

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

Kiev, 31 January–1 February 2013

Annotated provisional agenda

**To be held at the Ministry of Environmental and Natural Resources of
Ukraine, Kiev, starting at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 31 January 2013**

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Participation.
3. Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol.
4. Compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol.
5. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building.
6. Exchange of good practices.
7. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol.
8. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance.
9. Preparations for the second meeting of the Working Group.
10. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.
11. Related events.
12. Staffing of the secretariat.
13. Other business.
14. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. 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.

2. Participation

2. The Bureau will be informed about the departure of Mr. Matthias Sauer, the member nominated by Germany, and his replacement by Mr. Jochen Ritter. As the Meetings of the Parties had elected Mr. Sauer as alternate to the Chair of the Bureau for Protocol matters, the Bureau will be invited to decide whether it agrees to Mr. Ritter taking on this task until the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.

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

3. The secretariat will inform the Bureau of the status of ratification, and on the secretariat's efforts to encourage accession by States that are not parties. It may wish to suggest additional actions to be taken to encourage accession and to facilitate the entry into force of the two amendments to the Convention.

4. The Bureau will be informed about a decision adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and the Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) at its sixth session (28–30 November 2012) to expedite and facilitate the accession by non-Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) countries. It might consider whether it should propose submitting a similar decision to the Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and to discuss actions to promote the Convention outside the ECE region.

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

5. The Chair of the Implementation Committee is expected to present briefly the main outcomes of the Committee's twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth sessions (held on 11–13 September and 26–28 November 2012, respectively) as well as the main objectives for the Committee's upcoming sessions (12–14 March and 10–12 September 2013). She will present a Committee proposal to invite the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment, in consultation with the Bureau, to consider establishing an ad hoc group to prepare proposals for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties regarding the implementation of the Convention by Armenia and Azerbaijan, including notably the possible designation of an intermediary and the use of new communication technologies. The Bureau is invited to consider a draft terms of reference prepared by the Committee for the possible intermediary. It is expected to provide its views on the proposal and to suggest other possible ways forward.

6. The secretariat will report on the implementation of activities in the workplan (decision V/9–I/9) that relate to compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol, notably:

- (a) Distribution of the questionnaires for the report on implementation to the Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol for them to complete and return;
- (b) Production of the draft fourth review of implementation on the Convention and the draft first review of implementation of the Protocol (in the period 2010-2012);
- (c) Development of general guidance for resolving a possible systemic inconsistency between the Convention and environmental assessment within the framework of State ecological expertise;
- (d) Pre-accession legislative assistance.

7. The Bureau is expected to agree on actions to ensure the implementation of these activities. It is expected, in particular, to provide guidance for producing reviews of implementation that are substantially shorter (half as long) than the past reviews, including by recommending aspects and articles to be focused on as well as those that could be left out. To this end, it is invited to go through the Third Review of Implementation of the Convention and the questionnaires for reporting on the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol in the period 2010–2012.¹

5. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

8. 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;
- (b) Mediterranean subregion;
- (c) Baltic Sea subregion;
- (d) Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

9. The Bureau is expected to agree on actions to ensure the implementation of these activities.

6. Exchange of good practices

10. The secretariat will report on the implementation of workshops or half-day seminars specified in the workplan that relate to the exchange of good practices, starting with the seminar on biodiversity to be organized by Belgium, with the support of the European Commission, during the second meeting of the Working Group, in May 2013.

11. The Bureau is expected to provide guidance and agree on actions to ensure the holding of these events.

12. The Bureau might also discuss further activities to assist Parties in their application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities, including the development of guidance to codify practical experience that was supported by the Working Group on EIA and SEA at its first meeting.

¹ Available at: http://www.unece.org/env/eia/implementation/review_implementation.html

7. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol

13. 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 and maintenance of guidance materials;
- (b) Holding of workshops, including training;
- (c) Organization of pilot projects;
- (d) Preparation of a format for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) notification;
- (e) Development of legislation on SEA.
- (f) A joint workshop on public participation in SEA in accordance with the Protocol and article 7 of the Aarhus Convention held in Geneva from 29 to 30 October 2012. The secretariat will also report on the draft good practice recommendations on public participation in SEA developed in consultation with the Bureau for consideration by the Working Group at its second session in 27–30 May 2013.

14. The secretariat will inform the Bureau about the implementation of activities for promoting SEA (and EIA) in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine under the large multi-stakeholder (OECD, UNECE, UNEP and UNIDO) project “Greening of Economies in Eastern Neighborhood (EAP-Green)” financed by the European Commission for the period 2013–2017.

15. 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.

8. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance

16. The secretariat will report on the receipt of contributions to, and on expenditure from, the Convention’s trust fund. The Bureau is invited to consider a first draft of the biannual report covering the period from June 2011 until 31 December 2012.

17. 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 V/10–I/10, paras. 8–9).

18. The Bureau is expected to discuss as necessary limited adjustments to the budget (decision V/10–I/10, para. 13).

19. The Bureau is expected to discuss further the development, possibly with the support of a small group, of a strategy for carrying out the work under the Convention and the Protocol given the financial constraints (decision V/10–I/10, para. 16). It may consider possible elements of that strategy to be presented by the secretariat.

9. Preparations for the second meeting of the Working Group

20. The Bureau is expected to review the annotated provisional agenda of the second meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment, to be held in Geneva from 27 to 30 May 2013 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2013/1).

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

21. The Chair of the Bureau is expected to report on the initiation of practical arrangements for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MOP6/MOP2) to be held in Ukraine in May or June 2014. The secretariat will inform the Bureau about a draft host country agreement to be concluded between ECE and Ukraine.

22. The Bureau may wish to consider possible dates of the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, taking into account that these should not overlap with the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention scheduled to take place from 30 June to 6 July 2014 (in the Netherlands). The timing for the EU Environment Council meetings, the public holidays in May and June and the deadlines for the preparation of official documents should also be considered.

23. The Bureau is invited to consider the substantive preparations for the two MOP sessions that are to be initiated by the Working Group at its next meeting, including the development of (elements for) a new draft workplan and agreement on a list of draft decisions and documents to be prepared. The Bureau may wish to come forward with proposals regarding the draft programme of the Meetings of the Parties, including a possible high-level segment, side events and a cultural visit.

11. Related events

24. The Chair or the secretariat will inform the Bureau about the next joint meeting of the Chairs of the bureaus of the ECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and of the Chair of the Committee on Environmental Policy, to be held in Geneva on 27 February 2013.

25. The Chair of the Implementation Committee will inform the Bureau about the first meeting of the informal network of the chairs of the compliance and implementation bodies under the ECE MEAs, scheduled to take place in Geneva on 25 March 2013 to exchange ideas and experience on the procedural and operational aspects of the compliance and implementation work.

12. Staffing of the secretariat

26. The secretariat is expected to report on any recent or expected changes in its staffing.

13. Other business

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

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

28. 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.