

Annex XIII

CAVTAT DECLARATION

We, the high-level representatives of the UNECE member States and of the European Community, gathered in Cavtat, Croatia, from 1 to 4 June 2004 on the occasion of the third meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context,

1. Celebrate the seventh year of the entry into force of the Convention;
2. Pay tribute to the continued efforts of Parties and stakeholders in supporting the implementation of the Convention;
3. Recall that the Convention is the most significant international legally binding instrument dedicated to environmental impact assessment (EIA) in a transboundary context;
4. Note with satisfaction that the Convention has promoted an internationally accepted standard for EIA development and implementation, with regard to transboundary impacts;
5. Acknowledge that the Convention has had an important role in building EIA capacity among Parties;
6. Welcome the adoption of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment at the Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in Kiev and the work of countries and stakeholders in concluding it;
7. Anticipate the early ratification of the Protocol and its coming into force;
8. Acknowledge the activities undertaken on public participation by the Parties to the Convention and note the coming into force of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and its work to strengthen public participation;
9. Recognize with appreciation the valuable work carried out under the work plan adopted at the second meeting of the Parties, particularly:
 - (a) The steps taken by Parties and non-Parties to ensure that their EIA systems are consistent with the provisions of the Convention;
 - (b) The valuable guidance on:
 - (i) Good practice in EIA prepared by the Governments of Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden;
 - (ii) Public participation prepared by the Government of the Russian Federation; and

(iii) Subregional cooperation prepared by the Governments of Croatia and Poland;

(c) The development and operation of the database on transboundary EIA by the Government of Poland;

10. Note the work carried out to promote health as an integral aspect of EIA in accordance with the recommendations of the London Conference of Ministers of Health and Environment and consistent with the Convention;

11. Welcome the adoption of the second amendment to the Convention introducing provisions that will make the Convention more efficient and contribute to the transparency of its application;

12. Invite civil society and all stakeholders to continue to assist with and contribute to the development and implementation of the Convention and the preparations for the implementation of the Protocol, noting that the meetings under the Convention provide for an exchange of views and information;

13. Encourage multilateral lending institutions and bilateral aid agencies to apply the principles of the Convention to all their development projects with potentially significant transboundary environmental effects and to apply the principles of the Protocol to the development and implementation of their plans and programmes;

14. Recognize the contribution of EIA and strategic environmental assessment to national decision-making in support of sustainable development;

15. Encourage the Parties to the Convention to develop further capacity for its implementation on the basis of demonstrated need, giving particular support to the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and, wherever possible, working with regional institutions to make expertise and resources available as necessary;

16. Also encourage the Signatories to the Protocol to develop capacity for its ratification and implementation on the basis of demonstrated need, giving particular support to the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and, wherever possible, working with regional institutions to make expertise and resources available as necessary;

17. Call upon UNECE States to ratify the Convention and its amendments, and invite other States that are Members of the United Nations to accede to the Convention once the amendment adopted at the second meeting of the Parties has entered into force;

18. Also call upon UNECE States to ratify the Protocol and invite other States that are Members of the United Nations to accede to it once it has entered into force.