The European Union's IPA 2010 programme for Albania

Technical Assistance for Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration in Albania for Law Drafting and Enforcement of National Environmental Legislation

(EuropeAid/130987/C/SER/AL)

INTERNSHIP REPORT
Irish EPA March – May 2013
Activity C.3

Final Draft

This project is funded by the European Union

Project title:	Technical Assistance for Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration in Albania for Law Drafting and Enforcement of National Environmental Legislation
Project number:	Europe Aid/130987/C/SER/AL;
Contract no.	2011/275-693
Country:	Republic of Albania

	Beneficiary	**Contractor**
Name:	Ministry of Environment Forestry and Water Administration	Grontmij A/S
Address:	Durresi Str, Nr 27, Tirana, Albania	Granskoven 8 DK-2600 Glostrup
Contact Person:	Enkelejda Malaj	Paolo Bacca
Phone:	+355 4 2270622	+355 4 2226493
E-mail:	Enkelejda.Malaj@moe.gov.al	Paolo.Bacca@selea.al

Date of Report:	17 June 2013
Title:	**Internship Report, Irish EPA March – May 2013**
Authors:	Kurt Terpgaard Jensen, Etleva Sinoimeri and Olkida Mersini
QA/QC	Paolo Bacca

Acknowledgement

The project team wishes to express its gratitude to all resource persons and experts from all institutions and stakeholders involved in the collection of data and information and to all persons and bodies that have supported the development of this Report. Special thanks are extended to the directors of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration and the National Environment Agency. Also special acknowledgement to the Irish EPA for their hosting the Internships.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DAS	Dumping at Sea
EIS	Environmental Information System
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMO	Genetically modified organisms
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
IPPC	Integrated population prevention control
LEMA	Licence Enforcement and Monitoring Application
NEA	National Environmental Agency
UWWT Directive	The Council Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban waste-water treatment
WDF	Waste Disposal Facilities

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 12th March till 11th May two NEA staffs (Ms. Etleva Sinoimeri and Ms. Olkida Mersini) have joined the Irish EPA as internships.

They have spent most of their time in EPA home office in Wexford, Ireland. They have however also had an opportunity to travel for work and socially over a couple of weeks. A couple of days were spent in the EPA Cork offices and fitting in a visit to Fota at the same time. They also spent a long weekend travelling across Ireland to Galway with one of their EPA colleagues and have visited Kilkenny and Waterford and Dublin in quick succession.

The objective of the internship was to promote institution-to-institution and peer-to-peer working-relationships and professional networking between the EPA and the NEA to support the NEA meet the challenges of implementing new EU legislation in the areas of Industrial Emissions and Environmental Impact Assessment.

The visit has included hands-on supervised experience on permit process and procedure provided by EPA Ireland for new permits and amendments and review of existing permits under the EU Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

During the eight weeks internship the two NEA staffs worked in the following areas:

1. LEMA – Licence Enforcement and Monitoring Application
2. EIS – Environmental Information System
3. Business Analysis
4. Waste Water Discharge Licences/Authorisation
5. Waste Disposal Facilities (Historic Landfill)
6. Dumping at Sea
7. Aarhus Convention
8. IPPC- Integrated population prevention control
9. GMO-Genetically modified organisms

NEA participants had the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the licensing process, including: application forms, guidance notes, licence templates, final licences/authorisations, and inspector's (desk officers) reports in relevant department.

The Internships have been most successful and call for a continued cooperation between EPA and NEA.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 PURPOSE OF INTERNSHIP

The internship programme has provided work experience opportunities to two NEA staff at the Irish EPA.

The purpose of the internship and the benefits to participants has been the following:

- Gain Valuable Work Experience: the internship has provided the opportunity to gain hands on work experience that can't be obtained in a classroom. Getting such experience is a great way to build personal confidence;
- Develop Network Opportunities: the internship has provided the opportunity to meet with people working in the field of permitting, and built relations for future partnership and twinning between the two Agencies;

The two Internships have been supervised by people who have the responsibilities associated with the specific jobs, as follows:

Activity	Supervisor
Licence Enforcement and Monitoring Application	Breen Higgins
GIS	Gavin Smith
Waste Water Discharge Licences/Authorisation	Karen Creed
Waste Disposal Facilities	Brean Meaney
Dumping at sea	Karen Creed and Donal Grant
Integrated population prevention control	Marie O'Conner
Genetically modified organisms	Tom McLoughlin

2.2 RELEVANT BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Ireland

Ireland is a small open economy with a population of 4.5 million.
For historic reasons Ireland mid 20th century was one of the least developed economies in Europe. From this low base Ireland developed an outstanding track in job creation and in attracting direct foreign investment.

Ireland demonstrates that industrial development and the attraction of global foreign investment are not in conflict with strong Environmental regulations for industry.

The Irish system is based on the view that a single national regulatory authority, for environmental aspects of industrial activities is attractive for inward investment, and can contribute to consistency and certainty in the decision making processes.

Ireland has an outstanding track record in attracting direct foreign investment.
There are now 1,004 overseas companies with Irish bases. These companies employ 146,000 people between them and contribute to €110bn in total exports.

Ireland now ranks first in the world for value of investment projects and second in the world for inward investment per capita. That is according to IBM's 2011 Global Location Trends Report.

According to the 2012 Foreign Direct Investment Report from Foreign Direct Intelligence — a London-based subsidiary of the Financial Times Group Ireland significantly outperformed the rest of Europe in attracting foreign direct investment last year.

According to figures published by the US Department of Commerce, US investment in Ireland surged in 2011 to reach a new record. The value of all direct investment by US firms in Ireland stood at $188 billion at the end of 2011, an increase of just over $30 billion on 2010.

2.2.2 Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for controlling pollution and emissions via licensing of industry waste and wastewater. EPA has a wide range of responsibilities associated with environmental protection. The Agency is a 'one stop shop' which includes responsibility for the environmental inspection under the enforcement function. The Agency is also responsible for the ongoing monitoring of licensed facilities to ensure that licences are enforced and are compliant with their conditions. Where licence conditions are not adhered to, the Agency is responsible for taking the appropriate actions against licensees, known as enforcement.

The EPA is an independent public body established under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. There is 321 full-time staff equivalents currently employed in the EPA and it has an annual budget of approximately €60 million in 2011.

Due to economic cutbacks the Agency is managing an increasing workload with a reduced budget and staff numbers. Due to these constraints in the Agency, in common with most Irish public sector institutions, the Agency is not involved in the EU Institutional Twinning Programme.

2.2.3 Industrial Emissions

The Irish system is based on the view that a single national regulatory authority for environmental aspects of industrial activities is attractive for inward investment, and can contribute to consistency and certainty in decision making processes.

The EPA is responsible for regulating activities that have significant polluting potential which includes Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) Licensing. The EPA through its licensing and enforcement activities seeks to ensure sustainable industrial development within the state. These activities also contribute to promoting a level playing field for regulated enterprises in Ireland as part of the European Union and to the elimination of illegal operations that undermine legitimate activities.

As of March 2011, the EPA had issued 1,500 licences. The effectiveness of EPA licensing procedures has been verified through the internal EPA audit of the Environmental Licensing Unit, and external reviews (OECD 2010; NESC 2010).

3 INTERNSHIP

3.1 PROGRAMME

The programme and the provision of placements for NEA staff with the EPA in Ireland was developed to first of all provide direct experience and the development of practical skills and best practice on Industrial Permits to EU standards. This has included hands-on supervised experience on permit process and procedures provided by EPA Ireland for new permits and amendments and review of existing permits under the EU Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

During the eight weeks the detailed programme for the internship of the two NEA staffs was developed to include the following areas:

1. LEMA – Licence Enforcement and Monitoring Application
2. EIS – Environmental Information System
3. Business Analysis
4. Waste Water Discharge Licences/Authorisation
5. Waste Disposal Facilities (Historic Landfill)
6. Dumping at Sea
7. Aarhus Convention
8. IPPC- Integrated population prevention control
9. GMO-Genetically modified organisms

NEA participants had the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the licensing process[1], including: application forms, guidance notes, licence templates, final licences/authorisations, and inspector's (desk officers) reports in the relevant department.

3.1.1 Licence Enforcement and Monitoring Application Project

The Licensing Enforcement and Monitoring Application system (LEMA) has developed an environment where working procedures can be more efficient, duplication can be eliminated and strategic practices promoted. This is happening through engagement with internal business analysis and technical infrastructure/GIS.
LEMA is an end-to-end system, incorporating licensing, monitoring, reporting and enforcement activities from the pre-application stage through to application submission and acceptance. It facilitates receipt of regular monitoring data and reports, compliance assessment and reporting, risk evaluation and enforcement planning processes and other licence enforcement functions.

The advantages offered by LEMA are as follows:

- A single location for all aspects of emission related data (licensing, enforcement & monitoring)

[1] In Ireland a licence is a single integrated licence which covers all emissions from the facility and its environmental management. The licensing process is broken down into six key Stages. NEA participants had the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the process set out below.
Stage One: Applicant makes pre-application enquiry
Stage Two: Applicant Applies for licence
Stage Three: EPA Issues Proposed Determination (PD)
Stage Four: Objection(s) received by EPA
Stage Five: Objector requests oral hearing
Stage Six: EPA issues a Final Determination
The EPA licensing and enforcement activities produce a significant body of guidance that is intended to assist regulated activities in the operation of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable enterprises. The EPA also works with industrial and NGO partners in Ireland and across the EU in the definition of best technological and operational standards for regulated enterprises.

- View licensee reported information
- Automatic assessment of license compliance
- Dynamic Risk Assessment
- Coordination of audits, monitoring and inspections visits
- Aid communications with licensee
- Facilitate Reporting to EU

3.1.2 Environmental Information System

The Environmental Information System (EIS) is designed to store, manage, verify, protect, retrieve and archive environmental data. The EIS stores data in a Geographic Information System (GIS) developed by the Informatics Unit of the EPA in collaboration with the LEMA Project.
Data available include:

- Water Quality data relating to rivers, lakes, groundwater
- Register of hydrometric stations
- National soils and subsoil's data (developed by the Spatial Analysis Group of Teagasc in collaboration with the EPA, Geological Survey of Ireland, Forest Service and Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government)
- Corine Land cover data series developed in collaboration with the European Environment Agency
- Historic Mines Inventory Datasets.
- Licensed IPPC, Waste and Waste Water Treatment facilities.

3.1.3 Business Analysis

Internal Business Analysis is very helpful and important because it:

- Facilitates new ways of working
- Identifies business requirements
- Creates solutions as:
  - Process improvements
  - Organisational change
  - Technology based
- Turns business requirements into functional specifications
- Inputs into prioritisation process
- Verifies whether delivered solution meets the requirements

3.1.4 Waste Water Discharge Licences/Authorisations

During the internship the NEA staff gained an understanding of Irish and EU legislation with particular reference to water quality and waste water. They learned about the licensing process from the receipt of an application to the formulation of a licence or authorisation. They have received training on how to mass balance a discharge into the receiving water in order to determine the impact of the discharge on water quality.

3.1.5 Waste Disposal Facilities (Historic Landfill)

The Waste Disposal Facilities (WDF) include: landfills, transfer stations, hazardous waste disposal and other significant waste disposal and recovery activities.
The internships had reviewed some licence application of historic landfill and waste. They have also visited a landfill with the inspectors Mr. Damien Masterson and Ms. Anthea Southey where they had the opportunity to observe the operations at a large landfill constructed in accordance with the EU landfill

Directive and to see the infrastructure in place for gas management (collection and flaring), leachate management (extraction pipe work and storage tanks), storm water management (surface water retention ponds) and odour control (temporary impermeable capping of landfill). Internship also read some of the documents that the licensee is required to prepare such as reports on monitoring carried out (e.g. dust, groundwater, surface water discharge, landfill gas, leachate) and the Annual Environmental Report for the facility.

3.1.6 Dumping at sea

Internships have worked with some dumping at sea (DAS) permits.
A DAS Permit is required for disposal of dredged material and inert material of natural origin (in the absence of suitable alternative reuse and disposal methods). Dumping of vessels, aircraft, sewage sludge, animal carcasses/parts/products and industrial fish waste is not permitted.

3.1.7 Aarhus Convention

Access to information, public participation and access to justice are essential for transparent and accountable governance, for high quality outcomes of the decision-making and to strengthen trust of public in governing institutions. Internships have reviewed how the Aarhus Convention is implemented in Ireland.

3.1.8 IPPC- Integrated population prevention control

Internships have acquired some knowledge about the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU). They have concentrated on the Cement Sector because it is particularly relevant in Albania.
They have consulted relevant documents and significant amounts of background information by accessing the following links: IED Industrial emissions Directive and The IPPC Directive - Environment European Commission

- EC Transposition Checklist
- BAT Implementing Decision
- Cement, lime and MgO[2] BREF: BREF documents - The European IPPC Bureau website

The Internships have worked with some practical applications, including:

- P0029-03 Irish Cement Mungret Limerick
- P0030-04 Irish Cement Platin
- P0487-06 Lagan Cement

3.1.9 Genetically modified organisms

The Internships have had an overview to the work done by the Genetically Modified Organisms Sector where they learned on the procedures utilised.

[2] Magnesium oxide (MgO), or magnesia, is a mineral that occurs naturally as periclase and is a source of magnesium. By far the largest consumer of magnesia worldwide are the refractory and cement industry.