

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

Bureau

Geneva, 19–20 January 2016

Provisional annotated agenda

**To be held at Salle VIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Tuesday, 19 January 2016***

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¹ The revised draft agenda contains an updated list of informal meeting documents.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

I. Organizational matters

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 10.00–10.15

A. Adoption of the agenda

1. This provisional agenda was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Chairs. The Bureau will be invited to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

B. Participation

2. Further to the offer of Belarus to host the next sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, scheduled for 2017 and in accordance with past practice, a delegate from Belarus will join the Bureau as a representative of the host country. However, in accordance with the decision of the Bureau in January 2015, that new member would not be expected to chair the Bureau. The Bureau will also be informed about possible other changes in its composition, as appropriate.

II. Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 10.15–10.30

Relevant documentation²:

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.2 – Status of ratification

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.3 [ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/L.1] (Draft agreement on) Accelerating entry into effect of the first amendment

3. The secretariat will inform the Bureau of the status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and the Protocol. The Bureau members are expected to report on progress of their countries regarding ratifications. The Bureau is then invited to discuss possible measures to further encourage ratification and accession, in particular to facilitate the entry into effect of the first amendment and the entry into force of the second amendment. The Bureau will be invited to agree on recommendations to the Working Group on EIA and SEA in this respect, notably as regards the speeding up of the global accession to the Convention through a possible adoption of an agreement to modify article 17 paragraph 3 of the Convention.

III. Implementation of the workplan 2014–2017

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 10.30–13.00

Relevant documentation:

² The provisional agenda and all other meeting documentation will be made available on the password protected Bureau member's area website at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/environmental-assessment/about-us/bodies/enveiabureau/members-area.html>

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.4 – Workplan implementation status

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.5 – Summary report on technical assistance and capacity building activities

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.6 – Alignment of the authentic texts of the Protocol on SEA and the amendments to the Convention

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.7 – Draft guidance on the implementation of the Convention (drawing on opinions of the Implementation Committee)

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.8 – Note on good practice recommendations on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.9 – Note on the workshop on land-use planning, siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects

A. Compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol

4. The First Vice-Chair of the Implementation Committee is expected to present briefly the main outcomes of the Committee's thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions (held from 17 to 19 March and from 8 to 10 December 2015, respectively)³ as well as the main objectives for the Committee's upcoming session (15–17 March 2016).

5. The secretariat will report on the implementation of activities in the workplan (decision VI/3–II/3) that relate to compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol, including:

(a) Modification of the questionnaires for the report on implementation of the Convention and the Protocol (in the period 2014–2016); their distribution and the timetable and arrangements for the production of the fifth review of implementation of the Convention and the second review of implementation of the Protocol;

(b) Legislative assistance to support implementation or accession/ratification (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation);

(c) Developments on the alignment of the authentic language versions of the Protocol and the two amendments to the Convention;

(d) Preparation of guidance on the implementation of the Convention (drawing on opinions of the Implementation Committee);

(e) Further development and update of the Guidelines on EIA in a Transboundary context for Central Asian Countries;

(f) Preparation of a video to promote the benefits of the Protocol in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus;

6. The Bureau is expected to note the information and provide advice on the implementation of or follow-up to the activities, as needed.

B. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

7. The secretariat will report on the implementation of activities in the workplan that relate to subregional cooperation and capacity-building in the following subregions:

(a) South-Eastern Europe subregion;

³ Reports on the Implementation Committee's sessions held in 2014 are available at: <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/treaties/environmental-impact-assessment/meetings-and-events.html?id=7113#/2014/0/0/28089/19940/>

- (b) Mediterranean subregion, including Adriatic Sea;
- (c) Baltic Sea subregion;
- (d) Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

8. The Bureau is expected take note of the information and to agree on actions to ensure the implementation of these activities.

C. Exchange of good practices

9. The secretariat will report on the implementation of workshops or half-day seminars within the meetings of the Working Group specified in the workplan and relating to the exchange of good practices. In particular, the Bureau will be informed about the preparation of a joint workshop under the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA to be held on 13 April 2016. The joint workshop will discuss a draft joint guidance under preparation on safety and land-use planning with a focus on siting of hazardous activities, as well as allow exchange of experiences and good practice in that field. The preparation of the guidance is funded by European Investment Bank.

10. The secretariat will also present the preliminary outcomes of the survey for the development of good practice recommendations on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities as well as the subsequent steps for the preparation of the guidance and their time schedule.

11. The Bureau is expected to provide guidance and agree on actions to ensure the development of the guidance document and the good practice recommendations, as well as the organization of the joint workshop.

D. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol

12. The secretariat will report on the implementation of activities specified in the workplan that relate to promoting ratification and application of the Protocol:

- (a) Preparation of guidance materials;
- (b) Holding of workshops, including training;
- (c) Implementation of pilot projects;
- (d) Development of legislation on SEA;
- (e) Development of communication materials.

13. The Bureau is expected to provide its views on the information provided and, as needed, agree on actions to ensure the implementation of or follow-up to these activities.

IV. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 15.00–15.30

Relevant documentation:

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.10 – (Elements of draft) Biannual financial report and review of the implementation of the financial strategy

14. The secretariat will report on received contributions to, and on expenditure from, the Convention's trust fund. The full draft biannual financial report until end of December

2015 will be made available for consideration of the Bureau upon the release of the budgetary figures by the UN administration.

15. The Bureau may wish to discuss any further measures to encourage Parties that have so far not pledged anything to make contributions, and Parties that have so far only committed limited funds or in-kind contributions to raise their contributions, during the current and future budget cycles (decision VI/4–II/4, paras. 6-7). The Bureau may also wish to review the implementation of the financial strategy adopted at the last sessions of the Meetings of the Parties in 2014 (decision VI/4–II/4, Annex II, ECE/MP.EIA/20.Add.3–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/4.Add.3).

V. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 15.30–16.30

Relevant documentation:

ECE/MP.EIA/B/2016/INF.11 – Preparation for the 2017 sessions of the Meetings of the Parties

16. The representative of Belarus and the secretariat are expected to report on the initiation of practical arrangements for the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MOP–7 and MOP/MOP–3) scheduled to be held in Minsk (?), Belarus in May/June 2017, further to the offer by Belarus in June 2015 to host the sessions. The secretariat will inform the Bureau about the preparatory steps for the conclusion of a draft host country agreement between UNECE and Belarus; and the time schedule for the preparation of the documentation.

17. The Bureau is invited to consider and agree on proposals for possible dates of the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, taking due account of the public holidays in May/June 2017 (notably Ascension on 25 May and Pentecost on 5 June 2017), the timing of relevant UN meetings and the EU Environment Council meetings, as well as deadlines for the preparation of official documents.

18. The Bureau is also expected to initiate discussions on the substantive preparations for the two MOP sessions and come forward with proposals and recommendations for consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting, including regarding the draft programme of the Meetings of the Parties and its high-level segment, the chairmanship of the sessions; possible side events and a cultural visit. It is invited to consider an initial list of draft decisions to be submitted to the Meetings.

VI. Preparations for the fifth session of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 19 January, 16.30–18.00 and Wednesday, 20 January 10.00–11.00

Relevant documentation: ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/1 – Draft provisional agenda : fifth session of the Working Group on EIA and SEA

ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/L.1 – Elements for draft decision(s) by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol - (including on the adoption of the workplan for 2017)

ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/L.2 – (Elements for a) Draft declaration

19. The Bureau is expected to review the annotated provisional agenda of the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment, to be held in Geneva from 11 to 15 April 2016 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/1).

VII. Related events

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 20 January, 11.00–11.30

Relevant documentation:

- Chair's Summary of the seventh informal meeting between representatives of the governing bodies of the UNECE Multilateral Environmental and the Committee on Environmental Policy;
- Updated informal guidance documents: “Towards enhanced cooperation of UNECE MEAs” and “Secretariats to ECE multilateral environmental agreements —the way forward”
- Informal document on how UNECE MEAs might contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

20. The secretariat will first report on the meeting of the informal network of the Chairs of the MEA implementation and compliance committees held on 29 June 2015. The Chair of the Working Group on EIA and SEA will then inform the Bureau about the outcomes of the seventh informal meeting between representatives of the governing bodies of the ECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP); as well as of the segment devoted to the MEAs at the 21st session of the CEP held in Geneva on 27 October 2015. The Bureau members will be invited to comment the informal documents discussed at the meetings, including a possibly background document for the Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe to be held in Batumi, Georgia, on 8–10 June 2016 on the contribution of UNECE MEAs to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

VIII. Other business

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 20 January, 11.30–12.00

21. Members of the Bureau wishing to raise other business should contact the secretariat as soon as possible.

IX. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 20 January, 12.00–13.00

22. The Bureau is expected to agree on the main decisions taken at the meeting and to confirm the date and location of its next session before the Chair formally closes the session.