.
- Support family friendly working practices which allow staff, both administrative and technical, to achieve an appropriate balance between work and home life.
- Where possible, and to actively encourage female participation in competitions, allow individuals to continue any atypical working arrangements on promotion, which they enjoyed prior to promotion.
- Make reasonable allowances when assigning/moving staff which take account of family obligations.
- Proactive promotion of civil service professional/technical careers in the marine sector in secondary schools and third level colleges.
- Provide reasonable practical supports (accommodation, equipment and otherwise) which enable disabled staff to achieve their full potential and which ensure that such staff are not disadvantaged in the context of training, access to different work experiences and promotion.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- HR Strategy and underpinning Action Plans in place.
- New HR management information systems developed.
- Performance Management and Development System established.
- Training Strategy in place and delivering.
- Enhanced management communications and leadership.
- Availability and quality of staff resources.
- Better working environment.
- Effective resource deployment in response to priorities.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Implementation of PMDS cycle.
- Reorientation of the HRM function.
- Alignment of HR objectives and business planning.
- Recruitment and retention trends.
- Quality and quantity of training.
- Impact of training strategy.
- Expenditure on training and development.
- Equality of opportunity.
- Availability and quality of resources.
- Customer satisfaction.
- Enhanced performance.

INTERNAL ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The Department's internal systems, processes and structures have undergone important changes in recent years, as a result of a number of key initiatives including the introduction of a formal business planning process, the development of partnership structures, the roll-out of a Performance Management and Development System, the preparation of an Information Strategic Plan and the establishment of an Information Systems Division. All of these actions have contributed to a strengthening of the Department's internal capabilities, and we are committed to pursuing an agenda of further restructuring and change which will ensure that the Department can address its responsibilities as efficiently and as cost-effectively as possible.

OVERALL GOAL

To implement more effective internal organisation and management systems, including financial management and information and communications technology.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that the financial resources for which the Department is responsible are properly used and accounted for on a value for money basis.
- To ensure that systems are in place to safeguard the regularity and propriety of financial transactions and that resources are used economically and effectively.
- To have in place appropriate systems to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and operations.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Monitoring of expenditure/receipts and assessment of future requirements.
- Maintenance of an effective internal audit capability.
- Conduct of ongoing programmes of expenditure reviews.
- Development of financial management information systems.
- Supporting a value for money culture.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Ongoing reports on trends in finances and analysis of future requirements, including ongoing monitoring of relevant NDP programmes.
- Audit of Departmental and NDP schemes.
- Effective implementation of the Euro changeover.
- Ongoing implementation of the Civil Service wide financial management information framework.
- Expenditure review programmes.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Results of audits and expenditure reviews.
- Department's budgetary outturns.

- Outcome of Euro changeover process in the Department and its agencies.
- Progress in development of management information systems.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

KEY OBJECTIVE

- To implement IT development and investment programmes in accordance with the Department's IT Strategy, in order to support the business strategies of the Department and to underpin the cost-effective operation and management of the business of the Department.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- **Management:** To manage the implementation of information technology such that the organisational goals are achieved, while taking full account of the ongoing change process.
- **Information:** To collect, manage and disseminate information that will support the achievement of the Department's sectoral, operational and organisational goals, objectives and strategies.
- **Software Applications:** To deploy standardised, open software applications which eliminate unnecessary tasks, standardise processes, integrate information stores, and automate manual tasks, with linkages where appropriate to other information stores.
- **Technical:** To deploy appropriate technology to provide for modern communications based on Internet technologies and to ensure the security, reliability, availability and recoverability of the Department's data and information.
- **Human Resources:** To provide adequate levels of staffing, both internal and outsourced, to support the deployment of Information Technology, and to ensure the provision of appropriate training to all members of staff.
- **Quality:** To assure the quality of the IT service and applications provided.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Establish a framework for managing the development and delivery of Information Technology products and services.
- Build a portfolio of Information and Communications Technology products and services that are proven and can be rapidly deployed to meet the changing needs of the Department's businesses.
- Implement information systems that are focused on customer services and in line with the national eGovernment initiative and the Information Society Action Plan.
- Maintain a core team of personnel with expertise in systems and technologies.
- Develop a programme, in collaboration with the Human Resources Division, which will ensure that all personnel within the Department have the necessary training and skills to make best use of Information Technology.
- Ongoing review of key IT strategies to ensure that they are in line with business plans and the changing needs of the Department.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Delivery of quality information systems and technologies on time and within budget as set out in the Department's IT Strategy.
- High degree of utilisation of Information Technology to deliver services electronically, and capability to respond quickly to changing demands from our customers.
- Capability to conduct the Department's business efficiently and effectively through the use of modern Information Technologies.

TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATIONS

Teamwork within the Department, including co-operation through formal Partnership structures, has made a critical contribution to the progress achieved on many fronts in recent years. We are committed to developing this teamwork approach further, and to underpinning it by improved systems of internal communication.

We recognise also the critical importance of effective teamwork between the Department and its agencies. We will continue to pursue this approach in parallel with the ongoing development of enhanced systems and processes for corporate governance.

OVERALL GOAL

To develop effective teamwork and communications in internal and external business.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To consolidate and develop further the teamwork/partnership approach within the Department.
- To continue to develop a teamwork/co-operative approach with our agencies.
- To develop further the existing processes of corporate governance for our agencies.

MAIN STRATEGIES

- Development of more structured processes of co-operation and communication between the Department and its agencies.
- Further development of teamwork structures and approaches in the Department, based around the successful partnership processes already in place.

MAIN OUTPUTS

- Establishment of liaison committees and other liaison and communications procedures.
- Consultancy study on the adoption of a streamlined and standardised approach to corporate governance of the Department's Agencies, focusing in particular on key deliverables.
- Enhanced teamwork and communications systems and procedures within the Department.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Effective co-operation between the Department and its agencies.
- Effective operation of the partnership process and teamwork, and of improved internal communications systems, within the Department.

SECTION 6 MOVING FORWARD – IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGY STATEMENT

The sectoral, organisational and operational goals set out in this Statement represent a very challenging agenda for our Department over the next three years. While work is already underway on a considerable number of the policy, organisational and operational actions, it will, realistically, given the pressures on the Department's resources, be difficult to deliver all the outputs specified. Implementation procedures will accordingly incorporate the necessary flexibility to respond to evolving circumstances and requirements, having regard in particular to key Government and Ministerial objectives and priorities.

Implementation of this Statement will be undertaken in accordance with Divisional Business Plans prepared by each Division of the Department. These detailed work plans, prepared in consultation with all the Department's staff, set out what Divisions will do, both in their own specific areas of responsibility and for the effective discharge of the Department's overall responsibilities. The continued roll-out of the Performance Management and Development System will bring clarity to individual roles and support and motivate development.

Primary responsibility for monitoring the implementation of Divisional Business Plans and achievement of targets will, in accordance with formal assignments of responsibility made pursuant to the Public Service Management Act, 1997, rest with Heads of Divisions. Each Divisional Business Plan will also be reviewed regularly by the Department's Management Advisory Committee, with a view to ensuring that all Divisions contribute optimally to implementation of the Strategy Statement. Quality assurance and feedback mechanisms for PMDS will be a critical part of the ongoing review process.

Overall implementation of the policy, organisational and operational goals detailed in this Statement will also be monitored and reviewed regularly by the Department's Management Advisory Committee, and our Annual Reports under the Public Service Management Act, 1997 will report on progress. We intend, before publication of the Annual Report for 2001, to undertake a comprehensive review of Report structure and content, to ensure that these documents are as clear and informative as possible.

APPENDIX 1 SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Mr FRANK FAHEY, TD Minister	Mr TOM CARROLL Secretary General	Mr HUGH BYRNE, TD Minister of State
Mr Tom Power Assistant Secretary	Ms Sara White Assistant Secretary	Mr Michael Guilfoyle Assistant Secretary
Corporate Management	Human Resources	Central
Information Systems	Inland Fisheries/ Aquaculture Policy	Maritime Transport
Coastal Zone Administration	Sea Fisheries Policy	Marine Safety and Marine Environment
Exploration and Mining	Sea Fisheries Administration	Irish Coast Guard
Forest Service	Sea Fisheries Control	Marine Leisure and Research
	Engineering	Petroleum Affairs

APPENDIX 2 MAJOR AREAS OF EXPENDITURE 2001

DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET

The Department is responsible in 2001, through its Vote, for gross expenditure of £228 million. Of this, £22 million is accounted for by the Department's Administrative Budget. Major areas of expenditure for which the Department is responsible include:

	£M
Safety	18.2
Ports	2.8
Marine Tourism	7.2
Coast Protection	5.1
Marine Research	19.4
Fishery Harbours	17.8
Sea Fisheries/Aquaculture	33.1
Inland Fisheries	17.5
Forestry	82.2
Exploration/Mining	0.2
Other	2.6

APPENDIX 3 NDP 2000–2006 (DEPARTMENT OF THE MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES MEASURES)

Investment of almost €1.7 billion (IR€1.3 billion) has been provided for under the NDP 2000–2006 in respect of the marine and natural resources sectors. This investment is spread across some 38 measures under the three sectoral or inter-regional operational programmes, the two regional programmes, the CAP Rural Development Plan and the Cross-Border Initiatives.

SECTOR	TOTAL INVESTMENT 2000–2006 (€M)
Seaports	153
Angling	39
Marine Tourism	38
Forestry Structural	196
Fishery Harbours	84
Aquaculture	73
Coast Protection	52
Marine RTDI	53
Forestry RTDI	15
Seafood Processing	87
Seafood Marketing	8
Fisheries Effort Adjustment	6
Fisheries Fleet Development	95
Fisheries Innovation and Sustainability	38
Forestry Training	17
Seafood Training	14
CAP Forestry	688
Cross Border Initiatives	4
TOTAL	1,660

Note: All amounts are indicative and are subject to revision over time to account for re-profiling and the impact of inflators/deflators.

APPENDIX 4 GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS RELEVANT TO DEPARTMENT AS CONTAINED IN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE MILLENNIUM AND PROGRAMME FOR PROSPERITY AND FAIRNESS

ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE MILLENNIUM (AS REVIEWED IN NOVEMBER, 1999)

MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

"The Government will continue to develop Ireland's marine resources, in partnership with local communities and sectoral interests, to maximise their contribution to economic and social well-being.

In the period 1999-2002 we will:

- Prioritise investment in fishery harbours, and fleet modernisation, and training/safety needs of the fishing sector, promote co-operation between catching and processing and develop a comprehensive negotiating strategy for the 2002 review of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy.
- Develop and conserve inland fisheries through a new Inshore Fisheries Unit and prepare legislation to enhance efficiency and local involvement in the management of fishery harbour centres.
- Develop a first-class national health and food safety capability for fish and shellfish.
- Encourage the highest standards of safety at sea by establishing a Coast Guard Service, by implementing the Expert Group Report on Casualty Investigation, and by developing new regimes for the Marine Leisure sector, including fast craft and adventure centres.
- Promote the development of the Marine Sector by establishing a National Maritime College, a Maritime Development Office and a National Port Users' Forum.
- Support priority infrastructural development in commercial ports and assist restructuring of non-commercial regional ports.
- Encourage investment in Marine Leisure facilities and marine tourism and institute a systematic review of the potential of maritime and inland water resourced regions, based on the successful Donegal initiative.
- Through the continued integrated approach of the three Departments concerned, we will complete the significant ongoing work on the development of comprehensive policy proposals for an effective Coastal Zone Management framework.
- Encourage offshore oil and gas exploration and establish a promotion agency for Irish goods and services in the offshore sector."

FORESTRY

"Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats in Government are committed to the development of a sustainable forestry industry. Ireland's forestry resources have been comprehensively mapped for the first time ever through a Government funded Forestry Inventory and Planning Service. Our Strategic Plan for Forestry aims to increase the area under forest to 17% of Ireland's land area and increase employment in the sector to 27,000. We have established a Forestry Industry Forum to promote and develop the sector and a Code of Best Practice for forestry management is being drafted.

Key priorities will include:

- to develop a new package of incentives for forestry planting with a special emphasis on broad-leaved species;
- to complete a major strategic options study for Coillte to strengthen and develop the Company into the Millennium;
- to seek equitable treatment for forestry planting in an integrated Rural Development Plan;
- to promote the positive environmental aspects of forestry and to establish a new programme for urban and amenity planting."

PROGRAMME FOR PROSPERITY AND FAIRNESS

MARINE OBJECTIVES

- To balance the objectives and parameters of EU Common Fisheries Policy with the potential to develop the sector in coastal regions where alternative work opportunities are few.
- To maximise the value-added potential of our fisheries resource throughout the supply/demand chain.
- To realise the significant further potential of aquaculture production for sustainable development.
- To ensure the inclusive management, conservation and development of our inland fisheries resource to the highest standards and to realise its full potential in terms of the social and economic benefits which it brings to the regions and rural farming and local communities.

FORESTRY OBJECTIVES

- To develop forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to national, economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment, and supportive of climate change commitments.
- To increase processing capacity and/or increase utilisation of existing capacity in order to process the substantial forecast growth in supply.
- To win back market share at home and to exploit export opportunities to the UK in particular, having regard to its geographical proximity and high import volumes.

In addition, there is a commitment in the Programme that oil, gas and mineral exploration will be promoted in line with best international environmental standards and with a view to enhancing the security of supply and maximising the return to the Irish economy in terms of the use of Irish goods, services and employment.



 **Department of the Marine
and Natural Resources**

Roinn na Mara agus Acmhainní Náúúrtha



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