



Importance of impact assessment in planning related to greening the economy and in sustainable water management

Side-event on Thursday 22 September, 18:00–19:30
room B-9 in the Palace of Independence

The European Union and UNECE member States have recognized that strategic environmental assessment is a unique and important instrument for planning and policymaking related to greening the economy. They have also invited the Astana Ministerial Conference to take into consideration the importance of strategic environmental assessment in the Conference's two themes of sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems; and greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.*

This side-event will provide an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of strategic environmental assessment and related impact assessment tools for the Conference themes, with a focus on the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Implementation of the Belgrade Initiative on Strategic Environmental Assessment will also be reported.**

Speakers from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan will describe their experiences of using impact assessment tools—including project-level environmental impact assessment—to guide development towards sustainability. The speakers will show how participatory methods of integrating the environment into decision-making can bring about better development. A representative of a non-governmental organization will add a civil society perspective. The presentations will be complemented by a six-minute video and the opportunity to pose questions to the panellists. *The agenda is shown overleaf.*

Refreshments will be provided, together with English-Russian interpretation.

The side-event is being organized by UNECE in cooperation with Switzerland, UNDP and UNEP.

* Declaration by the high-level representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) member States and of the European Union, gathered in Geneva from 20 to 23 June 2011 on the occasion of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context serving as the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/INF/12).

** ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/INF/13.

Agenda (revised)

Welcome

by Mr. **Bruno Oberle**, State Secretary, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment

Introduction to the panel discussion

by Mr. **Nicholas Bonvoisin**, Secretary to the Espoo Convention, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Relevant activities of the United Nations Environment Programme

by Ms. **Rie Tsutsumi**, UNEP, Regional Office for Europe

Strategic environmental assessment of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea's Sub-Regional Development Strategy

by Ms. **Henrieta Martonakova**, Programme Manager, Regional UNDP & UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative, UNDP, Regional Centre for Europe & the Commonwealth of Independent States

- *followed by a short video presentation*

Building capacity for strategic assessment in Belarus

by Mr. **Alexandre Rachevsky**, Head of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus

Development of capacity in environmental impact assessment *and* strategic environmental assessment in Azerbaijan

by Ms. **Tatyana Javanshir**, Head of Environmental Impact Assessment Division, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan

Practical experience of Kazakhstan in environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context in Central Asia

by Ms. **Alissia Abisheva**, Chief of Division and Senior Expert, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Kazakhstan

Protocol on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context for the Teheran Convention

by Mr. **Serik Akhmetov**, National Convention Liaison Officer (for the Framework Convention for the Protection of Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea), Kazakhstan

A civil-society perspective

by Mr. **Andriy Andrusevych**, European ECO-Forum and Resource & Analysis Centre "Society and Environment", Ukraine

Discussion and closing of side-event: links to the Green Economy

moderated by Mr. **Marco Keiner**, Director, Environment Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

With thanks to the Federal Office for the Environment of Switzerland, and to the Government of Norway for its support of the speakers from Ukraine.

Further information on the side-event is available from: Nick Bonvoisin, Secretary to the Espoo Convention, UNECE, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, e-mail nicholas.bonvoisin@unece.org