

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
serving as the Meeting of the Parties
to the Protocol on Strategic
Environmental Assessment

Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Fifth meeting

Geneva, 7–10 November 2016

Items 3 and 7 of the provisional agenda

Compliance and implementation

Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol on SEA

Draft summary report on the implementation of technical assistance and capacity building activities (in the period June 2014 – October 2016)

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This draft report presents the results of the activities included in the workplan for the implementation of the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment for 2014–2017 (adopted through decision VI/3–II/3). The report covers the current intersessional period and provides a brief summary of main achievements of technical assistance financed by the European Union through the “Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood” (EaP-GREEN) Programme provided to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine from June 2014 to October 2016. It also provides information on the progress achieved in the context of technical advice and support financed by Switzerland: to Kyrgyzstan on improving its legislation and institutional framework to implement the Convention, and to further develop and update the Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries. Finally, the report covers the technical advice and support to the Russian Federation on bringing its legislation and its environmental assessment practice in line with the requirements of the Convention and the Protocol, with funding from Sweden and the technical advice to Kazakhstan on improving legislation to implement the Protocol, financed by the European Union.

A. Capacity building activities under the “Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood” (EaP-GREEN) (June 2014 – October 2016)

I. About EaP GREEN

1. A large amount of activities in the 2014-2017 workplan of the Convention and the Protocol have been financed through the Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood (EaP GREEN) programme. The EaP GREEN is a large regional programme implemented from 2013 to 2017¹ by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE – Secretariat of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA)), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organizations (UNIDO) to assist the six European Union’s Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in their transition to green economy. The programme is financed by the European Commission (EC), the four implementing organisations, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) and other donors, including Austria, Norway, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

2. The programme’s overall objective is to assist the EaP countries to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and resource depletion. The programme component which ECE is in charge of implementing, aims to promote the use of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) as essential planning tools for an environmentally sustainable economic development.

3. ECE supports the participating countries in developing and applying SEA legislation and systems in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol on SEA to the Espoo Convention (and the EU SEA Directive²) in order to promoting the ratification and implementation of the Protocol on SEA. When requested by the countries, assistance is provided for improving the current practices and legal and institutional frameworks on EIA in compliance with the Espoo Convention (and the EU EIA Directive³).

4. The activities build upon the workplan and are based on the requests by the target countries. They focus on:
- (a) Revision of the existing national regulatory and legislative frameworks;
 - (b) Capacity building on SEA/EIA procedures;
 - (c) Strengthening the administrative capacities and clarifying the roles of different stakeholders in SEA and EIA.

¹ The Programme’s duration will be extended until December 2017 on the non-costs basis based on the agreements with the beneficiary countries and the European Commission.

² Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

³ Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

II. Summary of the main achievements (June 2014 to February 2016)

(a) Revision of the existing national regulatory and legislative frameworks

(Workplan activities: Compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol: 8 a (i), 8 a (ii), 8b and 9 c, b, c.)

5. In this intersessional period, the ECE secretariat for the Convention and the Protocol (the secretariat) in cooperation with the ministries responsible for environment in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia carried out reviews of the existing legislative and institutional frameworks for the application of SEA and EIA vis-à-vis the requirements of the Espoo Convention, its Protocol and EU EIA/SEA Directive. Similar reviews on SEA were conducted by Belarus and the Republic of Moldova in 2013 (under the previous intersessional period⁴). The SEA and EIA reviews concluded that the current legislative frameworks of participating countries contained some elements of EIA and SEA systems. However, the legislative frameworks should be enhanced in order to comply with the requirements of the Espoo Convention, its Protocol on SEA and the relevant EU Directives.

6. The results of the reviews lead to reforms of the environmental assessment legislation in all five countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova) although such reforms were initially planned only in two countries. The reforms aimed to make the existing impact assessment procedures (i.e. environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment and state ecological expertise) more coherent and aligned with the Espoo Convention, its Protocol on SEA and the relevant EU Directives. Table 1 below provides a summary of the actions undertaken by the secretariat in cooperation with the beneficiary countries to facilitate the reforms. The table also presents anticipated follow up steps by the countries.

7. To facilitate adoption of the proposed changes in the legislation and to raise awareness of SEA and its benefits among high level officials, the secretariat organised targeted awareness raising campaigns in Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine during 2015. These included a high level and parliamentary round-tables and workshops as well as production of the video on SEA and its benefits.

8. Based on the results of the legislative reviews and experience gained during the legal drafting, a Draft overview of legislative and administrative reforms for implementing strategic environmental assessment in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus ⁵ and a Draft practical guidance on reforming legal and institutional structures with regard to application of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment ⁶ were developed. The overview and practical guidance aim to support further developments of the legal framework on SEA in the participating countries. They are also a useful source of information for other countries which plan to implement reforms of their national environmental assessment systems. The Overview and the Guidance were discussed with the representatives of the beneficiary countries at the sub-regional conference 'Developing legislative framework for the strategic environmental assessment in line with the Protocol on SEA', held in Georgia in November 2015 and will be completed by April 2016⁷.

⁴ The reviews of the existing legislative and institutional frameworks for the application of SEA vis-à-vis the requirements of the Protocol on SEA and EU SEA Directive in the Republic of Moldova and Belarus were implemented under the 2011-2014 workplan: decision VI/3-II/3, ECE/MP.EIA/2014/L.2-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2014/L.2.

⁵ Draft as of November 2015 is available at the <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40656#/>

⁶ Draft as of November 2015 is available at the <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40656#/>

⁷ The Overview will need to be updated by the MOP and MOP/MOP.

Table 1. Progress in revising the existing national legislative frameworks supported by the ECE secretariat to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA under the Workplan 2014-2017 with funding from the EaP GREEN Programme⁸

Country	Legislative review	Status of implementation	Reform process	Status of implementation
Armenia	Review vis-à-vis the Protocol on SEA/SEA Directive Review vis-à-vis the Convention/EIA Directive	Completed, October 2014 Completed, June 2014	Amending the Law on EIA and environmental expertise Drafting secondary legislation in SEA and EIA	Ongoing (March 2015 – March 2017) back-to-back with the pilot application of SEA in a waste management field (December 2015 – December 2016). The Law on EIA and environmental expertise was adopted by Armenian Parliament in June 2014 and entered into force in August 2014. The law combines provisions on the state ecological expertise with detailed procedural provisions regarding SEA and EIA, and those regarding transboundary procedures. However, the assessment of the Law revealed some gaps vis-a-vis the provisions of the Espoo Convention and the Protocol and some procedural omissions that impede the practical application of the Law. Following the assessment of the national procedures for amending legislation and the analysis of the existing gaps, Armenia has been assisted in: (i) drafting necessary amendments to the Law on EIA and environmental expertise (adopted in 2014) to address the conceptual gaps vis-à-vis the Protocol and the Convention by October 2016(ii) developing secondary legislation on detailed EIA and SEA procedures in line with the Convention and the Protocol by February 2017. The Espoo Convention Implementation Committee monitors the progress in preparation of the amendments.
Azerbaijan	Review vis-à-vis the Protocol on SEA/SEA Directive Review vis-à-vis the Convention/EIA Directive	Completed, October 2014 Completed, June 2014	Amending the draft Law on EIA and development of relevant bylaws	Ongoing (from November 2014). The draft Law on EIA was prepared from November 2014 to May 2015. According to the ECE expert review, the draft law (as of February 2016) provided an improved legal framework on EIA and SEA but, if adopted, amendments would be necessary to bring the law into full compliance with the provisions on the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA. The intergovernmental consultations on the draft Law were carried out between May 2015 and August 2016 and resulted to substantive revisions of the draft Law. The expert review of the revised draft Law will be completed in December 2016 and will provide advice on further steps to support to establishment of the national environmental assessment legislative framework that is aligned with the Convention and the Protocol. The draft Law has not yet been submitted to the Parliament. The Espoo Convention Implementation Committee monitors the progress in preparation of the draft law.
Belarus	Review vis-à-vis the Protocol on	Completed,	Developing a chapter on SEA	Ongoing (from March 2015). During the drafting process, substantial amount of changes was proposed not only to SEA

⁸ Preparation of legal framework for environmental assessment systems in Ukraine is supported by the EU funded project “Complementary Support to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine for the Sector Budget Support Implementation” – a large four-year project that started in October 2015. The 2014-2016 workplan under the Convention and the Protocol does not envision legislative assistance on SEA and EIA for the country. However, ECE established collaboration with the EU Delegation in Ukraine to monitor the progress of and ensure synergies with the above project, in particular when it comes to preparation of guidance document on SEA.

	SEA/SEA Directive	October 2013	procedures and amendments to improve the existing EIA system within the Law on state environmental expertise	system, but also to EIA and SEA schemes. To accommodate these changes, a new law on environmental expertise, SEA and EIA was elaborated. The Law was adopted in July 2016. Although it provides an improved legal framework on EIA and SEA, some gaps vis-à-vis the provisions of the Protocol and the Convention remain. Due to the national legislative procedures, these gaps are being addressed through secondary legislation on EIA, SEA and environmental expertise which is being developed from September to November 2016 with support from the secretariat. Drafting sessions were held in Minsk in 19-22 September 2016. The review by the UNECE consultant of the three draft regulations on EIA, SEA and environmental expertise was carried out in the first decade of October 2016.
Georgia	Review vis-à-vis the Convention/ EIA Directive Mapping exercise vis-à-vis the Protocol on SEA/SEA Directive ⁹	Completed, January 2014 Completed, September 2014	Preparing the new draft Law on EIA and SEA (Environmental Assessment Code) and relevant bylaws on detailed SEA and EIA procedures and public participation guidelines	Drafting of the Environmental Assessment Code completed (September 2014 – September 2015). The draft Code (as of 11 December 2015) is mostly in line with the provisions of the Espoo Convention and its Protocol SEA. High level event to facilitate the adoption of the Code organised (11 December 2015). Currently (late October 2016) the Draft Code is being considered by the Government of Georgia with the view to be submitted to the Parliament for its winter session.
Republic of Moldova	Review vis-à-vis the Protocol on SEA/SEA Directive	Completed, October 2014	Drafting (a) the new draft Law on SEA; (b) the draft law on changes and amendments to the national legislation to ensure implementation of the EIA law that came into force in January 2015.	Completed (Jan. - Dec. 2014) (a) The draft law on SEA was submitted to the Government in December 2014, but did not reach the Parliament before the new Government was appointed in July 2015. In August 2015, the draft law was re-circulated for approval of the new Government and submitted to the Parliament in early 2016. It is anticipated that the draft law will be adopted by the end of 2016. The supplementary legislation to adjust the existing legal and normative base to the requirements of the new Law on SEA will be drafted by December 2016. (b) Draft law on changes and amendments to ensure implementation of the EIA law developed and has been circulated to the Government in December 2015. High level event to facilitate the adoption of the draft Law organised (17 June 2015).

(b) Capacity building on SEA/EIA procedures and strengthening the administrative capacities and clarifying the roles of different stakeholders in SEA and EIA.

Workshops, including training, on the application of the Protocol

(Workplan activities: Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol on SEA 3 a, b, d, e, g)

9. The 2014-2015 training events in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Republic of Moldova were carried out in conjunction with the pilot SEAs. This approach enabled the

⁹ * The Mapping exercise is a simplified version of the review of the existing environmental assessment systems. Compared to the review it does not provide justification for amending the legislation, but rather aims at preparing various options for the legislative drafting

participants of the training to apply the obtained skills and knowledge in practice. In Belarus and Ukraine, the 2014 - 2015 capacity building workshops were built on the outcomes of the legislative reforms. The aim of the events was to raise awareness of various national stakeholders about changes in the existing legislation, the requirements of the SEA Protocol, existing European practice and SEA benefits. Special sessions were dedicated to discussing roles of the sectoral, local, environmental and health authorities in the SEA process.

10. Some changes in the workplan training activities were introduced taking into account the needs for more comprehensive legislative assistance in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Table 2 below provides an overview of the proposed changes in the workplan and refers to the status of the implementation of the training workshops.

Table 2. Overview of the proposed changes to the workplan related to the implementation of the activities 3 a, b, d, e, g on promoting ratification and application of the Protocol on SEA

Country	Workplan 2014-2017	Suggested changes	Status of implementation
Armenia	One national training event, one local training event;	<p>One national training event (in two sessions) in conjunction with the pilot project.</p> <p>One-day awareness raising training for sectoral ministries to help Armenia identify a pilot project.</p> <p>One final event to train the authorities in new SEA scheme based on the amended law.</p>	<p>One national level training (in two sessions) to be organised in 2016 in conjunction with the pilot project.</p> <p>One awareness raising seminar for sectoral authorities on the application of strategic environmental assessment in Armenia to select the pilot project, Yerevan 23 - 24 March 2015.</p> <p>The final event will be organised after completion of the pilot and finalisation of amendments to the law tentatively in spring 2017.</p>
Azerbaijan	Two national training events, two local training events;	<p>One national level awareness raising event on the EIA and SEA legislation.</p> <p>One national level training event (in two sessions) in conjunction with the pilot project and one final training event for dissemination of the results of the SEA pilot in 2016.</p> <p>One local level training event cancelled to financially support the drafting of the amendments to the draft law¹⁰.</p> <p>One awareness raising event for high level officials of line ministries to promote adoption of the draft law and to discuss role of the planning authorities in SEA.</p>	<p>Awareness raising workshop on implementing the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA in the national legislation of Azerbaijan (Baku, 2 March 2015).</p> <p>National training workshop back-to-back with the pilot project:</p> <p>Part I 'Practical application of the SEA' (Baku, 3 - 4 March 2015), Part II: Impact assessment and scoping consultations (Baku, 11 - 12 May 2015).</p> <p>One awareness raising event for high level officials (tentatively planned for second decade of February 2017)</p> <p>A workshop on SEA procedure for the planning authorities and environmental authorities (based on the guidelines) (tentatively planned for second decade of February 2017)</p>

¹⁰ The need for a second local training will be evaluated with the Government at the end of the law drafting process.

Georgia	Two national training events, two local training events;	<p>One national level and two local level training events are cancelled (in September 2013) in order to redirect the funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support to raise awareness of various stakeholders on the benefits of SEA and EIA (in May 2015 the request was further amended and the training activities restored); - provide international experts to build capacities on control quality of EIA documentation, in particular for small scale hydro power plans (in February 2016 this request was withdrawn). 	<p>Awareness raising event on SEA procedure and SEA benefits for high level officials (11 December, 2015).</p> <p>National level training events back to back with the pilot project:</p> <p>Part I: webinar to introduce SEA methodology (5 August, 2015),</p> <p>Part II: practical application of SEA and impact assessment within SEA procedure (Tbilisi, 21 - 22 September 2015),</p> <p>Part III: role of environmental authorities in (a) scoping (19 April 2016) and (b) in quality control of SEA documentation (planned 28 November 2016).</p>
The Republic of Moldova	Two national training events, two local training events;	Change two local level training events to a second pilot project on SEA at the national level and organise a final dissemination event at the end of 2016 at the national level.	<p>Second SEA pilot project is initiated for the Road Map on Green Economy in Moldova.</p> <p>Dissemination event planned for early 2017.</p>
Ukraine	One national training event, two local training events	<p>Change one local level training event to three back-to-back events as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a one-day awareness raising event to promote SEA benefits among officials of the sectoral ministries; (b) a one-day training workshop for environmental authorities on their role in SEA; (c) a one day round table discussion for high level officials to promote SEA benefits and adoption of the law on SEA. 	<p>Awareness raising events organised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Practical application of strategic environmental assessment (SEA): Role of the environmental authorities in the SEA process (12 June 2015), Kiev (b) Benefits of the strategic environmental assessment and the role of sectoral authorities in SEA process (10 June 2015), Kiev (c) High-level round table on benefits of the strategic environmental assessment and the role of sectoral authorities in SEA process (11 June 2015), Kiev (d) Training workshop on practical application of strategic environmental assessment for representatives for local authorities (25-26 October 2016) (e) Training workshop on the role of environmental authorities in SEA (planned for second decade of December 2016).

*More details on the country specific activities are presented in the Annex 1.

Pilot projects

(Workplan activities: Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol on SEA 5 a, b, c, d, e)

11. To facilitate identification and implementation of the pilot projects in the participating countries, the secretariat developed a list of selection criteria¹¹ and organized special training sessions at the sub-regional events in Minsk (April 2014) and Prague (December 2014). A successful pilot requires integration of the SEA into the strategic planning process. The planning authority was expected to share the draft plans/programmes, be willing to engage in the SEA procedure, cooperate with the SEA team and be ready to incorporate the results of the SEA procedure into the strategic document. In practice, many countries experienced initial difficulties in identifying a plan or a programme for the pilot application of SEA. Most of the strategic documents are developed by Ministries not relating to the environment, which seem not to have very good understanding of the SEA procedure and not always be willing to carry out SEAs in the absence of clear legislative requirements. Therefore, implementation of the pilot projects was slightly delayed. Table 3 below presents an overview and a status of implementation of the pilot projects.

Table 3: SEA pilot projects and their implementation progress

Country	Pilot project focus	Status of implementation
Armenia	Application of the SEA to Armenia's "Strategic Development Plan, Road Map and Long Term Investment Plan for the Solid Waste Management Sector in Armenia"	Initiated: December 2015 National team hired, SEA base line analysis under preparation. National training workshop: Part I (Yerevan, 9 - 10 March 2016); Part II (Yerevan, 23-24 June 2016), SEA scoping report produced and discussed with the environment and health authorities and the public in five regions from 5 to 19 August 2016. Expected competition date: December 2016
Azerbaijan	Application of SEA for the State Strategy on Alternative and Renewable Energy Resources Use in Azerbaijan for 2015-2020	Completed : (March 2015 – October 2016) National training workshop: Part I (Baku, 3 - 4 March 2015), Part II (Baku, 11 - 12 May 2015), SEA expert group meeting on SEA report (Baku, 27 - 29 August 2015); final public consultation workshop (Baku, 9 December 2015). SEA Report and executive summary prepared in December 2015 and July 2016. Dissemination of the results of the pilot project at the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development to disseminate the results of the pilot project to the international community (Baku, 21 October 2016, 1.5 hour session)
Georgia	SEA Pilot Project on National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan in Georgia	Completed: July 2015 – April 2016 National training workshop: Part I: webinar to (5 August, 2015), Part II: (Tbilisi, 21 - 22 September 2015); Public scoping consultations meeting (Tbilisi, 22 September 2015); Final public consultation workshop (30 October 2015). Final SEA report produced and published on the EaP GREEN website, results disseminated at the side event 'The role of Strategic Environmental Assessment in Greening Economies'

¹¹ Available on the Internet at:

http://www.unecce.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/eia/documents/EnvSec/Minsk_April_14/Selection_of_SEA_pilot_RUS.pdf

		at the 8th Ministerial Environment for Europe Conference.
The Republic of Moldova	Application of SEA for the Master Plan of Orhei Town	Completed (July 2014- June 2015) National training workshop on SEA: Part I (30 to 31 July 2014, Chisinau), Part II: 16 December 2014, two public consultation events (17 December, 2014 and May 2015). SEA report and a final project report prepared. Results disseminated at the final high level event (17 June 2015).
	Practical application of the Draft Law on SEA in the Republic of Moldova for the Road Map on promoting green economy	Initiated: December 2015 National team hired: SEA base line analysis ongoing. National training workshop: Part I (Chisinau, 2 - 3 December 2015); Part II (Chisinau, 21 - 22 April 2016), public consultations on the Green Economy Road Map and the SEA scoping report and the amended Road Map and the scoping report (22 April 2016 and 12 October 2016). Expected competition date: December 2016 (might be delayed due to the delays in the preparation of the Road Map by the Government of the Republic of Moldova)

*General description of a typical pilot project is available in the Annex 2.

12. In January 2015, Ukraine expressed its interest in carrying out a pilot SEA at the national level for the waste management action plan (WMAP). However, by November 2015 the request was withdrawn due to delays in preparation of the waste management legislation – a prerequisite for development of the WMAP. After the Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment was adopted on the 4 October 2016, Ukraine reiterated its request to the UNECE for carrying out the SEA pilot project. The activity is incorporated into the waiting list of the 2017-2020 Workplan.

13. Ukraine receives substantial support from various donors to further develop its national SEA system, including for implementation of the SEA pilot projects. For example, a five year project 'Partnership for Local Economic Development and Democratic Governance' (PPLEDG) funded by the Canadian Government (started in October 2015) will work with 16 cities from 4 oblasts of Ukraine to prepare regional and local development plans, including carrying out SEAs for some of them. The ECE secretariat established cooperation with PPLEDG in October 2015. The PPLEDG national experts who will lead SEA pilots attended the EaP GREEN training of trainers' workshop in November 2015 and improved their understanding of SEA and their training skills. In addition, in autumn 2016, to support the PPLEDG SEA pilots, the ECE in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine will organise a training workshop on SEA in urban planning for the selected local authorities (see Table 2).

Development of national guidelines

14. The national guidelines on SEA procedures are being developed since April 2016 based on the experience gained through legal drafting and implementation of the pilot projects. As Georgia also request to support preparation of the national guidance document on EIA. Table 4 below provides progress in the preparation of the national guidance in each of the beneficiary countries.

Table 4: Progress in the preparation of the national guidance documents

Country	Focus of the guidance document	Status of implementation
Armenia	Guidance on practical application of SEA procedure according to the SEA regulation in Armenia	Planned for February – June 2017 after the regulation on national SEA is completed
Azerbaijan	Recommendations on implementation of the national SEA procedure	Initiated in September 2016: Meeting on establishing organisational issues (21 September, 2016) First meeting to prepare the concept and structure for the recommendations (22 October)
Belarus	Guidance on practical application of SEA procedure according to the SEA regulation in Belarus	Planned for February – June 2017 after the regulation on national SEA is completed
Georgia	Guidelines on practical application of strategic environmental assessment in Georgia	Initiated in March 2016 Four working group meetings for development of the guidelines organised on 3 March 2016, 22 April 2016, 10 June 2016, 1 August 2016. First draft produced in June 2016 Second draft produced in September 2016 Comments from the Ministry responsible for environment obtained during the regular bilateral meeting of the project team and the Ministry. The Guidelines will be presented for comments to the national stakeholders during the trainings for sectoral authorities (30 November – 1 December 2016) and training for urban planner (2 December 2016) that are jointly organised by EaP GREEN and the EU Delegation in Georgia. Final draft to be produced in December 2016
	Guidelines on Practical Application of Environmental Impact Assessment in Georgia	Initiated in August 2016 Produced in cooperation with EU project on Support to the Approximation in various fields as part of the environmental provisions under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (FWC BENEFICIARIES 2013 - LOT 6: Environment EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/multi) A national expert hired to support production of the guidelines by the international expert (hired by the other EU project) and carrying out national working group meetings The first draft is produced in September 2016 The final draft will be produced in November 2016

The Republic of Moldova	Guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of the SEA Law	Initiated in July 2016 First draft is developed (in Romanian) in October 2016. Comments by the UNECE secretariat will be provided by November 2016 Final draft will be produced by March 2017 (subject of adoption of the draft Law on SEA in December 2016)
Ukraine	Methodological recommendations on application of strategic environmental assessment to the national planning documents (in accordance with the Law on SEA adopted in 4 October 2016)	Initiated: June 2016 National team hired. First draft produced in September 2016 and discussed with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine on 30 September 2016. Second draft produced by 21 October 2016 and discussed with the local planning authorities at the training workshop on 25 October 2016. Expected competition date: December 2016

Sub-regional coordination and experience sharing events

(Workplan activities: Subregional cooperation and capacity-building to strengthen contacts between the Parties and others, including States outside the ECE region, 4 a)

15. The Study tour ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’ was organised from 1 to 5 December 2014 in the Czech Republic, with the participation of 32 representatives from EaP GREEN countries. It provided participants with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with a working SEA system, including legislation, institutional structure and procedures and allowed them to study existing SEA practices in land use, plans, energy related plans, environment related plans, urban development plans. The participants were able to share their own experience in SEA, as well as to meet representatives of national authorities, consultants and non-governmental organizations dealing with SEA on a daily basis in their country. They were able to study the transition process of introducing SEA in the Czech Republic.

16. The sub-regional conference “Lessons learned from national and subregional reviews of legal and institutional frameworks for application of EIA and SEA” (including a training of trainers workshop on the practical application of SEA) took place from 2 to 6 November 2015 in Georgia. During the sub-regional conference 35 participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine studied various approaches to enhance their legal and institutional frameworks for the application of SEA¹². During the ToT workshop the participants addressed questions related to the practical implementation of SEA. They further substantiated their knowledge about SEA and learned about various techniques for designing and delivering effective capacity-building events. 30 national experts are now able to plan and deliver SEA awareness raising and initial training events. In addition, the

¹² The secretariat sub-regional activities link various activities envisioned in the Workplan under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA. In 2015, the representatives from Russian Federation and Kazakhstan were able to attend the sub-regional conference and the training of trainers events planned under the EaP GREEN Program.

participants discussed the needs to sustain the initiated legislative reforms of the environmental assessment systems after the completion of the EaP GREEN funded assistance provided by the secretariat.

(b) Challenges for the implementation of the workplan activities

17. Non-environmental planning authorities are not aware of SEA procedures and of their role as a developer of the SEA report. They are reluctant to attend the EaP GREEN training and awareness raising events on the practical application of SEA or to participate in the SEA pilot projects, because they perceive SEA as a responsibility of the environmental authorities only. In 2015, the ECE environment division engaged with ECE housing and energy divisions to raise awareness of sectoral ministries of SEA and facilitate their participation in EaP GREEN events. The attendance of the non-environmental authorities to the EaP GREEN events has increased in 2015.

18. Environmental authorities are not fully aware of their role in ensuring the quality of SEA documentation. To address this gap and develop a training methodology, a targeted two-part training event will be offered in 2016 to the environmental authorities in Georgia and Ukraine.

19. Taking into account the requests for extended legislative assistance from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova and the decrease of available financial resources that occurred due to the change in the currency exchange rates from December 2014 to December 2015, there is a lack of resources to carry out the remaining training events for sectoral authorities at national and local level. ECE has been communicating with the participating countries to clarify national priorities and amend the plans. The participating countries confirmed that the national or sub-national training events are important for further awareness raising among sectoral authorities and promotion of the SEA systems at the national and local level, especially in light of the upcoming changes in the legal framework. In addition, the national trainers which were trained as trainers in November 2015 need to complete the training cycle by planning and carrying out the awareness raising and training events; the final sub-regional conference on the lessons learned from the SEA pilots is also important and it is unfeasible to cancel it. Thus, the secretariat has been communicating with the EaP GREEN Project Partners to identify possibilities for reallocation of the existing EaP GREEN funds. OECD preliminary indicated that some funds might be available by middle of 2016.

20. EaP GREEN initiated legislative and institutional reforms of the environmental assessment systems in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova. The project has also raised awareness of the national planning and environmental authorities about SEA. Competing priorities for the limited governmental budget is a major obstacle hindering adoption of the proposed legislation and approval of the suggested institutional reforms. Further awareness raising campaigns and pilot projects on practical application of SEA in various economic sectors are needed to calculate the costs of SEA and its social value, including creation of additional work places. The EaP GREEN Programme is likely to be extended until December 2017 and efforts should be made to obtain additional funding to sustain the initiated reform process beyond 2017.

B. Technical assistance to Kyrgyzstan (2014–2015)

I. Background

21. According to the workplan (Decision VI/3–II/3), technical advice and support to improve legislation as well as the institutional framework to implement the Convention would be provided to Kyrgyzstan in 2014. The project, financed by Switzerland, should be undertaken by an external consultant and a national expert group on EIA.

II. Activities implemented

22. Preliminary negotiations about the scope of the proposed assistance took place between the secretariat and the Government of Kyrgyzstan in the course of 2014, followed by, a workplan with concrete deadlines and responsibilities in early 2015.

23. In the meantime, a representative of the Government engaged in impact assessment participated in the study tour to the Czech Republic which took place in December 2014 (see para. 14 above on sub-regional coordination and experience-sharing events cooperation). The representative was able to familiarize herself with the practical application of EIA, as well as SEA, and specific good practice examples in a country that went through a similar transition path in that area. She also had the opportunity to build a network with EIA/SEA practitioners for future reference.

24. Regarding the activity, an international expert was identified to provide, together with a national consultant, an analysis of the existing legislative framework and to identify needs to provide customized assistance for the development of legislation. The analysis was made on the basis of a desk review, with materials provided among others by the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, and meetings of the consultants with Government experts (from Ministries and the Agency) and NGO representatives. At that stage, the Government explained that following the recent adoption of a detailed EIA/OVOS Regulation in January 2015, its objective was to develop a framework law on EIA, which would also consider SEA aspects, at no additional cost. That request was in accordance with Kyrgyzstan's wish to align the principles on EIA and SEA in its national legislation to the Convention and the Protocol.

25. A national expert group (or working group) was established under the direction of the national focal point to accompany the drafting process and provide feedback. The group consisted inter alia of representatives of the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, the State Inspectorate for ecological and technical safety, and the Ministry of Health.

26. Subsequently, the following activities were implemented in 2015:

- **Beginning of May:** a first draft of the law¹³ and the a list of legal acts to be amended, based on the new law was developed. The documents were shared with members of the national working group.
- **13 May:** the law and the list of amendments were discussed by the working group and the international consultant at the national round table (Bishkek,). Participants also included: representatives the Parliament, relevant ministries and agencies (including the State Agency for Environmental Protection), EIA contractors and members of the public.
- **25 May:** Deadline for submission of comments to the two documents discussed at the roundtable on 13 May.
- **End June:** Consolidated comments by the Government on the draft framework law.
- **July:** a list of suggested activities to strengthen Kyrgyzstan's capacity to implement and comply with its obligations under the Convention, and to accede to the Protocol is developed, further to the outcomes of the discussion at the national round table.

¹³ The drafts were available on the web site of the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry, at: www.nature.kg.

- **July – September:** Discussions of the international and national consultants with the Government on the review of the draft – comments by other stakeholders, e.g. civil society, are also considered.
- **October:** Development of a revised draft framework law, including detailed provisions for transboundary EIA, as well as SEA.
- **October:** Development of detailed amendments to the 1999 Expertiza Law to align it to the new framework law, in particular with regard to the SEA.
- **End October:** Development of national guidelines on the practical application of the transboundary EIA procedure (1st draft).

III. Next steps

27. The *final version of the draft framework law on environmental assessment* is currently under consideration by the Government. The law covers EIA, SEA, and Ecological expertise at the stage of consultation with environmental authorities (which was not included in the 1999 Expertise law. Further to recent correspondence between the secretariat and Kyrgyz national focal point (end October 2016), the draft law is still reviewed by the Government. The SEA part of the law was endorsed by the Government and excluded from the Law. Once the draft is approved, the law is submitted for review and approval by the Parliament and then for signature by the President.

28. The *national guidelines on the practical application of the transboundary EIA procedure* elaborate on the practical application of the draft framework law. They constitute a useful source of information and can already be used in practice, before the adoption of the framework law. It is, however, suggested, that they are reviewed once the law has been adopted in its final version and other relevant legislation amended, as required, to ensure that the *Guidelines* correspond to the actual laws in force and include the correct references.

29. Drafts of the law and other material (working documents) have been prepared in Russian. Final versions have been translated into Kyrgyz. It would be desirable to translate the final law into English.

30. Following completion of this activity, Kyrgyzstan will lead the activity foreseen in the workplan for further development and update of the *Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries*. The activity is implemented with funding from Switzerland. Details are expected to be agreed with Kyrgyzstan in 2016, so that the activity is launched in spring 2016.

C. Technical assistance to the Russian Federation (2014–2016)

I. Background

31. According to the workplan (Decision VI/3–II/3), technical advice would be provided in 2015 to the Russian Federation on improving implementation of the Convention and the Protocol. The project, financed by Sweden, aimed to assist the country in its efforts to develop a national system to apply impact assessment, in particular SEA procedures, according to the provisions of the Protocol, including:

- (a) Improving its legislative and institutional framework to fully comply with the Protocol;
- (b) Defining roles and responsibilities of various authorities in the SEA process;
- (c) Building national and local capacities, developing practical experience and national guidelines in application of the SEA procedures in line with the Protocol;

(d) Raising awareness and common understanding of the benefits of the SEA at national and local levels and in different sectors, including the benefits of public participation and the consultation of relevant authorities.

32. The project should be undertaken by an external consultants and World Wide Fund Russia (WWF-Russia), under ECE guidance and in collaboration with Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

II. Activities implemented

33. In 2014, Russia began harmonizing its national legislation with the provisions of the Protocol on SEA. Draft laws and Governmental decrees on SEA were developed and are provided in late 2014 for consultations with the national authorities. Based on the request from the Ministry and with support from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the secretariat provided expert support to the Russian Federation to review the draft laws and decrees vis-à-vis the provisions of the Protocol.

34. **In December 2014**, five representatives of the Russian Federation participated in the SEA study tour to the Czech Republic (see para. 14 above on sub-regional coordination and experience-sharing events cooperation).

35. **In January 2015**, a round table on “Major legislative dilemmas for implementing the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA in the ECE region and ways to address them in national legislation” was organized. The results of the expert review were presented and discussed with representatives of the ministry and different agencies.

36. **In January-February 2015**, the secretariat in collaboration with the Ministry of Ecology and WWF Russia, prepared a proposal for the pilot application of SEA in the decision-making for the “Strategy of socio-economic development the Zabaikalsky Region of until 2030”. It was planned that the project would be implemented by the secretariat, the central and regional authorities, and the WWF Russia. Funds for this part of the project were expected to be provided by the Russian Federation. However, the project proposal was declined for funding by the Russian Federation. At the same time the WWF Russia used the project proposal to raise funds for awareness raising and capacity building from UNDP office in Russian Federation.

37. **In August 2015**, the secretariat obtained limited funds from the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation to organise two training events to support the pilot project implementation team in application of SEA according to the requirements of the Protocol on SEA and prepare draft overview on the practical application of environmental assessment, including guidelines on the practical application of SEA in the Russian Federation. However, due to the tax regulations for the UNECE Grants the funds were returned to the UNECE Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation.

38. **In November 2015**, one representatives of the Russian Federation participated in the sub-regional conference on SEA legal reforms and training of trainers on practical application of SEA (see para. 15 above on sub-regional coordination and experience-sharing events cooperation).

39. **In September 2015** the activities related to the implementation of the SEA Pilot project were initiated. The two training event on SEA methodology according to the Protocol on SEA were carried out in September (29-30) and November (27) 2015 in Chita, Zabaikalsky Region. During these events the UNECE consultants assisted the national partners (WWF – Russia) in organising efficient public participation and consultations with the relevant authorities. They discussed how to identify the public potentially to be affected and helped developing a plan for public participation. **In March 2016** the national counterparts produced the first draft SEA report that was reviewed by the UNECE consultants.

40. From **February to June 2016** the UNECE consultants provided support for preparing the guidelines on the practical application of SEA in the Russian Federation. They helped to develop the structure of the guidelines and drafted the chapters on quality control of SEA documentation, incorporation of biodiversity assessment into SEA, monitoring and an introductory chapter with the overview of the practical application of environmental assessment in the Russian Federation (ongoing until February, 2016).

41. On **25 October 2016**, UNECE in cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, the UNDP project «Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into Russia's energy sector policies and operations», and WWF Russia organized a national conference on practical application strategic environment assessment in development planning. About 100 national experts from federal and regional planning and environmental authorities as well as representatives of the business and civil society took part in the conference. They got familiar with SEA procedure as provided by the Protocol, SEA benefits, and key principles of efficient SEA application. They further discussed (i) lessons learned from use of SEA in different sectors in various countries– Parties of the Protocol, and (ii) existing experiences of carrying out environmental assessments based on the SEA procedure in the Russian Federation.

III. Next steps

42. The pilot project in the Zabaikalsky region is expected to include the following elements:

- Review of the documents prepared during the pilot SEA to ensure quality (as of 20 October 2016 the SEA pilot project is suspended by the Government of the Zabaikalsky Region, thus the final review is postponed);
- Publication of a leaflet with infographics on the SEA pilot application in the Zabaikalsky Region (cancelled due to lack of funds);
- Preparation of a final report on the implementation of the SEA pilot in English, including the documentation of all meetings and events conducted under the pilot SEA and recommendations on further development of the national SEA procedure in the Russian Federation (only documentation of the event, no funds available at the Secretariat to support the entire SEA process, the final report on SEA pilot cancelled – will be done by the WWF directly without quality control of the ECE secretariat);
- x
- Assistance to the national team in developing a dissemination strategy to raise awareness of authorities and public about the SEA pilot project and the benefits of SEA (cancelled due to the lack of funds).

D. Update of the Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries

I. Background

43. According to the workplan (Decision VI/3–II/3), technical advice and support would be provided to update the Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries produced in 2005 (EIA Guidelines) and raise the awareness of the national officials in the Central Asian countries about the transboundary EIA.

44. The Guidelines were initially developed in 2005, by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) with Switzerland's financial support, in accordance with

the workplan adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at their fourth session (Cavtat (Croatia), 1–4 June 2004). They were further tested and revised in 2007 on the basis of the outcomes of the transboundary EIA pilot project involving Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan regarding the proposed operation of a copper and gold mine. The Meeting of the Parties took note of the Guidelines at their third session (Bucharest, 19–21 May 2008). Under this project the Guidelines will be updated on the basis of the introduced since 2005 legal and institutional national developments concerning the application of the Espoo Convention, the subregional experience gathered, as well as the developed international practice of the Espoo Convention.

45. The project is financed by Switzerland. Kyrgyzstan is the lead country for the activity. It will have a central role and will guide the work of the expert(s). The designated national Governmental experts will be responsible for providing required materials, taking active role in the development of the Guidelines, and providing organisational support for the planned events (including venue, etc.). The technical advice will be provided by one or two qualified legal experts with experience in post-Soviet legal systems as well as EIA system promoted by the Convention. The expert(s) will work in cooperation with the lead country expert and in close consultation with the experts designated by the four other Governments. The activity language is Russian. The Secretariat of the Espoo Convention will be responsible for the overall supervision for the implementation of the activity.

46. The activity was expected to be initiated at the end of 2015 completed by 2016. However, the implementation timeline was extended until end of 2017 due to the delayed implementation of technical advice in the lead country (foreseen for 2014, and implemented in 2015. See section B for more details) and resource constraints in the UNECE secretariat. The activity will therefore be completed in the next interessional period.

II. Planned activities

47. A kick off subregional workshop (Bishkek, **tentatively December, 2016 (tbc)**) to report on lessons learned from the application of the Guidelines since their development; legislative and institutional developments; inter-State transboundary consultations over the last ten years, lessons learned and challenges; and identification of gaps or shortcomings in the existing Guidelines requiring further development and/or update; the workshop will be organized with the participation of Government experts from the five countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector/project developers, the Secretariat and the donor country.

48. Development of an updated draft version of the Guidelines (**tentatively from December 2016 to June 2017**), following the outcomes of the kick-off workshop, by the lead country (Kyrgyzstan) and the consultant(s) in close cooperation with the designated Government experts from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The draft will be developed in Russian and available for public comments on the web sites of the competent Ministries and Government agencies. Translation of the draft into the national languages should be undertaken by the Governments.

49. Subregional workshop (Bishkek, **tentatively in fall 2017**) to discuss and comment on the draft Guidelines with the participation of Government experts from the five countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector/project developers, the Secretariat and the donor country.

50. Finalization of the Guidelines (**tentatively by the end of 2017**) on the basis of comments and proposals received during the public comment period and the subregional workshop and submission to the countries for their approval and practical use.

E. Technical advice to Kazakhstan (2015 – 2017)

I. Background

51. According to the workplan (Decision VI/3–II/3), technical advice and support would be provided to Kazakhstan on improving legislation to implement the Protocol (*activity 9 (d)*). The activity is implemented within the framework of the EU funded project “Supporting Kazakhstan’s Transition to a Green Economy Model” and includes the following elements: (i) review of the national environmental assessment and sectoral development frameworks (Phase I from September 2016 to March 2017); (ii) developing recommendations on further legislative developments (Phase I from September 2016 to March 2017); (iii) drafting of the SEA legislation (Phase II from June 2017 to February 2018), and (iv) building capacities of national stakeholders on the practical application of SEA procedure (Phase I and Phase II).

52. The activity will be implemented by the Ministry of Energy of Kazakhstan with the support of the international and national consultants.

II. Planned activities under the Phase I

53. **From 1 September to 30 October:** Desk-review of the existing legislation and institutional framework on environmental assessment of strategic documents in Kazakhstan. The review will be conducted by the international and national consultants based on materials provided by the Ministry of Energy of Kazakhstan.

54. **14 November 2016:** A kick-off round table meeting ‘Development of the strategic environmental assessment system in Kazakhstan’. The aims of the meeting are (i) to raise awareness of the national stakeholders about the UNECE Protocol on SEA and its benefits and (ii) to brief the national environmental, sectoral and local authorities on the necessary steps to be taken by the Government of Kazakhstan in order to establish a national SEA system according to the Protocol.

55. **From 15 to 17 November:** Fact finding mission of the international consultant to Kazakhstan to conduct the interviews with the national environmental and sectoral authorities, to gather additional information related to the implementation of the Protocol in Kazakhstan; and to discuss with the Ministry of Energy the preliminary findings of the review.

56. **From 17 November 2016 to 15 February 2017:** Development of a draft report that should include assessment of the existing legislative and institutional framework; recommendations regarding possible amendments to the current legislation and development of a new legislation; indications of possible areas where subordinate legislation regulating procedural actions could be required; conclusions and recommendations related to further steps in setting up a national SEA system in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol.

57. **Second part of February 2017:** A roundtable discussion to analyse and further develop the draft report. The international consultant will present the draft report to the representatives of relevant Ministries and NGOs. The aim of the roundtable is to discuss possible ambiguities in the draft report and to find a consensus with regard to the recommendations and further steps to be taken by Kazakhstan. Following the roundtable discussion stakeholders will provide their comments also in written format.

58. **By 30 March 2017:** Development of the final review report. The international consultant will develop a final report based on the feedback received during the roundtable discussion and the written feedback. The final report will focus on presenting legislative and institutional amendments required and the concrete steps to be taken by Kazakhstan to comply with and accede to the Protocol on SEA. It will include a proposal for the amended or new legislation.

Annex 1 – Overall list of the implemented activities financed by the EU through the EaP-GREAEN Programme per country (January 2013 – December 2015) that were implemented under the two intersessional periods

Armenia

[National level training workshop on strategic environmental assessment \(SEA\) in Armenia](#), Yerevan 26-29 November 2013

[Assessment of the Draft Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise](#) (Available in English)

Review of the National Legislative and Institutional Framework of SEA in Armenia (Available in [Russian](#) and [Armenian](#))

[National Round-table Discussion on Legal Implementation of the Protocol on SEA in Armenia](#), Yerevan 26 September 2014

[Assessment of the draft Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the environmental impact assessment and expertise"](#), July 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic 'Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector'](#), 1-5 December 2014 (Armenian Participants: 5 national experts)

[Seminar on the application of strategic environmental assessment in Armenia](#), Yerevan 23 - 24 March 2015

[Planning meeting for preparation of the amendments to the law of the Republic of Armenia on "Environmental impact assessment and expertise"](#), Yerevan 24 March 2015

Contract for the implementation of the pilot project and the drafting of the amendments to the law on EIA and environmental expertise is signed, November 2015 and January 2016 respectively

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Armenian Participants: 4 national experts)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 (Armenian Participants: 4 national experts)

Azerbaijan

[Review of national legislative and institutional framework of SEA](#), October 2014 (Available in English)

[Assessment of the Draft Law of Azerbaijan on environmental assessment, May –July 2014](#) (Available in English)

[National Round-table Discussion on Legal Implementation of the Protocol on SEA in Azerbaijan](#), Baku 28 August 2014

Plan for the implementation of pilot SEA of the Action Plan on Alternative and Renewable Energy Resources Use, March – December, 2015

[Expert mission to assist Azerbaijan in developing its legislation in Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment](#), Baku 28 October 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’](#), 1-5 December 2014 (Azeri Participants: 5 national experts)

[National Round-table Discussion ‘Implementing the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA in national legislation in Azerbaijan’](#), Baku 2 March 2015

[Pilot project for the application of the SEA in the alternative and renewable energy sector](#), initiated in March 2015 – ongoing

[Training workshop \(Part I\) ‘Practical application of the SEA in the alternative and renewable energy sector in Azerbaijan’](#), Baku 3 – 4 March 2015

[Training workshop \(Part II\) ‘Practical application of the SEA in the alternative and renewable energy sector in Azerbaijan’](#), Baku 11 - 12 May 2015

[SEA expert group meeting on Scoping report](#), Baku 27-28 August 2015

Second Draft law on EIA and SEA is prepared and circulated among the national authorities, May – August 2015

[Public Consultation Workshop: SEA for the National Strategy on use of alternative and renewable energy sources in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2015 – 2020](#), Baku 9 December 2015

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Azerbaijani Participants: 4 national experts)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 (Azerbaijani Participants: 4 national experts)

Belarus

[Review of legislation on strategic environmental assessment of Belarus with regard to implementation of the Protocol on SEA to the Espoo Convention](#), December 2013

[National round-table on Legal Implementation of the Protocol on SEA in Belarus](#), 5 September 2013

Three training workshops on SEA at local level were held [7-9 October, 2013, Gomel](#), [21-23 October, 2013, Brest](#), [24-25 October, 2013, Grodno](#) (Report on the training workshops on SEA)

[Joint pilot project between Belarus and Ukraine on post-project analysis of the exploitation of the Khotislavskoye quarry](#), April, 2013 – April, 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’](#), 1-5 December 2014 (Belarussian Participants: 5 national experts)

[Round-table to discuss amendments to the law of the Republic of Belarus on Strategic Environmental Expertiza](#), Minsk 29 - 30 April 2015

Draft law on EIA, SEA and environmental expertise is prepared and submitted to the Parliament, October 2015

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Belarus Participants: 5 national experts)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA, Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 \(Belarus Participants: 5 national experts\)](#)

Georgia

[Review of legislation on environmental impact assessment of Georgia with regard to implementation of the Espoo Convention, January 2013](#)

[Report on analysis of the existing elements and gaps in the national legislation of Georgia related to implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention, October 2014](#)

Plan for drafting of the law on EIA and SEA

[National round-table on Legal Implementation of the Espoo Convention in Georgia, Tbilisi 4 November 2013](#)

[Start-up workshop for the development of a new law on EIA and SEA in Georgia, Tbilisi 25-26 August, 2014](#)

[Drafting workshop to support development of a new law on EIA and SEA in Georgia, Tbilisi 18-19 November 2014](#)

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’, 1-5 December 2014 \(Georgian Participants: 5 national experts\)](#)

[Advisory mission to supervise the preparation of the draft Law on EIA and SEA and coordination of the activities with the GIZ project on cumulative effects from the HPP, Tbilisi 29 January 2015](#)

[National round-table to discuss the draft law on EIA and SEA in Georgia, Tbilisi 19 May 2015](#)

[Public hearing on the draft law on EIA and SEA in Georgia, 20 May 2015](#)

[Pilot project for the National waste management strategy and relevant action plan initiated, July 2015 – ongoing](#)

[Final round-table meeting to support development of a new law on environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment in Georgia, Tbilisi 23 - 24 September 2015](#)

[Training Workshop on practical application of strategic environmental assessment in Georgia, Tbilisi 21-22 September 2015](#)

[Public scoping consultations meeting on the SEA for the National waste management strategy and relevant action plan, Tbilisi 22 September 2015](#)

[Final Public Consultation Workshop:SEA on the Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan, Tbilisi 30 October 2015](#)

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA, Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 \(Georgia Participants: 6 national experts\)](#)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA, Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 \(Georgia Participants: 5 national experts\)](#)

[Developing Strategic Environmental Assessment system in Georgia. Meeting for the high level officials to promote benefits of SEA, Kakheti 11 December 2015](#)

The Republic of Moldova

[Review of legislation of the Republic of Moldova with regard to implementation of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment](#), October 2013

[National round-table on Legal Implementation of the Protocol on SEA in the Republic of Moldova](#), 3 September 2013

[Draft law on Strategic Environmental Assessment](#), July 2014

[National round-table meeting: Draft Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment in the Republic of Moldova and its pilot application to urban plans and programmes](#), 29 July 2014

[Practical application of the Draft Law of the Republic of Moldova on Strategic Environmental Assessment to urban plans and programmes: SEA scoping and baseline analysis workshops](#), 30-31 July 2014

[Practical application of the Draft Law of the Republic of Moldova on Strategic Environmental Assessment to urban plans and programmes: Impact training workshop](#), 18-20 November 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’](#), 1-5 December 2014 (Moldovan Participants: 5 national experts)

[Training Workshop on practical application of Strategic Environmental Assessment based on the draft law on environmental assessment in the Republic of Moldova \(PART II\)](#), Chisinau 16 - 17 December 2014

[First public consultation meeting to inform local stakeholders about the Orhei Town Master Plan preparation process and the preliminary results of the strategic environmental assessment](#), Orhei 17 December 2014

Advisory mission to supervise the implementation of the pilot project on application of SEA to the Orhei Master Plan, Chisinau 12-13 February 2015

[Pilot project “Application of SEA to the Orhei Town Master Plan”](#), July 2014- May 2015

[Round-table Discussion on Practical steps towards ratification to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment \(the Protocol on SEA\) to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in the Transboundary Context \(Espoo Convention\)](#), 17 June 2015

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Participants from the Republic of Moldova: 4 national experts)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 (Participants from the Republic of Moldova: 4 national experts)

Pilot project for application of the SEA to the National Road Map on promoting green economy, December 2015 – ongoing

[The practical application of the Draft Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment in Moldova through the Road Map on promoting green economy: Training Workshop in Strategic Environmental Assessment](#), Chisinau 2 - 3 December 2015

Ukraine

[National level training workshop on strategic environmental assessment \(SEA\) in Ukraine](#), Kyiv 1 - 4 October 2013

[Joint pilot project between Belarus and Ukraine on post-project analysis of the exploitation of the Khotislavskoye quarry](#), April, 2013 – April, 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’](#), 1-5 December 2014 (Ukrainian Participants: 5 national experts)

[Introduction to strategic environmental assessment and its benefits: Seminar for planning and sectoral authorities](#), 10 June Kiev

[Benefits of the strategic environmental assessment and the role of sectoral authorities in SEA process](#), 11 June, Kiev

[Practical application of strategic environmental assessment: Seminar on the role of the environmental authorities in the SEA process](#), 12 June, Kiev.

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Participants from Ukraine: 6 national experts)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 (Participants from Ukraine: 6 national experts)

Sub-regional level

[Subregional conference, presenting results on pilot project on post-project analysis with Belarus and Ukraine and capacity building on SEA](#), Minsk 15 - 16 April 2014

[Study tour in the Czech Republic ‘Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment at the national level in the field of urban planning, waste management, agriculture and energy sector’](#), 1-5 December 2014

[Sub-regional conference Developing legislative framework for the SEA in line with the UNECE Protocol on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 2 November 2015 (Participants from Ukraine: 6 national experts)

[Draft overview of legislative and administrative reforms for implementing strategic environmental assessment in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus \(Draft 1\)](#)

[Practical Guidance on reforming legal and institutional structure with regard to application of SEA procedure in accordance with the UNECE Protocol on SEA \(Draft 1\)](#)

[Training of Trainers Workshop on Design and Delivery of training events on SEA](#), Kakheti, Georgia, 3 – 6 November 2015 (Participants from Ukraine: 6 national experts)

[Manual on Strategic Environmental Assessment for Trainers \(Draft 1\)](#)

Annex 2 – General description of an SEA Pilot Project implemented with funding from the EaP GREEN Programme

The **overall aim of SEA pilot projects** is to build capacities in application of SEA procedures at a national level and to raise awareness of SEA benefits among various national stakeholders. Specific objectives include:

- Testing and demonstrating opportunities of practical application of SEA.
- Providing recommendations for environmental optimisation and modifications of the selected plan/programme.
- Developing recommendations for further improvement of national legislative and institutional frameworks in the participating countries.

Organisation of work and tentative timeframe

A pilot project is conducted by a team of national experts with support from qualified international consultants and the ECE secretariat and in close cooperation with the developer of a selected plan/programme. The tentative timeframe of a pilot project extends from six month to one year.

Activities

The pilot project on application of SEA procedure is implemented in several phases, including:

1. Preparatory Phase: Setting up a national working group on SEA and a team of technical experts to carry out the SEA and prepare an environmental report.

2. Implementation Phase: Carrying out the pilot SEA for the selected plan/programme based on the ECE Resource Manual to Support Application of the ECE Protocol on SEA¹⁴, including:

- (a) SEA scoping (and a scoping training workshop)
- (b) Baseline analysis
- (c) Analysis of likely environmental impacts and the action plan optimization, mitigation measures, and environmental monitoring (and an impact training workshop)
- (d) SEA reporting, incorporation of the SEA results in to the plan/programme (and public consultations)

3. Reporting

Final reporting on the pilot project

¹⁴ http://www.unece.org/env/eia/pubs/sea_manual.html