

Statement of Strategy

2017–2021



Statement of Strategy

2017–2021

Ireland's energy will be sustainable, secure, affordable and clean.

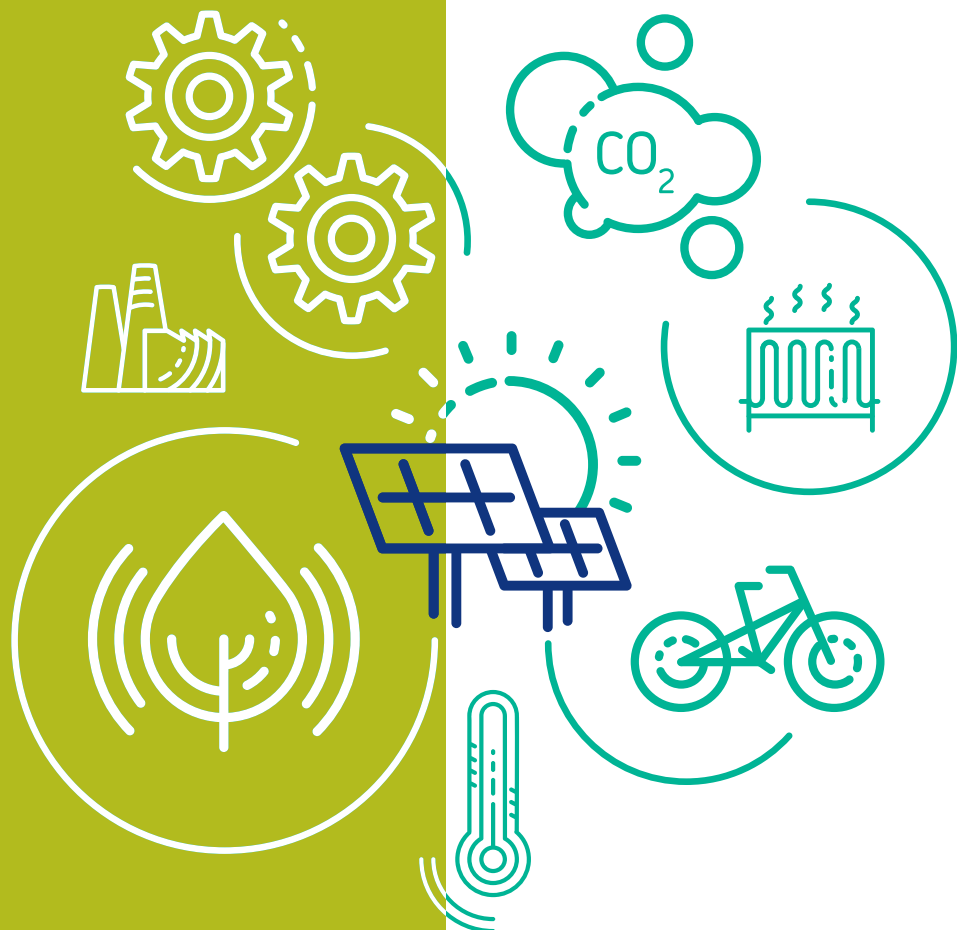
SEAI will be central to bringing about a low carbon economy through measures and activities focused on the transition to a smarter and more sustainable energy future.



@seai_ie

Contents

Chair's Introduction	2
CEO Statement	4
Our Vision, Mission and Values	6
Our Key Challenges	8
Our Goals and Objectives	10
Our Approach	12
Our Commitment	15
The Next Five Years	16



Chair's Introduction



As Ireland's national Sustainable Energy Authority, SEAI will be at the centre of moving towards a low carbon energy future for Ireland. We do not underestimate the challenge of achieving this overarching goal.

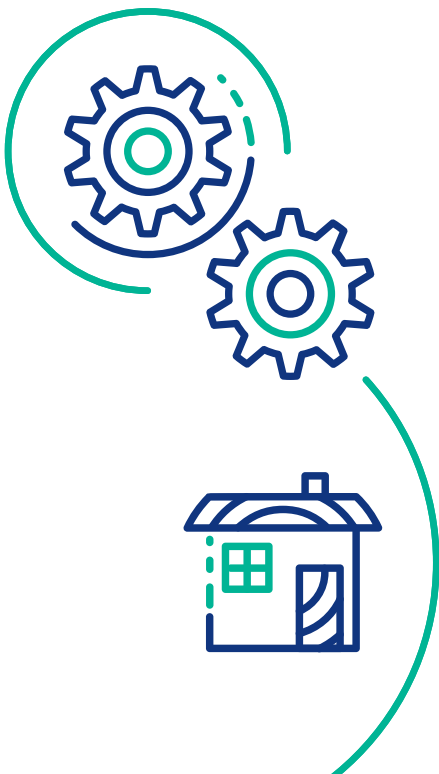
We believe that to do so we need to move from a situation where sustainable energy is the concern of committed individuals, communities, businesses and public bodies to one where the great majority of citizens participate in the transition to a more sustainable energy future.

Collectively we have challenging targets to meet in the years ahead. The Paris Agreement seeks to keep global warming to below a 2C° threshold and commits the 196 signatories to attempt to beat this target by limiting temperature increases to 1.5C°. We expect to have clarity soon regarding our national EU 2030 climate change target.

Overlaying these targets is the Irish Government energy policy White Paper published in 2015: *'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future'*. The White Paper outlines Ireland's vision to 2030 and retains the focus on continued reduction in energy demand, alongside decarbonisation of our energy supply and enhanced energy security. It also reiterates the 2020 targets on renewable energy and efficiency at 16% of final energy consumption, and a 20% reduction in energy usage respectively.

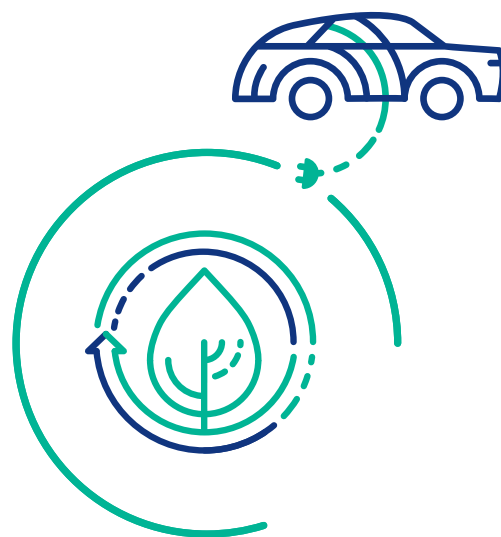
While we are well over half way to these targets, this has been achieved over a long period of time, and covering the remaining ground will be no easy task. The challenge to meet targets beyond 2020 is likely to be even greater and to require deep insight, tough policy decisions and increasingly engaged citizens empowered to take control of their energy needs and usage.

SEAI will play a key role in delivering on the ambitions of the White Paper and in helping Ireland achieve its 2030 climate targets.



2030

SEAI will play a key role in delivering on the ambitions of the White Paper and in helping Ireland achieve its 2030 climate targets.



In doing so we recognise the importance of the citizen in our transition to a low-carbon economy, not just as a receiver of infrastructure and technology, but increasingly as a key enabler and a more active participant in the energy market.

The ongoing convergence of energy technology around the individual, and trends towards smaller-scale energy generation, will give the energy citizen more power to help shape our transition to a lower-carbon future. It is therefore essential that we prepare society for newer energy technologies as we move beyond basic energy efficiency. This will see us promote new behaviours and technologies beyond the early adopters to society as a whole.

We will also engage with industry, regulators and government to ensure that the transition is achieved in a sustainable and equitable manner.

Our strategy for 2017–2021 is written in the context of these international, European and national policy drivers, and at a time of significant economic and socio-political change. The core imperative of climate change remains, however, and a more sustainable approach to energy continues to be paramount in addressing the challenges it poses.

SEAI will look beyond shorter-term targets and ensure that we are promoting the behaviours, delivering the programmes, and supporting the technologies that will enable a longer-term and sustainable transition.

In doing so, we will provide evidence-based advice across the Government, State and Semi-state bodies, in addition to delivering a range of grant and support programmes to promote sustainable energy activity across the business, consumer and research sectors.

Our response to the challenges we face will also help to place Ireland at the forefront of the global clean technology and sustainable business movement, thereby allowing the country to capitalise from a position at the vanguard of the global transition towards decarbonised energy systems.

SEAI has consistently shown that by delivering excellence and innovative solutions locally, we can have a significant impact nationally and internationally. Our 2017–2021 Strategy will enable us to continue to seek opportunities to showcase Ireland as leaders in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

On behalf of the Board of the SEAI, I am delighted to present this Statement of Strategy to the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Mr Denis Naughten TD and we look forward to working with him and his colleagues in the Department as the Board oversees its implementation.

Ms Julie O'Neill
Chairperson

CEO Statement



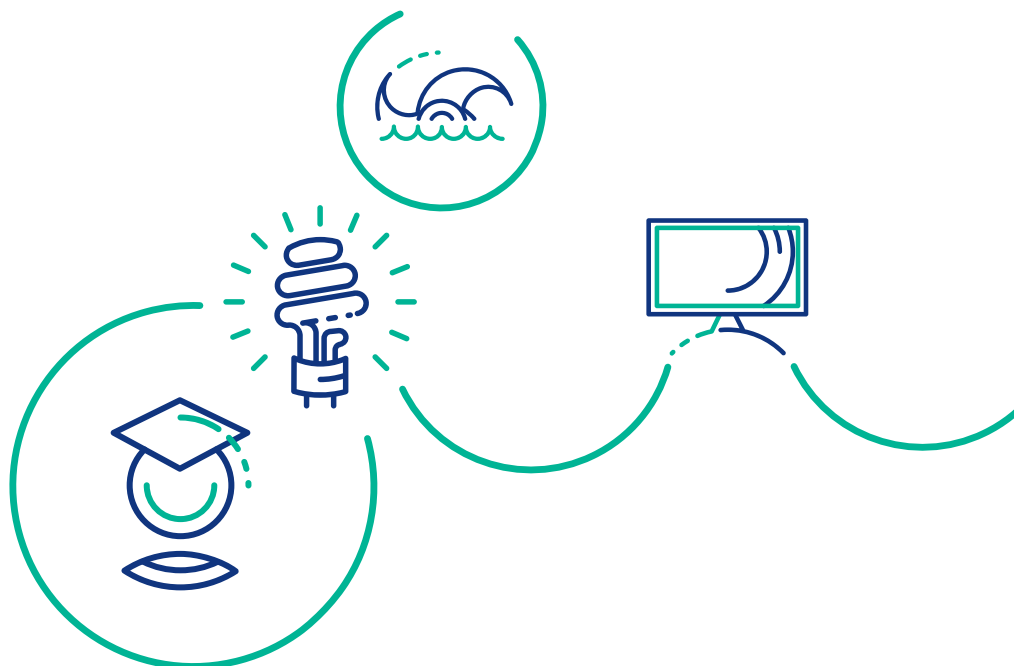
SEAI's strategy for 2017–2021 has been framed in the context of our vision for Ireland's energy to be sustainable, secure, affordable and clean. To achieve this, Ireland must use less energy, use clean energy, and innovate to create new solutions to our energy needs.

I am delighted to introduce this Statement of Strategy which has been developed with the participation of staff and our Board and in consultation with our stakeholders. This strategy outlines how SEAI will support the realisation of this vision through measures and activities focused on the transition to a smarter and more sustainable energy future. Our influence extends across electricity, heat and transportation in their various forms, all areas where a significantly increased effort will be required in the coming years to meet and exceed our energy targets.

The strategy acknowledges that all parts of society, business and government must be involved in the sustainable energy transition. It is also predicated on the guiding principle that sustainable energy is about improving people's lives, bringing comfort and convenience, addressing environmental challenges, as well as creating and protecting jobs.

In developing the strategy we have identified four key challenges to be met:

- The need to engage with and provide confidence to citizens so that they become receptive to, and ultimately benefit from, the rapid technological and market changes that will place them in a more central and active role.
- The requirement for large-scale and deeper retrofit within our built environment in order to achieve energy efficiencies and behavioural changes. This brings associated challenges, including the development of appropriate technical solutions, generation of consumer awareness and adoption, and evolution of suitable finance models.
- The need for accelerated innovation in both technology and policy interventions, which drive the transition to a low-carbon energy economy, and provide a significant opportunity for Irish society and businesses to create value, grow and lead internationally.
- As the interaction between infrastructure, technology and society becomes ever more important in this next phase of decarbonisation, there is a need to involve citizens and communities as key enablers and partners in the deployment of both large scale infrastructure and small-scale low carbon technologies and practices that will become increasingly more common in the home.

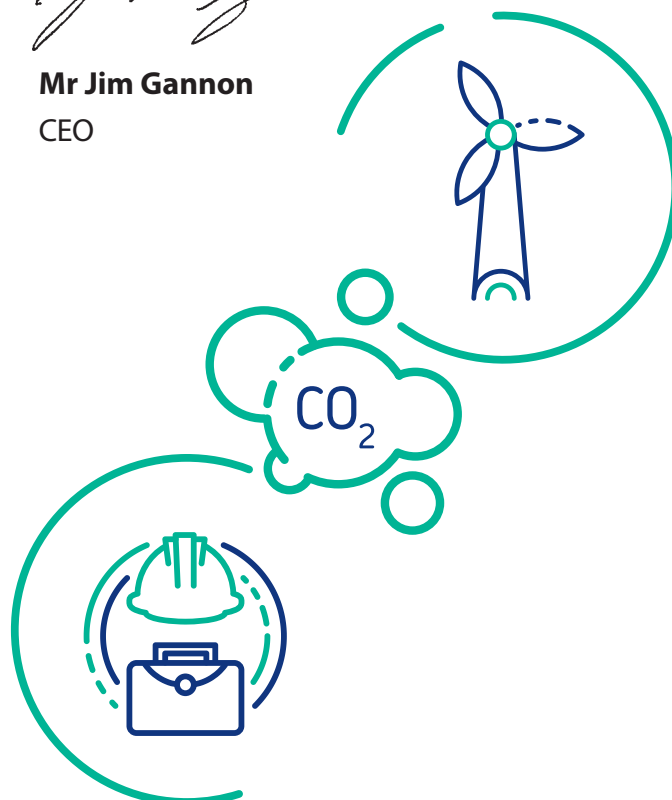


These challenges will be met through achieving the following goals, which will see:

- Empowered citizens and communities at the centre of our sustainable energy transition
- Increased awareness and confidence throughout society in sustainable energy technologies, practices and behaviours
- Increased impact from our existing grant programmes along with the development of new platforms that look towards and beyond our 2030 ambitions
- Further step changes in public sector, industry and SME sustainable energy activity
- Enhanced decision-making through expert and authoritative analysis
- Enhanced value derived from energy research and innovation in Ireland

SEAI is a key catalyst at the centre of a transformational change. We will deliver this change, using our role as Authority, by providing evidence, confidence, analysis and interventions which bring citizens, communities and businesses to a cost effective and equitable decarbonised energy future.

Mr Jim Gannon
CEO



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Ireland's energy will be sustainable, secure, affordable and clean. To achieve this vision, Ireland must:

Use less

Energy efficiency offers the cheapest and most immediate opportunities to reduce import dependence, reduce emissions, and bring social and economic benefits to all energy users.

Use clean

Fully exploiting all our local renewable sources, in a socially and environmentally sustainable way, must be a central pillar of our energy future. We have an opportunity to move towards meeting all our energy needs through our own clean resources.

Innovate

We must develop new approaches to our sustainable energy transition from technological, economic and social perspectives. We have a mandate to support research, innovation and enterprise, while developing evidence-based responses that engage all stakeholders.



Our Mission

SEAI will be central to bringing about a low carbon economy through measures and activities focused on the transition to a smarter and more sustainable energy future.

To achieve this mission, we will continue to build an environment for positive change through our analysis, modelling and support for policy-making. We will catalyse direct action through our design and delivery of grant and incentive programmes and through our capacity-building processes with citizens, communities and private and public sector organisations.

We will be an agile organisation, with the ability to grow and adapt to meet national needs and we will maintain and grow the expertise and experience to deliver transformational programmes and activities.



Our Values

Our work will be guided by our values and we will continually measure ourselves against them:

Expert

We are the leading organisation in Ireland on sustainable energy thinking, research, understanding, and analysis.

Open

We listen to the ideas and concerns of all strands of society and communicate openly and honestly to promote and deliver positive change.

Innovative

We continually learn, we seek new solutions, and we continually adapt in a fast-changing environment. We have shown that by delivering excellence and leadership at a national level, we can have significant impact internationally.

Ambitious

We believe in the importance of our mission and we want to see Ireland positioned as a leader internationally in delivering a low carbon future; we are committed to growing our role in delivering Ireland's low carbon transition.

People-centred

We aim to reach and empower every individual and community in Ireland to participate in this transition. Equally, we value our own staff: their excellence and commitment, and we focus on their development and well-being.



Our Key Challenges

A number of key challenges face the organisation as we seek to drive the significant level of change required in the coming five year period:

The Energy Citizen and Communities

Energy consumers must be empowered to play a more active role in our low carbon transition.

In the future, individual citizens will be able to exert a much greater influence on the broader energy market as a result of rapid technological advances and the policy and market evolution that will surround them. However, there is a significant challenge around giving citizens and communities the knowledge and confidence to engage with and ultimately benefit from this change.

SEAI's activity in consumer insight research, piloting new technologies, developing citizen and community focused supports and our Sustainable Energy Communities programme provides us with the platforms to engage with consumers and build that confidence. Our roles as an objective source of information, operator of the Building Energy Rating scheme, and as the Market Surveillance Authority will also make an important contribution.

An Emphasis on Retrofit

The energy performance of existing buildings must be improved dramatically if we are to achieve our low carbon goals. This will require an extensive retrofit within the built environment which will involve a range of energy efficiency and energy generation technologies and methods. The initial focus must be on the residential and commercial market, in parallel to increased activity and leadership from the public sector.

Challenges around the most effective technical solutions for differing building types, consumer awareness and empowerment, robust supply chains for delivery, finance, and other factors will all need to be addressed. SEAI will investigate the technical, societal and financial challenges which exist in relation to a broad deeper retrofit programme, and will engage all stakeholder groups in order to develop the mechanisms that will deliver the required meaningful and sustained activity. Only through collaboration with all stakeholders will we succeed in this challenge.



We will continue to provide cutting edge evidence-based analysis and support to government through our modelling, statistical analysis and behavioural economics work streams.

Innovation

Leveraging off advancements in technology and developing new approaches to policy intervention will be critical over the coming years. Ireland has unique challenges with regard to our economy, society and geographical location. These challenges provide us with both an impetus and an opportunity to create novel solutions and practices, which can position us at the vanguard of an international low carbon transition.

We will continue to provide cutting edge evidence-based analysis and support to government through our modelling, statistical analysis and behavioural economics work streams. Our role at the forefront of policy design and implementation will become even more important as new mechanisms for energy demand reduction and the decarbonisation of our supply are designed and come into operation. We will continue to look deeper into the convergence at consumer scale of energy efficiency, demand response, and renewable energy.

Our role in leading further step-changes with our Large Industry Energy Network and SMEs will continue to drive decarbonisation while improving enterprise competitiveness. SEAI's national role in research, development and demonstration will also be key to bringing early stage innovation to the mass market.

Infrastructure, Technology and Society

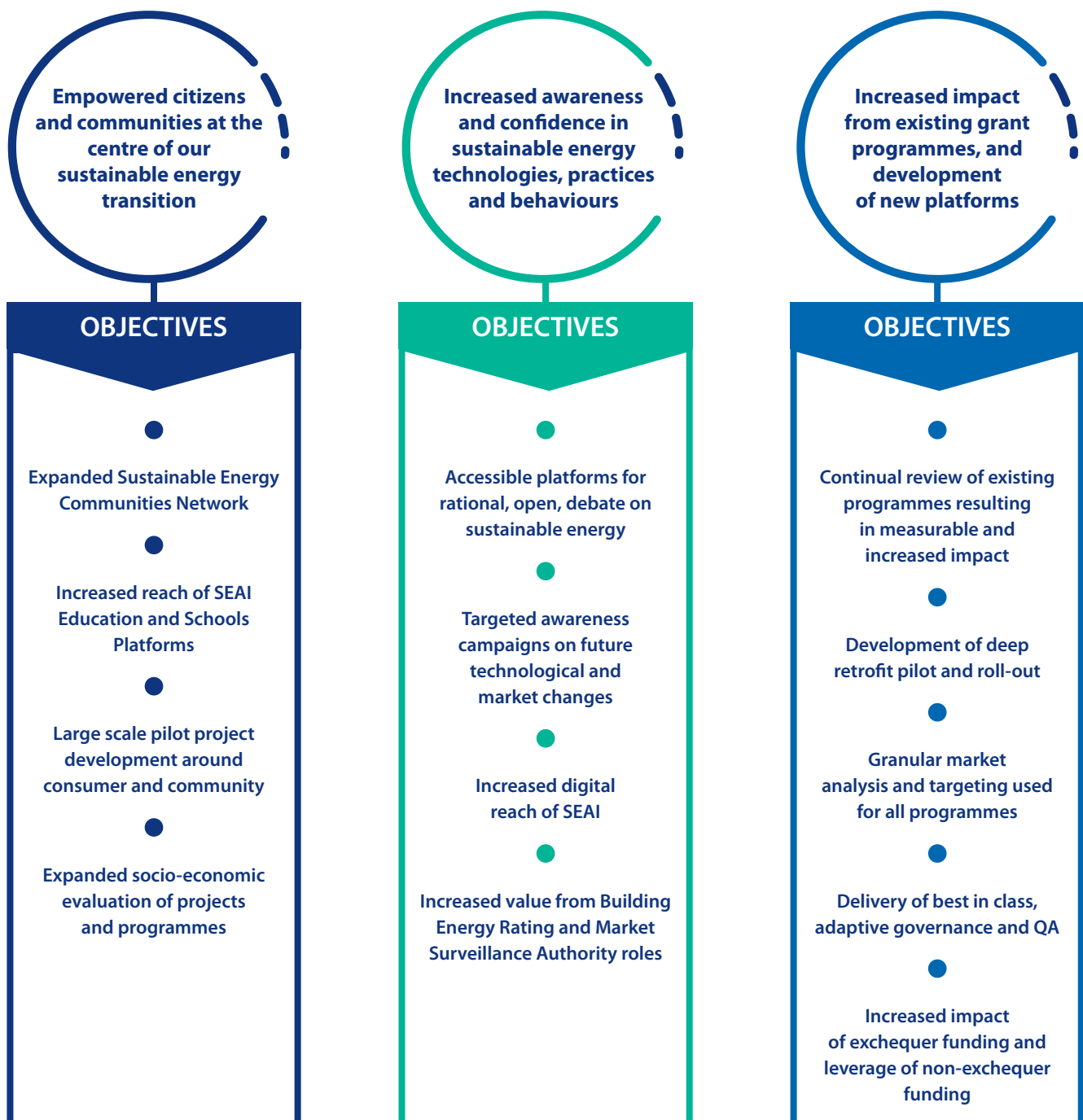
The interaction between infrastructure, technology and society will become ever more important as we enter our next phase of decarbonisation. Significant progress has been made to date towards achieving our targets, having reached 27% renewables penetration in electricity and 9.1% across final energy use. However, the next phase of deployment of low carbon technologies will be even more transformative, and will need to involve citizens and communities as key enablers and partners. This new perspective will need to be applied to both large scale infrastructure and the small-scale low carbon technologies and practices that will become increasingly more common in the home.

SEAI will be central to facilitating a rational dialogue around low carbon technologies, both at large and small scale, and to supporting the design and implementation of activities that will facilitate greater involvement of communities and citizens in their deployment.



Our Goals and Objectives

Specific metrics and performance indicators are developed within SEAI to align our goals and our objectives with the funding provided to us on an annual basis by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.





Further step-changes in Public Sector, industry and SME sustainable energy activity

OBJECTIVES

- Increased public sector activity through funding and best practice platforms
- Targeted ongoing support to Large Industry
- Development of cost-effective and high impact support to SMEs
- Increased collaboration with public and private sector initiatives that align with our mission

Enhanced decision-making through expert and authoritative analysis

OBJECTIVES

- Increased utilisation of our analysis and modelling activities across Government
- Enhanced consumer insight data contributing to policy design
- Development of nudge interventions as outcomes of economic and behavioural analysis
- Improved policy impact, progressive interventions and metrics to measure value for money

Enhanced value derived from energy research and innovation in Ireland

OBJECTIVES

- Increased funding of R&D projects and test sites with national and international impact
- Enhanced Irish Engagement with Horizon 2020
- Increased delivery of demonstration and innovation projects contributing to enterprise development
- Increased mapping and co-ordination of Irish energy research, leading to higher impact

Our Approach

Our strategic approach is based on SEAI's overarching ethos to be a catalyst for change. Achieving this will require a flexible, agile organisation that can meet the evolving needs within this change process. We believe that sustainable energy transition requires an approach supported by the following core pillars of activity:

We enhance decision-making and champion new approaches

As Ireland's national energy authority, we carry out analysis and modelling which support policy decision-making and the development of new programmes and interventions that deliver on our mission. These range from the basic building blocks of producing national energy statistics, to designing and analysing policy options to assist the Government's decision making process.

Our audiences cover all sectors in Ireland – business and investors; communities and consumers; policy makers and agencies; schools and universities. Our direct contact across Irish society, through our programmes and activities, provides us with unique insights which enhance and support the decision-making process. These insights, combined with our expert behavioural and economic analysis, ensure that best evidence-based solutions can be delivered.

SEAI informs debate through the provision of reliable, relevant and timely information. This information is built on analytical expertise, which means that we can provide impartial and robust advice. It is solutions-focused: we propose policies and actions for government and society to consider, and we look very carefully at the costs and benefits of these options.

A core objective for us is to establish more rational debate around low-carbon energy technologies, both at large and small scale. We acknowledge that the choices are complex and linked and that all options involve preference, risk and pros and cons. Strong analysis must underpin decision making, and must be used and shared as part of a much wider conversation about our collective energy future.

Our direct contact across Irish society, through our programmes and activities, provides us with unique insights which enhance and support the decision-making process.

We will continue to improve and deepen the level of our research, data sets and modelling tools to support Government in its decision making, and to enhance the quality of all energy debates. We will also work diligently to disseminate our information. In addition, we are strengthening our ability to examine wider dimensions of sustainable energy measures – such as job impacts, health impacts, consumer choice and all costs and benefits.

We foster confidence and engage society

A central part of our role as a leader of change is engagement and collaboration; we listen, debate, inform and empower. We communicate to raise awareness and assist decision making – whether it be in relation to daily behaviours or in major investment decisions. Our authoritative evidence is the starting point and the basis for our wide engagement.

We also bring people together to share experiences, create new ideas, form new partnerships, and solve real problems through open dialogue. Our networks include all of Ireland's largest business energy users and a fast-growing network of communities collaborating to deliver change at a local level. We also help to co-ordinate action in areas such as



energy research. We work directly with almost every single Government department as well as a wide range of agencies and other bodies.

We want to widen the conversation about society's sustainable future. Our schools programmes, already reaching 80,000 pupils every year, will continue to grow. We will continue to work with other agencies on integrated solutions across all relevant policy areas. We will also work with other key enterprise agencies to assist Irish-based firms succeed in the fast-growing markets for sustainable energy solutions, nurturing new technologies, new start-ups, and new ideas in the process.

We already engage internationally, working with the EU, and the International Energy Agency to develop policy and programmes, and to develop best practice. We bring this value back to Ireland through dissemination activities and input to the policy-making process.

A core part of our brief is to deliver statutory functions and to deliver value for exchequer funding. Our statutory functions are wide-reaching and include the production and reporting of Ireland's official energy and energy research statistics, operation of the Building Energy Rating system, and our role as Market Surveillance Authority ensuring compliance around energy labelling.

These functions are critical to market confidence and will become increasingly more important as society engages in a transition to more sustainable energy practices. Our governance, quality assurance and other internal controls will continue to adapt and remain best in class as our activities change.

Our networks include all of Ireland's largest business energy users and a fast-growing network of communities collaborating to deliver change at a local level.

We deliver programmes and services that catalyse change

The programmes we run on behalf of Government have had a major impact on many people's lives. Our grant programmes deliver direct change in terms of more comfortable and more sustainable homes and more competitive businesses. Equally, they build new markets and create new opportunities for innovation and enterprise to thrive. Ireland's progress on energy efficiency in particular has historically been among the best in the EU. SEAI will continue to be at the heart of that progress.

We have reached large numbers of people and businesses with information and tailored advice that has had a measurable impact on behaviour and decision making. In addition, tools such as Building Energy Rating, Triple-E product register, and our wide range of online support materials are being used by people to influence the purchase and usage of everything from appliances and cars to homes and industrial equipment.

Our influence on and stimulation of direct change in society can grow. We will use our extensive experience, data and expertise as a platform for wider participation; targeting segments and sectors that have not been engaged to date. We will extend our reach and impact beyond the early adopters to take in the more passive majority within the marketplace. This will include making our case for resources to Government as well as seeking innovative ways to leverage non-exchequer funding and extend our reach through partnerships and strategic alliances.

Key partners include the financial and professional services community, energy utilities, industry, the research and education institutions, local authorities and other public bodies, and of course the wide network of local and community structures. The groundswell of community involvement in local sustainable action, through the Sustainable Energy Communities network is one of the most positive results of this activity in recent years.

Our core programmes, all dependent on our annual allocated budget, include the delivery of the Better Energy suite of grant schemes which provide direct funding to businesses, communities and individuals, including those in energy poverty. Our research, industry and public sector programmes also provide direct funding and support for specific activities and projects within these sectors.

Our Approach



In addition to these core pillars of activity, the following cross-cutting themes are critical to ensuring we succeed in delivering on our mandate:

Innovation

New solutions and new technologies will be central to our sustainable energy future, which in turn require new approaches to policy and delivery. A transformational change, based on sound research and tested pilot programmes, is required to achieve our ambition. We will act to foster and support new enterprise and innovation and SEAI will also learn and evolve constantly.

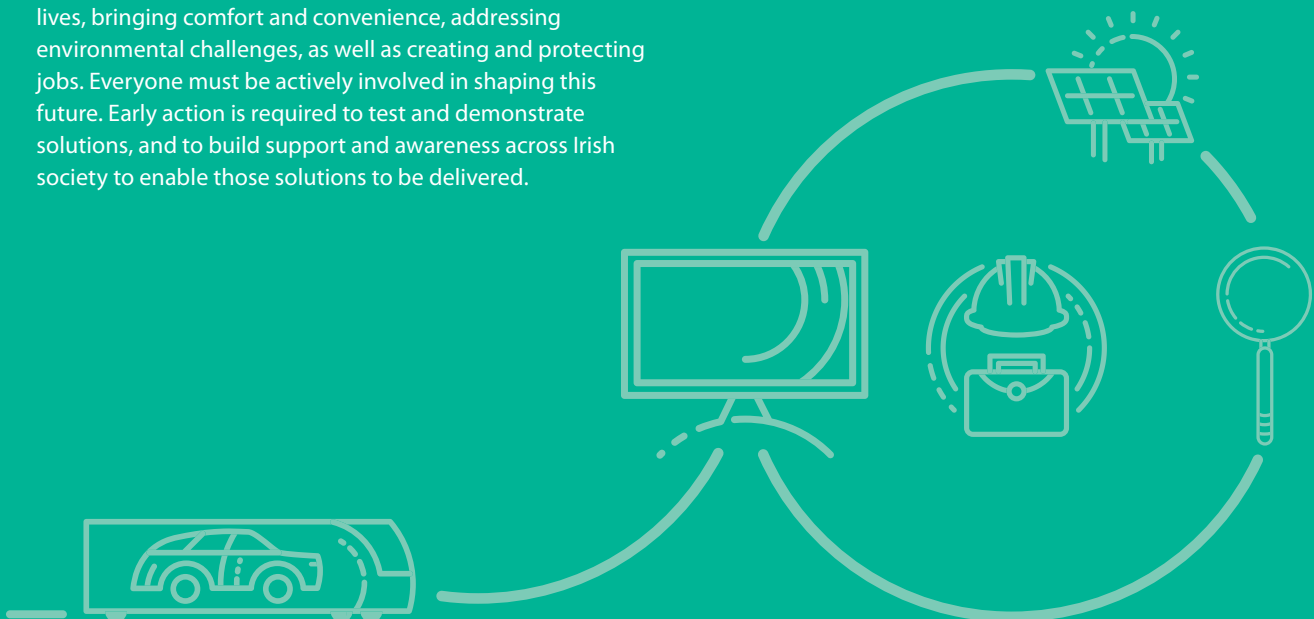
Inclusion

Sustainable energy is about improving people's lives, bringing comfort and convenience, addressing environmental challenges, as well as creating and protecting jobs. Everyone must be actively involved in shaping this future. Early action is required to test and demonstrate solutions, and to build support and awareness across Irish society to enable those solutions to be delivered.

Integration

All parts of society, business and government will be involved in the sustainable energy transition. Our influence, solutions and impact will reach across areas of society, government and policy that are traditionally disconnected.

SEAI will be at the centre of moving society from specific actions by the few to majority participation in our transition to a more sustainable energy future. We will achieve this by delivering proof, confidence, programmes, and supporting processes to citizens and businesses in order to engage and normalise these activities.



Our Commitment

We are committed to exemplary behaviour in all of our work, particularly in relation to our customers and stakeholders, our staff and in regard to our governance and the value for money we provide the citizen and the State.

Our stakeholders and customers

SEAI commits to providing best in class services to all of our stakeholders and customers, and to maintaining a continual focus on performance and improvement in this area. Our *Customer Charter*, accessible on our website, sets the standards we seek to uphold and describes the methods we use to ensure we continually improve our services.

We listen to our customers constantly through a Voice of the Customer programme that actively seeks feedback on our customers' experiences. This allows us to learn from our customers and to constantly look for ways to improve their experience with us as well as to improve our policies and programmes.

We commit to supporting and informing policy formation across government, and to influencing the various state and semi-state bodies under the aegis of government departments. We will continue to engage with industry and commerce, and will forge new and stronger relationships with the corporate, financial and professional services sectors in order to stimulate broader involvement in our sustainable energy transition.



For our Customer Charter visit:
seai.ie/about_us/customer_charter

Our people

To deliver on our goals, SEAI relies heavily on our people and their core values. As an organisation, it is our responsibility to facilitate their development and their wellbeing such that they can live those values, and provide value for money to our citizens and the State. We will foster and develop talent and encourage openness and creativity. The collective experience and expertise of our staff provides us with our position of authority and it is our duty to ensure that we maintain and grow these attributes. Through formal evaluation and mutual commitment, we seek to develop our staff in order to deliver a high quality service and to provide value to them through their own professional development.

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff are of paramount importance to us. The Chief Executive leads SEAI's health and safety initiatives and gives regular reports to the Board.

We commit to supporting and informing policy formation across government, and to influencing the various state and semi-state bodies under the aegis of government departments.



Our Commitment

Our organisation and governance

We are committed to ensuring the highest level of governance in all aspects of our work. We ensure transparency and accountability in our performance. Organisational development and operational excellence are core corporate values and we will continue to focus on excellence in service delivery as we grow and adapt to new challenges and interact with new stakeholders.

Corporate Governance is of critical importance within SEAI. We were the first body in Ireland to be certified to the Swift3000 Corporate Governance standard and have maintained our certification ever since. A sustained focus on governance, audit and risk will be central to ensuring that the funding we receive delivers a high impact for society. We welcome the publication in 2016 of a new *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*, effective from September 1st 2016. We are committed to adhering to the new Code, which provides a new benchmark for bodies such as SEAI.

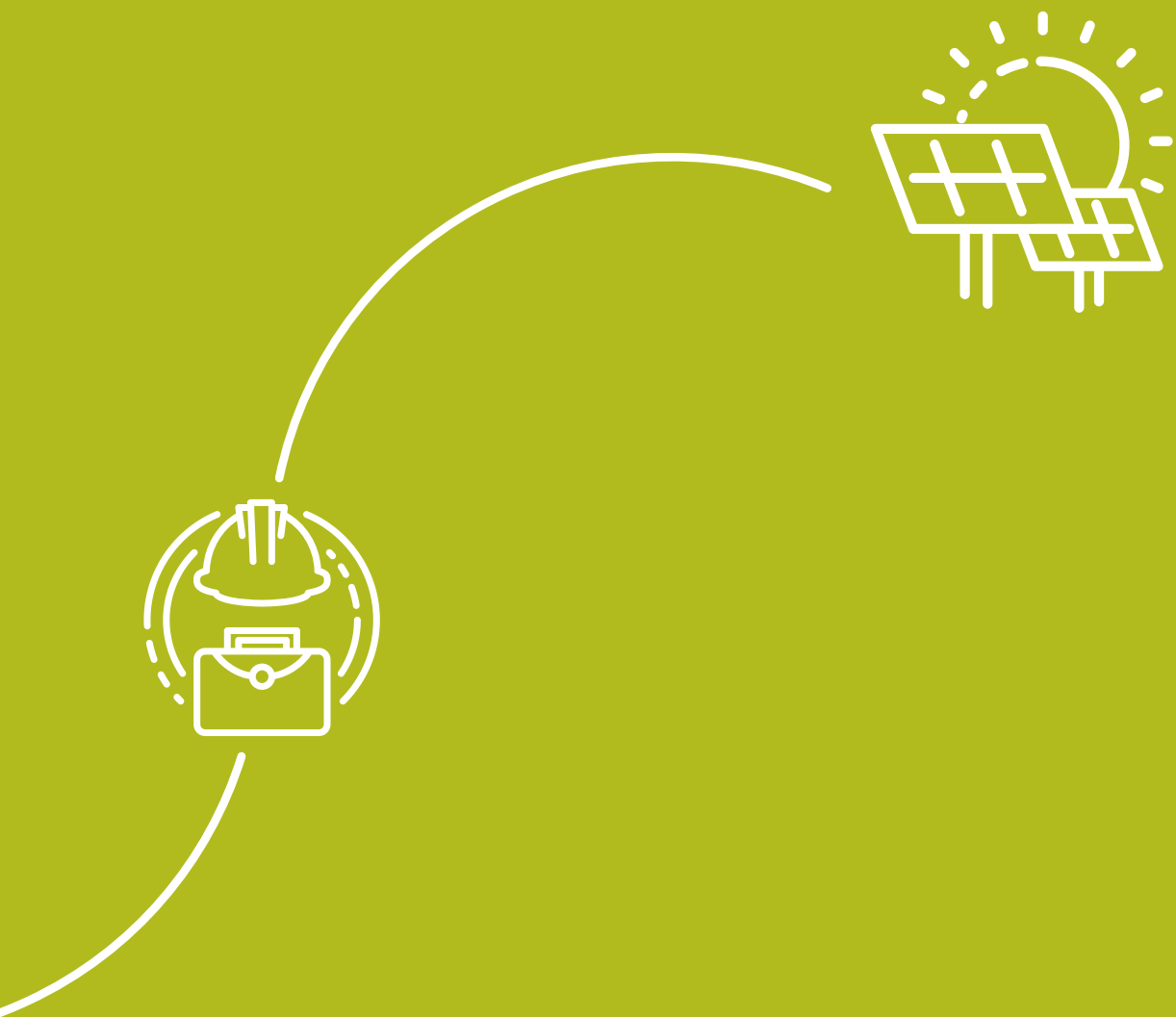
Our annual work plan is guided by a comprehensive business planning process which connects this strategy to the annual goals of the organisation, teams and individuals. In the past three years, we have enhanced our administrative cost efficiency by over 10%. We maintain a constant focus on efficiency and value for money. We set annual targets for efficiency gains and cost savings, and we measure and report the impact and cost-benefit of our major programmes.

As we enter a period of growth, we will continue to identify and address organisational risk as a core part of our processes. Further, we will engender a culture of risk awareness and risk management within both the existing team and new members of the organisation. We will use this to identify both risk and opportunities for improvement as we plan for growth over the next five years.

The Next Five Years

We are enthusiastic and ambitious about our mission. Over the next five year period, we will experience growth in both budget and staff numbers, and we will remain agile to adapt to the changing needs of our stakeholders. We will achieve this through cross-government and cross-agency collaboration, and through responding to the changing challenges and opportunities faced by our stakeholders. So we must, and will, engage with citizens, communities and businesses to plot a course to an efficient and equitable decarbonised energy future.







Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

Wilton Park House
Wilton Place
Dublin 2
Ireland
D02 T228

t +353 1 808 2100 | e info@seai.ie
f +353 1 808 2002 | w www.seai.ie

