



Espoo Convention  
**EIA/SEA UPDATE**  
Issue No. 1, January 2004



## Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of EIA/SEA UPDATE. The UPDATE provides a less formal means of letting you know what is happening with the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Transboundary Context and its new Kiev Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). You can find out more about the Convention and Protocol on the Convention web site, [www.unece.org/env/eia](http://www.unece.org/env/eia).

The big news of the past few months was of course the adoption and signing of the **SEA Protocol** in Kiev in May 2003, during the Ministerial Conference 'Environment for Europe'. Thirty-five countries plus the European Community signed the Protocol in Kiev; **Slovakia** became the 37<sup>th</sup> Signatory of the SEA Protocol on 19 December 2003. Some countries have indicated a wish to ratify the Protocol soon.

The big event to come is **Cavtat 2004**, with the first meeting of the Signatories to the SEA Protocol and the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention. Preparations are under way for these two important meetings, as described in this UPDATE.

Meanwhile, member States have also been busy with recent technical activities including:

- A public participation workshop, hosted by the **Russian Federation**;
- Two subregional cooperation workshops, hosted by **Poland** and by **Serbia and Montenegro**; and
- A workshop on cooperation between the ECE conventions, hosted by **Romania**.

You can find out more about these activities in this UPDATE.

In a very welcome move, **Luxembourg** has joined **Germany** in ratifying the amendment to the Espoo Convention. The amendment will allow non-UNECE member States to ratify the Convention, subject to the Parties' agreement, and clarifies that the public that may participate in procedures under the Convention includes civil society and, in particular, NGOs.



Cavtat 2004 would be an excellent opportunity for countries to announce their ratification of the Espoo Convention, the amendment and the SEA Protocol!

With the Protocol being open to non-UNECE member States, and the amendment to the Espoo Convention opening the Convention up too, countries outside the region are showing increasing interest in the two agreements. Discussions have recently been held with representatives of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and the **Lebanon**, among others. The former was represented at meetings of subsidiary bodies in October and November.

## Kiev 'Environment for Europe' Conference

The Ministerial Conference 'Environment for Europe' in Kiev (Ukraine), from 21 to 23 May 2003, saw the adoption and signing of three new protocols to the UNECE environmental conventions, including the SEA Protocol.

The positive speeches made about the SEA Protocol during the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, held on 21 May, were backed up by **36 signatures**:

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, the European Community, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

The Meeting also adopted a resolution that encouraged wide application of SEA and rapid implementation of the Protocol.

## Cavtat 2004

The Hotel Croatia in Cavtat (Croatia) will be the venue of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Signatories to the SEA Protocol followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention, from 1 to 4 June 2004, at the kind invitation of the Croatian Government.



If you would like to present a poster in Cavtat, please contact the secretariat to define your needs ([eia.conv@unece.org](mailto:eia.conv@unece.org)). Please check the Convention web site for the latest news and for meeting documents as they become available.

## Public Participation Workshop

The **Russian Federation**, assisted by the NGO **Ecoterra**, hosted a final workshop on the draft guidelines on public participation in transboundary EIA, Moscow, 25 and 26 September 2003. The draft guidelines were presented to the October meeting of the Working Group on EIA and will be finalized for the Group's January 2004 meeting.

## Sub-regional Cooperation Workshop

**Poland** produced a report for the Working Group on EIA October meeting on two sub-regional cooperation workshops:

- Implementation of Transboundary EIA in the Balkan and Black Sea regions (April 2002 in Sandanski, **Bulgaria**), and
- Application of the Espoo Convention in Central and Eastern Europe (June 2003 in Szentendre, **Hungary**).

A further workshop was held subsequently in Belgrade (**Serbia and Montenegro**), the findings of which will be incorporated into the subregional cooperation report to be presented at the January 2004 meeting of the Working Group.

## Workshop on Cooperation between Conventions

**Romania** hosted a workshop, from 2 to 4 October 2003 at the Mountain Resort of Cheia, on cooperation between the UNECE environmental conventions. Proposals from the workshop were discussed and amended by the Working Group on EIA (see below).

## Meeting of the Working Group on EIA

The Working Group on EIA continued preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, held in

Geneva, from 27 to 29 October 2003. The key outcomes of the meeting included:

- proposals for activities to be included in the draft work plan for adoption at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties;
- a draft second amendment to the Convention, including extensions to the list of activities covered, the introduction of scoping and other technical matters;
- support for a Bureau proposal on future funding of activities under the Convention;
- a recommendation to discontinue the database ENIMPAS and to transfer its data to the Convention web site; and
- proposals for strengthening cooperation with other ECE conventions.

The meeting took note of a summary of the draft review of implementation, based on responses to a questionnaire on implementation, and of reports on other activities, including public participation and sub-regional cooperation.

All these outcomes will be discussed further at the January 2004 meeting of the Working Group, which will prepare draft decisions on each activity for adoption at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties in Cavtat.

The meeting was also informed of the preparations being made for the meetings in Cavtat, June 2004, including the need for more funding.

Remember, the next meeting of the Working Group (and the last before the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Parties) will be in Geneva, from 28 to 30 January 2004.

## Meetings of the Implementation Committee

The Implementation Committee held its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting immediately after the 6<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting. The Committee discussed information brought to its attention by an NGO and prepared a response. In addition, the

Committee developed a draft decision, amending the mandate of the Committee, for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties.

The Committee met again 19 and 20 December 2003 to finalize the draft decision, which will now be discussed by the Working Group on EIA. At the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Committee again discussed information from the same NGO as at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, and prepared a second response, which is presented in the report of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. The second response noted that the majority of the Committee did not wish to consider the information further.

## Preparatory Meeting for the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Signatories to the SEA Protocol

In Geneva, 27-28 November 2003, the 1<sup>st</sup> preparatory meeting was held for the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Signatories to the SEA Protocol. The key outcomes of this meeting included:

- election as its Chair of Mr. Jan De Mulder (**Belgium**), with Mr. Gia Zhorzholiani (**Georgia**) and Mr. David Aspinwall (**European Commission**) as vice-chairs;
- establishment of a small group led by the **Netherlands** to examine procedural and legal matters;
- agreement to include the work plan and budget of the Protocol within that for the Convention, until the Protocol comes into force;
- identification of a large number of possible activities for inclusion in the work plan; and
- agreement to hold the first meeting on the Signatories on 1 June 2004.

Remember, the final preparatory meeting will be in Geneva, 26 and 27 January 2004.



## Workshop & Meeting Documents

Reports on the workshops and meetings described above may be found on the Convention web site, [www.unece.org/env/eia](http://www.unece.org/env/eia), together with other information on the Convention and SEA Protocol.

## IAIA'04

IAIA'04, the annual conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), will take place in Vancouver (Canada), from 26 to 29 April 2004. If you are interested in participating in IAIA'04 and you are from a Central or Eastern

European country, you may be able to obtain a travel grant - but the deadline for submitting an application is **28 January 2004**. For more information, including guidelines and an application form, see [www.aucc.ca/ptp-ppa/index\\_e.html](http://www.aucc.ca/ptp-ppa/index_e.html).

## Next UPDATE

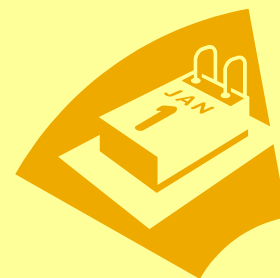
We hope to produce issue number 2 of UPDATE immediately before the meetings in Cavtat, June 2004.

## Русский

We wish to publish UPDATE in English and Russian. If you are able to assist by providing (for free!) an informal Russian translation of the English original, please contact the secretariat.

## Upcoming events

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|--------------------|---|
| 26-27 January 2004 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Preparatory Meeting for the 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, Geneva  |
| 28-30 January 2004 | 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment, Geneva   |
| 1 June 2004        | 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, Cavtat (Croatia) - open to <b>ALL</b> member States |
| 3-4 June 2004      | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, Cavtat (Croatia)              |



For a more complete and up to date listing of events, visit the Convention web site at [www.unece.org/env/eia](http://www.unece.org/env/eia).

### NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD.

This EIA/SEA UPDATE provides informal information on the: Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, and Kiev Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment.



**Your news and views would be very welcome.**

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