

**Access to information and public participation in EIA & SEA
*in Georgia***

OSCE

**2019 Aarhus Centres Annual
Meeting**

16-17 October 2019, Vienna



Environmental Assessment Code

Based on:

◆ **Respective EU Directives** - 2011/92/EU, 2003/4/EC, 2003/35/EC, 2001/42/EC

◆ **Espoo Convention and SEA Protocol**

◆ **Aarhus Convention**

Adopted in 2017



Environmental Assessment Code - *procedures*

- ◆ **EIA**
- ◆ **SEA**
- ◆ **Transboundary Impact Assessment**
- ◆ **Continuation of ongoing activities**
- ◆ **Public participation in decision-making**



EIA & SEA - *scope*

EIA

- **Activity**
- Possible **impact** on environment and human health
- MEPA – **responsible** ministry
- Screening, Scoping and **EIA** stages

SEA

- **Strategic documents**
- Possible **impact** on environment and human health goals and its affect on long-term tendencies
- MENPA and **MLHSA** – **responsible** ministries
- Screening, Scoping and **SEA** stages



Public Participation

MEPA ensures:

- ◆ Provision of information to the public effectively, adequately and timely on **planned activity** and **public participation possibility**
- ◆ Access to the necessary **documentation**
- ◆ **Public participation** in decision-making
- ◆ Possibility to submit **comments**
- ◆ **Consideration** of submitted comments – *written to the MEPA, oral – at public hearings*
- ◆ Provision of information to the public on **decision**



Public Hearings

- ◆ Public hearing is **open for everyone**
- ◆ Local **government attends** public hearings on Scoping and EIA report
- ◆ **MEPA is responsible** on public hearings - *its organization, conduction and preparation of report*
- ◆ Public hearing holds at the **nearest administrative organ** of planned activity
- ◆ Information on public hearing is **placed on**: MEPA's web site, newspaper, information desk or web site of local municipality, other places (bus stops, schools, etc.), nearest location where implementation of planned activity or strategic document is considered



Screening & Scoping procedures

Screening



Scoping



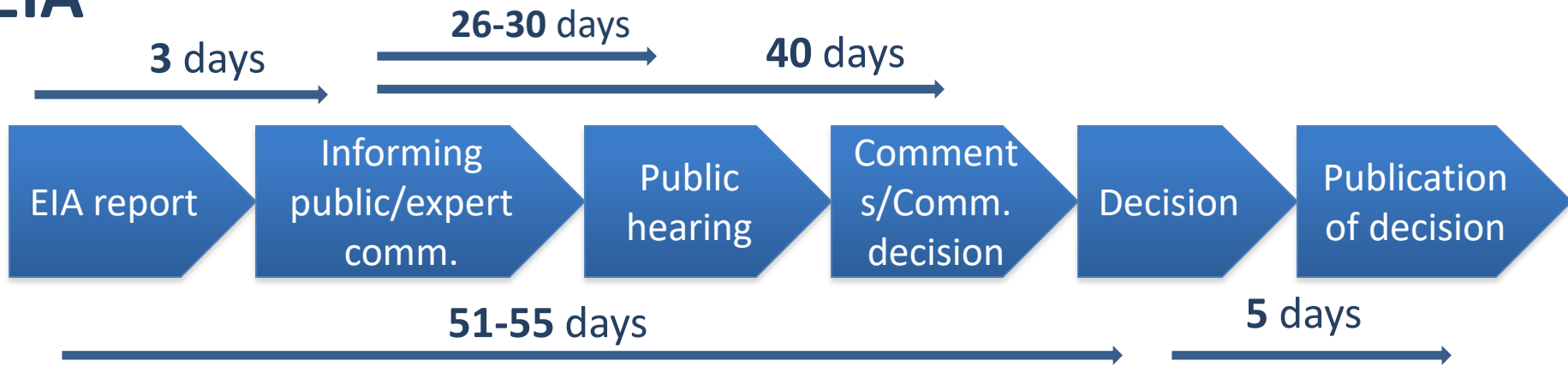
SEA Scoping: 20-25 days (no PP)

EIA Scoping: 26-30 days

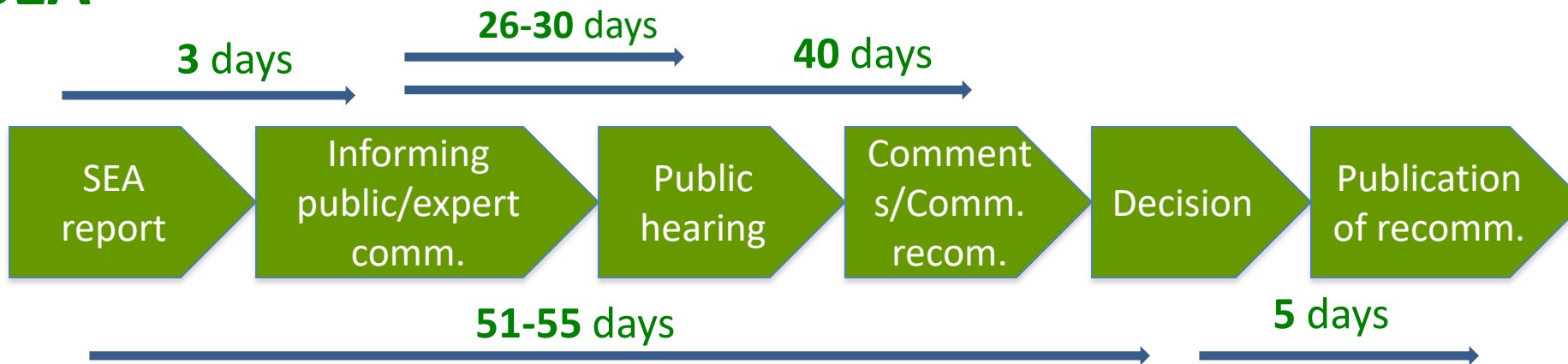


Public hearings of EIA & SEA reports

EIA



SEA





EIEC for effective public participation

EIEC **trainings** on “Environmental democracy - human rights & obligations”

- ◆ **Scope** - Aarhus Convention, public participation (EIA&SEA), control mechanisms
- ◆ **Where** - whole territory of Georgia except of occupied territories
- ◆ **When** – September/December 2019
- ◆ **Participants** – Local government, public sector, NGOs, school teachers, media
- ◆ **Total** - 550 participants



Challenges in Public Participation

Sometimes:

- ◆ Lack of **interest** to obtain information & participate
- ◆ Unargued **protest**
 - ◆ Lack of **knowledge** on where/what information to request
 - ◆ Lack of **trust** in government/developer



Findings from trainings

- ◆ Expressed high **interest** on training topics
- ◆ **Willingness** on awareness raising, further trainings and continuation of such meetings
- ◆ **Realization** of importance of having information and participation in decision-making
- ◆ **Realize** that public participation can not guarantee the satisfaction of all stakeholders because their different priorities and attitudes, *but*

Guarantees to reach consensus



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