



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
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment

**Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment
and Strategic Environmental Assessment****Ninth meeting**

Geneva, 24–26 August 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda**Revised Annotated provisional agenda for the ninth meeting**

**To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Monday, 24 August 2020***

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.

* In accordance with the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to register online no later than three weeks prior to the meeting, i.e. by 31 July 2020, through the following link: <https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=IpkLa>. The use of the Internet Explorer browser is recommended. In case of difficulty, please refer to the online user manual (www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR/Online+Meeting+Registration+Guidelines), or contact the secretariat by email (eia.conv@un.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva's Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see map and other practical information available from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website:



2. Status of ratification.
3. Financial arrangements.
4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties:
 - (a) Practical arrangements;
 - (b) Provisional agenda;
 - (c) Draft workplan 2021–2023;
 - (d) Draft declaration;
 - (e) Chairs of the sessions;
 - (f) Officers for the next intersessional period;
 - (g) Provisional schedule of meetings 2021–2023.
5. Promoting ratification and application of the Convention and the Protocol:
 - (a) FasTips on the Convention and the Protocol;
 - (b) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment;
 - (c) Capacity-building activities.
6. Compliance and implementation:
 - (a) Reporting and review of implementation;
 - (b) Legislative assistance;
 - (c) Draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol;
 - (d) Review of compliance and related draft decisions;
 - (e) Draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants.
7. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building.
8. Inputs to related international processes.
9. Other business.
10. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

*Tentative timing: Monday, 24 August, 10–10.15 a.m.*¹

1. The Chair of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a

www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html). In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 6307.

¹ See annex to present document for more detailed tentative timings of individual agenda sub-items.

Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment will invite the Working Group to adopt the agenda for its ninth meeting, as set out in the present document. The provisional agenda was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Bureau of the Meetings of the Parties to the two treaties.² Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau agreed through written consultations to postpone the meeting of the Working Group from its originally scheduled dates of 9–11 June to 24–26 August 2020.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the ninth meeting (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/1)

Informal document

Informal notes on the agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.1)

2. Status of ratification

Tentative timing: Monday, 24 August, 10.15–10.45 a.m.

2. The secretariat will report on the status of the Convention and its two amendments. Delegations will be invited to report on planned ratifications. The Chair will invite each Party to the Convention that has not yet ratified the two amendments to report on its preparations for ratification. The delegations of Armenia, Belgium, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Ukraine will be invited to provide detailed information on steps taken towards the ratification of the first amendment to the Convention. The missing ratifications from these five Parties, which were Parties to the Convention at the time of the adoption of the first amendment, are necessary for that amendment to have effect, opening accession to the Convention to all States Members of the United Nations. Moreover, the representatives of the nine Parties that have not yet ratified the second amendment – Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – will be invited to report on their progress towards that end. The completion of those ratifications is important to ensure unified application of the Convention by all its Parties.

3. The secretariat will also report on the status of the Protocol. Delegations will be invited to report on planned ratifications. The Chair will invite each signatory State that has not completed the process of ratifying the Protocol (Belgium, Greece, France, Ireland, Georgia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) to report on its preparations for ratification.

4. Romania, as the depository of the Multilateral agreement among the countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, will be expected to report on the status of that agreement. The two signatory States that have not yet ratified that agreement, Croatia and Greece, will be invited to report on the progress made to that end.

5. The Working Group will be invited to propose any further actions that could be taken to encourage accession to, or ratification of, the Convention, its amendments and the Protocol

² All meeting documentation will be made available on a dedicated web page for the meeting on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website (www.unece.org/index.php?id=53209). Please note that documents with symbols ending in “INF.” and a number are informal documents and can be located in the documents table by clicking on the “Informal documents” tab.

and, in particular, to accelerate the operationalization of the first amendment as soon as possible.

Documentation

Informal document

Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.2)

3. Financial arrangements

Tentative timing: Monday, 24 August, 10.45 a.m.–noon.

6. The secretariat will provide an update on contributions to the trust fund of the Convention and the Protocol. Subsequently, the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, will prepare the third annual financial report extending from July 2017 until the end of June 2020. The secretariat will also report on any additional pledges and contributions from Parties following the request for further funding to fill the budgetary gap in the second half of 2020 addressed to their foreign ministers and environment ministers (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, para. 9). The Working Group will be informed whether the funding available would suffice to ensure the functioning of the treaties and their secretariat during the period July–December 2020 or whether other urgent measures are required.

7. The Working Group is invited to consider and agree on draft decision VIII/1–IV/1 on financial arrangements for 2021–2023 prepared by the Bureau, with support from the secretariat, taking into account the comments from the Working Group at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 26–28 November 2019). The Working Group is expected to ensure that the draft decision addresses the general shortage of contributions to the trust fund under the treaties and provides for a more sustainable, predictable and equitable funding during the next budget cycle and beyond.

8. All delegations will be invited to provide, by 30 June 2020, the secretariat with initial information on the contributions they will pledge to the trust fund in the period 2021–2023. The Working Group is expected to take note of the initial information on Parties' expected funding for the next intersessional period. Building on that, the Working Group will be able to agree on a realistic and implementable workplan for the same period under item 4 (c) of the present agenda.

Documentation

Draft joint decisions by the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/3)

Informal documents

Contributions to the trust fund of the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.3)

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

Tentative timing: Monday, 24 August, noon–1 p.m. and 3–5.30 p.m.

(a) Practical arrangements

9. The secretariat and the host country, Lithuania, will provide an update on the practical preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in Vilnius, from 8 to 11 December 2020.

(b) Provisional agenda

10. The Working Group is expected to consider and agree on the provisional annotated agenda for the two sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, prepared by the Bureau with support from the secretariat.

11. The Working Group will be invited to agree on thematic seminars and/or panels, to be organized during the sessions' general and/or high-level segments. It may wish to consider the Bureau's recommendations on a general segment panel on sustainable infrastructure, also covering energy transition and climate change issues, and on a high-level event for the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention. Delegations are expected to suggest speakers and moderators and to specify the contents of the thematic events, including with a view to attracting high-level participation to the sessions. Delegations are also invited to propose leading the organization of the events.

(c) Draft workplan 2021–2023

12. The Working Group will be invited to finalize and agree on draft decision VIII/2–IV/2 on the adoption of the workplan and its annexes I–III. Annex I to the draft decision contains a draft workplan for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocol with proposed work areas and activities in the period 2021–2023. Annex II outlines both the minimum necessary financial and the secretariat staffing resources for the implementation of the workplan activities. Annex III lists additional activities that require further resources, including secretariat staff, to be implemented. The draft decision and its annexes have been prepared by the Bureau, with support from the secretariat, taking into account the comments and proposals from delegations at the eighth meeting of the Working Group (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, paras. 57–60).

13. Keeping in mind its earlier discussions on financial matters and the initial information on Parties' pledged contributions to the trust fund in the period 2021–2023 (under item 3 above), the Working Group is invited to ensure that the draft workplan matches the resources that are expected to be available for its implementation. Moreover, it is invited to verify that, for each activity in the workplan, information is provided on the lead countries or organizations, organizational arrangements, identified resources, and, as relevant, any specific time schedule for implementation. Delegations will be invited to propose leading or sponsoring activities and hosting events. In addition, the Working Group is expected to decide whether other activities should also be wait-listed pending the identification of possible future resources and included as annex III to the draft decision. Lastly, the Working Group is expected to reach an agreement on the text of the draft decision and its annexes to be forwarded for adoption by the Meetings of the Parties.

(d) Draft declaration

14. The Working Group will be invited to review and agree on the text of the draft Vilnius declaration to be forwarded to the Meetings of the Parties.

(e) **Chairs of the sessions**

15. The Working Group is expected to discuss and agree on the chairing of the general and high-level segments of the sessions. Delegations are invited to submit proposals to the secretariat by 30 June 2020.

(f) **Officers for the next intersessional period**

16. Delegations will be invited submit to the secretariat, by 30 June, nominations for officers to be elected for the next intersessional period, that is, a Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Working Group, a Chair and members of the Bureau and five (permanent and alternate) members of the Implementation Committee. Additional new members of the Implementation Committee may need to be nominated depending on whether Committee members are Parties to the Protocol. Parties that have never or not recently been represented in the treaty bodies will be encouraged to consider taking on that role.

17. The Working Group is expected to consider Bureau proposals for possible criteria for the officers to be elected and information on the tasks of the Bureau members. It will also be invited to propose actions aiming to ensure that all the vacancies are adequately filled and that all nominations are confirmed well in advance of the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.

(g) **Provisional schedule of meetings 2021–2023**

18. The Working Group is invited to consider an updated provisional schedule of meetings of the treaty bodies in the next intersessional period that is expected to extend from January 2021 to December 2023.

Documentation

Draft joint decisions by the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/3)

Draft Vilnius declaration (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/6)

Informal documents

Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.4)

Provisional agenda for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.5)

Officers for the period 2021–2023: Nominations, election criteria and tasks (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.6)

Provisional schedule of meetings 2021–2023 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.7)

5. Promoting ratification and application of the Convention and the Protocol

Tentative timing: Monday, 24 August, 5.30–6 p.m., and Tuesday, 25 August, 10 a.m.–noon

(a) **FasTips on the Convention and the Protocol**

19. The Working Group is invited to consider the draft informal pamphlets, or “FasTips” on the Convention and the Protocol, as revised by the secretariat based on the comments

made at the eighth meeting of the Working Group (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, para. 37), and, to the extent feasible, as reviewed and revised by the International Association for Impact Assessment. In the event that the reviewed versions are available, the Working Group may indicate whether it agrees to their publication.

(b) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment

20. The Working Group is expected to review and agree on the draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment, as revised by consultants funded by the European Investment Bank based on comments from the Working Group at its last meeting (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, paras. 38–41, and annex) and the subsequent in-depth inputs provided by a task force composed of representatives of Austria, Finland, Ireland and Slovenia.

21. The Working Group is also invited to review and agree on draft decision IV/6 on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment and to forward both draft documents to the Meetings of the Parties.

(c) Capacity-building activities

22. The secretariat and delegations from the countries or organizations concerned will be invited to provide brief updates on the following capacity-building activities undertaken or planned for since the eighth meeting of the Working Group to promote ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention:

(a) Activities to further promote the implementation in particular of strategic environmental assessment in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, funded or co-funded by the “EU4Environment” programme;

(b) Activities to raise Central Asian countries’ awareness of the Protocol’s benefits and to build capacity on its practical application, with funding from Germany and Switzerland, implemented in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

23. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information and, as relevant, provide advice for the implementation or follow-up of the activities.

Documentation

Draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/5)

Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/7)

Informal documents

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.8)

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (FasTip) (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.9)

Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (FasTip) (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.10)

6. Compliance and implementation

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 August, noon–1 p.m., 3–6 p.m., and Wednesday, 26 August, 10 a.m.–noon

(a) Reporting and review of implementation

24. The Working Group will be invited to consider and agree on draft decisions VIII/5 and IV/5 on reporting and review of implementation of, respectively, the Convention and the Protocol, to be submitted to the Meetings of the Parties.

(b) Legislative assistance

25. Representatives of the concerned countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and the secretariat will be invited to provide any updates since the last meeting of the Working Group as regards legislative assistance to support the countries' relevant legal reforms and their efforts to implement and to ratify the Convention and/or the Protocol.

(c) Draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol

26. The Working Group is expected to finalize and agree on the text of a draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol, prepared by the Netherlands and Poland with support from the secretariat, taking into account the comments made at the last meeting of the Working Group (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2019/2, paras. 28–31) and at the third informal meeting for the development of a long-term strategy and an action plan for the Espoo Convention and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Warsaw, 23 and 24 January 2020). The Working Group is also invited to review and agree on the text of draft decision VIII/3–IV/3 on the long-term strategy and the action plan to be forwarded to the Meetings of the Parties.

(d) Review of compliance and related draft decisions

27. The Chair of the Implementation Committee is expected to present the main outcomes of the Committee's forty-sixth session (Geneva, 10–13 December 2019) and the main objectives of its forty-seventh session (Geneva, 16–19 March 2020). Specifically, he, and, where relevant, the first Vice-Chair of the Committee will present initial draft decisions on compliance with the Convention and the Protocol. Delegations may wish to comment on the initial drafts both orally during the session, and in writing, before, during and after the meeting of the Working Group. The Committee will then finalize the draft decisions at its forty-eighth session (Geneva, 1–4 September 2020) considering the comments and any other information received by 31 July 2020, prior to forwarding the draft decisions to the Meetings of the Parties at their next sessions.

(e) Draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants

28. The delegations of Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will be invited to present work in progress, with a view to the development of draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants by an ad hoc working group chaired jointly by those countries. The cancellation of two preparatory meetings of the ad hoc working group in spring 2020 has delayed and rendered more challenging the drafting of the guidance. Consequently, should the draft guidance not be available for consideration by the delegations during the meeting of the Working Group, it will subsequently be circulated to Parties and stakeholders for their written comments. Once finalized, taking into account the comments made, the draft guidance will be issued in

advance of the next session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention for consideration at that session.

29. The Working Group is also invited to review and agree on the text of draft decision VIII/6 on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants to be forwarded to the Meetings of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/4)

Draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/5)

Draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/8)

Informal documents

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.8)

Initial draft decisions on the review of compliance with the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.11)

Draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/INF.12) (if available)

7. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 August, noon–1 p.m.

30. Lead countries for subregional cooperation and capacity-building activities foreseen in the workplan and the secretariat will be invited to provide updates on the outcomes of, or preparations for, activities in the following subregions:

(a) The Baltic Sea subregion, including a meeting organized by Denmark in cooperation with Finland and Sweden, in Copenhagen, on 25 and 26 March 2020;

(b) Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: a subregional conference foreseen in autumn 2020, with funding from EU4Environment;

(c) Central Asia: a subregional conference foreseen in the second half of 2020, to be organized in cooperation with OSCE and with funding from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Germany and Switzerland.

31. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information and, as needed, to provide advice and agree on actions to ensure the implementation of, or follow-up to, these activities.

8. Inputs to related international processes

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 August, 3–3.30 p.m.

32. The secretariat will report on the outcomes of any relevant events, including the workshop on environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments in areas beyond national jurisdiction (Brussels, 28 and 29 January 2020) organized by the European Commission Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries to support the ongoing negotiations in the United Nations on the new high seas agreement under the United

Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction).

33. The Working Group will be invited to comment on the information provided and, as relevant, to advise on further actions to be taken.

9. Other business

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 August, 3.30–4 p.m.

34. Delegations wishing to raise other business should contact the Chair and the secretariat as soon as possible ahead of the meeting.

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

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 August, 4–6 p.m.

35. The Working Group is expected to agree on the main decisions taken at its ninth meeting, to authorize the secretariat to complete the report after the meeting under the guidance of the Chair and to confirm the date and venue of its next meeting.

Annex

Organization of work

<i>Date and tentative time schedule</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
Monday, 24 August 2020	
10–10.15 a.m.	1. Adoption of the agenda
10.15–10.45 a.m.	2. Status of ratification
10.45 a.m.–noon	3. Financial arrangements
	4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties:
Noon–12.15 p.m.	(a) Practical arrangements;
12.15–12.45 p.m.	(b) Provisional agenda;
12.45–1 p.m. and 3–4 p.m.	(c) Draft workplan 2021–2023;
4–4.30 p.m.	(d) Draft declaration;
4.30–4.45 p.m.	(e) Chairs of the sessions;
4.45–5.15 p.m.	(f) Officers for the next intersessional period;
5.15–5.30 p.m.	(g) Provisional schedule of meetings 2021–2023.
	5. Promoting ratification and application of the Convention and the Protocol:
5.30–6 p.m.	(a) FasTips on the Convention and the Protocol;
Tuesday, 25 August 2020	
	5. Promoting ratification and application of the Convention and the Protocol (continued):
10–11.30 a.m.	(b) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment;
11.30 a.m.–noon	(c) Capacity-building activities.
	6. Compliance and implementation:
Noon–12.30 p.m.	(a) Reporting and review of implementation;
12.30–1 p.m.	(b) Legislative assistance;
3–4 p.m.	(c) Draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the Convention and the Protocol;
4–6 p.m.	(d) Review of compliance and related draft decisions;

Date and tentative time schedule *Agenda item*

**Wednesday, 26 August
2020**

	6. Compliance and implementation (continued):
10 a.m.–noon	(e) Draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants.
Noon–1 p.m.	7. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building.
3–3.30 p.m.	8. Inputs to related international processes.
3.30–4 p.m.	9. Other business.
4–6 p.m.	10. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.
