



**Smarter Regulation of Waste in Europe  
(LIFE13 ENV-UK-000549)  
LIFE SMART Waste Project**

# **LIFE Actions: Progress-to-date**

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12	07 February 2020	Ian Bryson (SEPA)

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AN EU LIFE+ PROJECT FOR 2014–2019



## Introduction

The LIFE SMART Waste project is structured to meet the contractual requirements of the LIFE Grant Agreement and the LIFE Common Provisions 2013. The LIFE actions have been separated into seven work streams as follows:

- [Intelligence Communications Hub \(Actions B1, B2 & B9\)](#)
- [Tools, Approaches & Techniques \(Actions B3-B8\)](#)
- [Investigations & Intelligence \(Actions B10-B11\)](#)
- [Interventions \(Actions B12-B16\)](#)
- [Project Impact Monitoring \(Actions C1-C3\)](#)
- [Communication and dissemination actions \(Actions D1-D9\)](#)
- [Project Management \(Actions E1-E3\)](#)

A brief summary of progress-to-date for planned project actions follows.

## Intelligence Communications Hub\* (Actions B1, B2 & B9)

### B1 - Design an innovative intelligence communications hub

- Design and procurement process completed.
- Live system - IBM Cloud Connection (S2) - in use since June 2016.

### B2 - Develop an intelligence gathering strategy for intelligence communication hub

- Completed: The Intelligence Gathering Strategy (version 1.0) was approved by the Project Board in September 2015.

### B9 - Deploy and test the intelligence communication hub for challenging waste streams and related waste crime issues

- In progress: Deployment and testing was initiated in June 2016.
- A supplementary online platform (iBase) to facilitate the sharing of 'Official (Sensitive)' information between UK environmental regulators - in the form of a Cross Border Flagging Database - is currently being assessed as part of the pilot.

*\*Note: The 'Hub' is an online platform intended to allow participating enforcement agencies to collaborate in a secure, virtual environment. It is not a system for sharing sensitive criminal intelligence.*

#### **Links to published reports:**

B2 – [Intelligence gathering strategy](#)

## Tools, Approaches & Techniques (Actions B3-B5)

### B3 - Design and demonstrate innovative methods to understand and analyse competitive behaviour in waste businesses and market trends and how this relates to waste crime (Competitive Intelligence or 'CI')

- In progress: Phase 1 Desk-Top Research Report delivered in December 2016; Work by an external supplier on a Phase 2 Framework Report was discontinued in 2017; SEPA used in-house resource to prepare a Competitive Behaviours Toolkit in 2018 and commenced piloting in Scotland during Q3 2019.

### B4 - Build and demonstrate an innovative emerging threats and predictive analysis tool and approach for waste crime

- Completed: Following stakeholder consultations to develop and test a draft tool during 2017, a final tool was prepared and published in Q2 2018; A European pilot study was undertaken during Q3-Q4 2018 and an evaluation report was completed in Q4 2019; A corresponding EU intelligence report is currently in progress.

### B5 - Develop innovative waste flow audit approaches

- Work on the action has been completed but will not deliver a toolkit and training as envisaged. The final report was published in Q1 2019; a complementary Waste Crime Indicators toolkit was developed in Q4 2018 and shared with interested parties to facilitate external pilots.

#### **Links to published reports:**

B3 – [Competitive Intelligence Literature Review](#)

B4 - [Horizon scanning - Phase 1 \(Research\) literature review](#)

B4 - [Horizon Scanning Toolkit](#)

B5 - [Waste flows audit approach \(Final report\)](#)

## Tools, Approaches & Techniques (Actions B6-B8)

### B6 - Develop innovative financial investigation approaches

- In progress: The external supplier, Cranfield University, has developed a Financial Risk Assessment Toolkit; SEPA is currently testing and evaluating the toolkit; toolkit shared with NIEA to facilitate external piloting.

### B7 - Develop innovative ways to use waste flow tracking devices

- Completed: A final Recommendation Report and Scope of Pilot was approved in September 2016; a legal advice note on legal barriers applicable to deployment of waste tracking in Wales was delivered in May 2017; significant legal restrictions were identified preventing the launch of the pilot; the final report was published in Q1 2019. Recommendations for policy changes are being considered for inclusion in the policy recommendations report (B16).

### B8 - Develop innovative remote sensing techniques, pilot them and produce evaluation and intelligence reports

- Completed: The supply contract was awarded to Cambrensis, subcontracting to Air and Space Evidence, in November 2016; The Phase 1 desk-top research report, to identify applications in tackling environmental and waste crime, was completed in May 2017; Phase 2 pilot studies to develop Remote Sensing approaches - one to detect unknown, potentially illegal, waste sites (Gavia Environmental), a second to detect waste materials (Pixalytics) and a live case - were completed successfully in Q4 2019 and are currently being evaluated.

#### **Links to published reports:**

B6 - [Assessment of financial indicators to detect waste crime \(Research & Recommendations\)](#)

B7 - [Waste flow tracking devices \(Final report\)](#)

B8 - [Remote sensing - Phase 1 \(Research\) Non-technical summary](#)

B8 - [Remote sensing – Phase 1 \(Research\) final report](#)

## Investigations & Intelligence (Actions B10-B11)

### B10 - Undertake investigations to fill intelligence gaps and pilot innovative investigatory tools

- Investigation bundle 1 – Completed: a Waste Crime Perception Survey was undertaken in 2016; the accompanying report was completed in April 2017 and approved for publication in September 2017.
- Intervention Bundle 2 - Completed: an investigation into waste tyre vulnerabilities was completed in Q2 2017.
- Investigation bundle 3 – Completed: an investigation into waste hauliers was completed in Q2 2018.
- Investigation bundle 4 - Completed: an investigation into Waste brokers was completed in Q1 2019.
- Additional investigation - In progress: an investigation into the threat of waste crime arising as a result of relatively recent waste import restrictions in international markets has commenced in collaboration with INTERPOL; Results expected in Q1 2020.

### B11 - Produce four intelligence reports

- Intelligence Report No. 1 - Completed: An evaluation of current waste crime intelligence held by environmental regulatory agencies in Scotland and Wales was completed in December 2016, and approved in February 2017.
- Intelligence Report No. 2 - Completed: Report assessing vulnerabilities in the Scottish waste tyre sector was completed in February 2018.
- Intelligence Report No. 3 - Completed: A preliminary report on Waste hauliers was delivered in August 2018.
- Intelligence Report No. 4 - Completed: A report into Waste brokers was completed in April 2019.
- Intelligence Report No. 5 - In progress: A report , focusing on waste plastics, outlining the impact of the China ban on import of waste is ongoing (in collaboration with INTERPOL).

#### **Links to published reports:**

B10 - [Waste industry perceptions of waste crime in Scotland, 2017](#)

## Interventions (Actions B12-B16)

### B12 - Scope out the barriers to joint working between agencies nationally and trans-nationally on interventions to tackle waste crime

- Completed: A report on 'Barriers to Joint Working: Issues affecting joint working in tackling waste crime' was approved in December 2015.

### B13 - Specify how to set up group structures to overcome barriers and delivery joint interventions

- Completed: A report on 'Overcoming Barriers to Joint Working: Group Structures Required' was approved in August 2016.

### B14 - Create an innovative interventions menu and design manual that allows interventions to be selected according to the specifics of the situation

- Completed: Phase 1 Literature Review completed in January 2016; An 'Intervention Design Manual' (including Intervention Menu) was approved in April 2016; A revised three-part version was completed in April 2017 to improve the manual's accessibility.

### B15 - Set up cross agency intervention groups and delivery a minimum of three packages of interventions

- Intervention Bundle 1 - Completed: A collaborative communications intervention addressing unregulated rented warehousing units being exploited for illegal waste activities commenced on 4 December 2017 and was completed in Q1 2018.
- Intervention Bundle 2 - Completed: A collaborative intervention addressing illegal activity by waste hauliers was undertaken in Q3 2018 and concluded in Q1 2019.
- Intervention Bundle 3 - In progress: Plans for a Waste Brokers intervention bundle are currently being implemented.

### B16 - Produce recommendation reports for policy and /or legislative interventions

- Completed: Policy recommendations were considered on the basis of results-to-date; Recommendations reports for Scotland, UK and EU were finalised and approved in Q4 2019.

#### **Links to published reports:**

B12 - ['Barriers to Joint Working: Issues affecting joint working in tackling waste crime'](#)

B13 - ['Overcoming Barriers to Joint Working: Group Structures Required'](#)

B14 - [Intervention design literature review](#)

B14 - [Intervention Design Manual](#)

B15 - [Intervention bundle 1 - Illegal warehousing of waste](#)

B15 - [Intervention bundle 2 - Illegal haulage of waste](#)

## Project Impact Monitoring (Actions C1-C3)

### C1 - Produce evaluation reports for the intelligence communication hub and innovative investigatory tools and approaches

- In progress: Initial evaluation of the communications 'hub' and tools has commenced; SEPA completed evaluation of the Horizon scanning tool (B4) in Q4 2019.

### C2 - Produce intervention evaluation, protocols and case study reports

- In progress: Evaluation of B15 interventions is in progress.

### C3 - Undertake overall evaluation of the LIFE SMART Waste project & produce final report

- Evaluations were undertaken for the project's first two interventions ('Illegal warehousing of waste' and 'Haulage of illegal waste').



## Communication and dissemination actions (Actions D1-D9)

### D1 - Develop a targeted dissemination strategy

- Completed: A targeted Dissemination Strategy was approved on 31 March 2015.

### D2 - Disseminate to enforcement agencies and industry representatives

- In progress: Dissemination and inter-agency networking activities have been ongoing since the project's inception (June 2014); an interim Agency and industry representative report was published and disseminated in June 2019.

### D3 - Disseminate to policy makers and legislators

- In progress: Dissemination and engagement activities commenced in June 2014; An 'Engagement Action Plan' was approved by the Project Control Board in June 2017.

### D4 - Disseminate to wider stakeholders

- In progress: Dissemination activities - primarily via digital communication channels - have been ongoing since November 2014.

### D5 - Produce notice boards

- Completed: Multi-lingual noticeboards (in English, Welsh, French, Flemish and German) are in situ, following issue to each of the project beneficiaries in December 2014.

### D6 - Produce LIFE SMART Waste website

- Completed: the project website - [www.lifsmartwaste.com](http://www.lifsmartwaste.com) was published ahead of schedule in November 2014; and content development is ongoing.

### D7 - Produce a Layman' s report

- Not started: Due to be published on the LIFE SMART Waste project website in May 2020.

### D8 - Produce an " After LIFE" communication plan

- In progress: Due to be completed in early 2020 for inclusion in the project's final report.

### D9 - Dissemination conference in Brussels

- Completed: Over 200 people registered for the project's final conference (delivered in partnership with INTERPOL) held in Brussels from 12-14 November 2019; Post-event dissemination activities were completed in December 2019.

#### **Links to dissemination reports/assets:**

D2 - ['Progress on technical actions' \(Agency and industry representative report\)](#)

D4 - [News and events](#)

D4 - [Reports, brochures, e-newsletters, videos and supporting information](#)

D6 - [LIFE SMART Waste project website](#)

D9 - [Final conference web page](#)

## Project management and monitoring of the project progress (Actions E1-E3)

### E1 - Project Management by SEPA

•In progress

### E2 - Project Monitoring & Evaluating

•In progress

### E3 - Audit

•Not started

#### **Links to published reports:**

E2 – [LIFE SMART Waste project \(LIFE13 ENV/UK/000549\) Mid-term report](#)