



Implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment: from Kiev to Belgrade and beyond



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Implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment: from Kiev to Belgrade and beyond

Opening by

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of Moldova



BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE
ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
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Agenda

1. Status of implementation of Protocol

- Example of practical application in South-East Europe

2. Capacity development for implementation of Protocol in EECCA

- Including lessons learnt from implementation of Sofia EIA Initiative in Central & Eastern Europe

3. A way forward with implementation of Protocol

- National capacity-development strategies for implementation of Protocol in EECCA
- Proposed Belgrade SEA Initiative



Discussion

- What are the key obstacles to ratification of the Protocol and what can be done by the different stakeholders to overcome these obstacles?
- How can cooperation among countries in the region / sub-regions improve implementation of SEA nationally?



Strategic environmental assessment

- *Analytical, anticipatory and participatory process that aims to integrate environmental considerations into plans, programmes and other strategic actions and identifies inter-linkages with economic & social considerations*



1. Status of implementation of Protocol

Facilitated by Nick Bonvoisin, UNECE

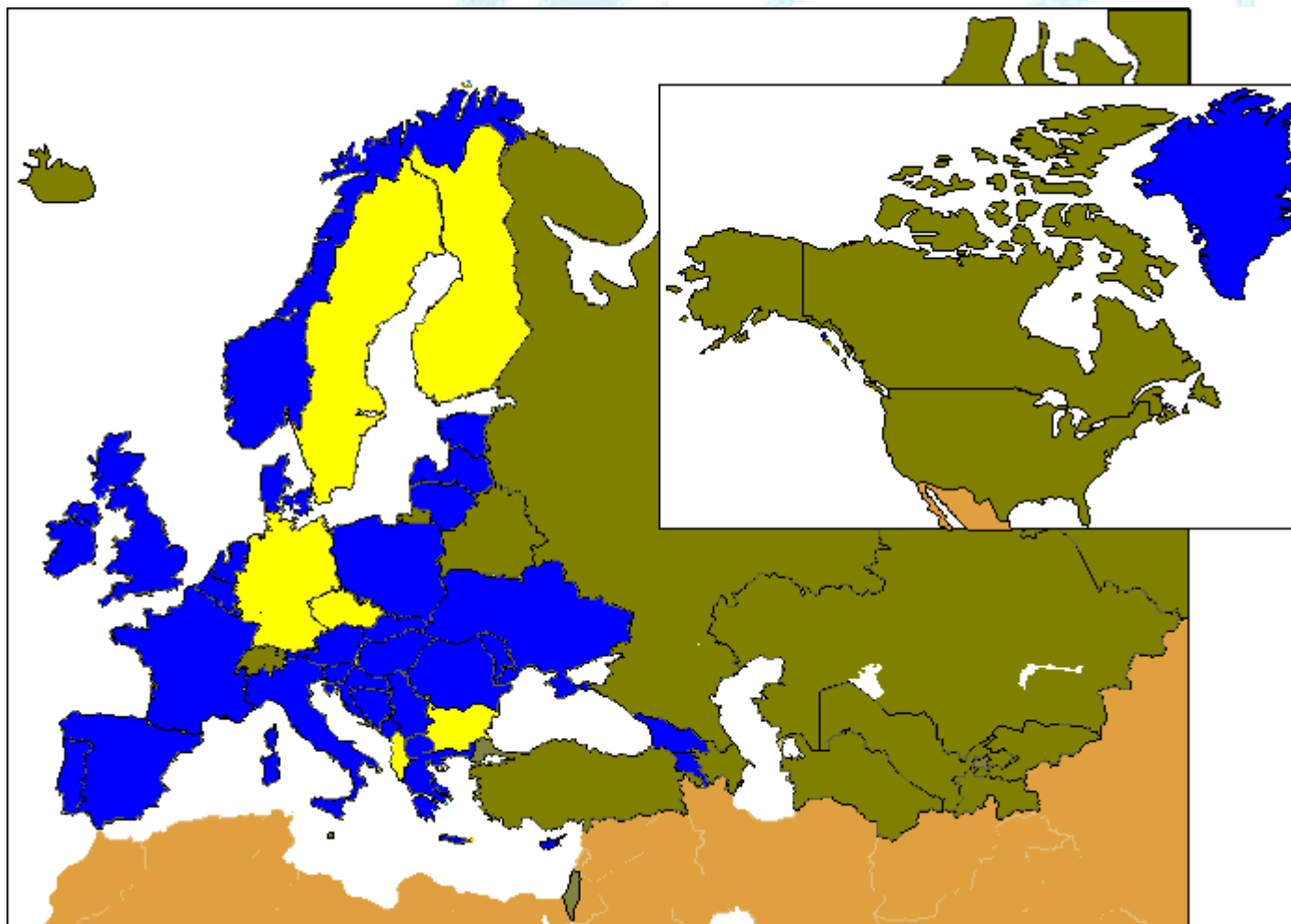
- a) Status of implementation
- b) Country case study
- c) Wrap-up & capacity-development needs
- d) Questions



1(a) Status of ratification

Parties:

- Albania
- Bulgaria
- Czech Rep.
- Finland
- Germany
- Sweden





1 (b) **Country case study**

- Presentation by Mr. Nenad Mikulic, Ministry of the Environment of Croatia, on Croatia as a case study in the implementation of the SEA Protocol



1(c) **Wrap-up & capacity-development needs** : Eastern Europe, Caucasus & Central Asia (1/2) - *status*

- Little experience in SEA
- Early stages of legal development for SEA
- Lack of understanding still of Protocol requirements & implications
- However, national strategies for Protocol implementation developed by countries demonstrate their commitment
- Regional initiatives proposed to facilitate sharing of lessons learnt



1(c) **Wrap-up & capacity-development needs** : Eastern Europe, Caucasus & Central Asia (2/2) - *needs*

- Support in drafting SEA legislation
- Training of experts & officials on SEA, with pilot projects
- Development of SEA guidance & methodologies
- Development of procedures for different types of plans & programmes
- Promotion of SEA among various stakeholders
- Networking of environmental assessment experts, nationally & internationally
- Capacity-development in educational institutions



1(c) **Wrap-up & capacity-development needs :** South-East Europe (1/2) - *conclusions*

- *Acceptance and implementation of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements in South-Eastern Europe (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/INF/19)*
- Not enough political support for Protocol transposition & ratification
- One country ratified (though all are Signatories, except Turkey)
- Slow transposition of Protocol requirements into national law
- Lack of capacity to deal with Protocol at national & local levels
- Poor capacity development of local experts in conducting SEAs
- Sporadic & uncoordinated financial & technical support from international stakeholders
- Low-quality SEAs



1(c) **Wrap-up & capacity-development needs** : South-East Europe (2/2) - *recommendations*

- Strengthen resources of authority responsible for SEA
 - information sharing & capacity-development of other stakeholders
 - enhance attempts to move towards sustainable development
- Focus SEA on limited number of priority spatial plans & economic sectors, where greatest added-value expected
- Start developing screening & scoping requirements within SEA
- Start elaborating national capacity-development strategies
 - in cooperation with other countries in subregion
 - with input from international stakeholders
 - including regular review through network of SEA experts



2. Capacity development for Protocol implementation

Facilitated by Henrieta Martonakova, UNDP

- a) Capacity development in EECCA region
- b) Resource Manual for application of Protocol
- c) Lessons learnt from implementation of Sofia EIA Initiative in South-East, Central & Eastern Europe
- d) Questions



2(a) Capacity development in EECCA region

Initial SEA capacity development in:
Armenia, Georgia, Moldova,
Ukraine + Belarus

Experience and lessons
learned from the SEA
application in the countries
of Central and Eastern Europe

THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE
for Central and Eastern Europe

UNDP, REC¹

Benefits of Strategic Environmental Assessment

This briefing paper introduces the role of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in development of policies, plans and programmes. It describes practical lessons learned with pilot SEA projects supported by the Sofia EIA Initiative in countries of central and eastern Europe. This experience indicates numerous benefits that can be gained from application of SEA in eastern Europe, the Caucasus and central Asia.

1] What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of proposed policy, plan or programme initiatives in order to ensure they are fully included and appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on par with economic and social considerations.

SEA is a process for analysing and addressing the environmental and health effects of proposed policies, plans, and programmes or other strategic initiatives (e.g. legislation or regulations). It can be applied at all stages and tiers of decision-making and at the local, regional or national level. When carried out systematically, SEA helps decision-makers to achieve a number of important environmental objectives and sustainable development aims. These are summarised in Box 1.

Box 1: Aims of SEA

SEA helps decision makers

- to incorporate environmental and other sustainability objectives in the formulation of policies, plans and programmes;
- to gather and analyse the information necessary for sound decision-making, including input from key and stake holders;
- to evaluate likely significant environmental and health effects of strategic options and proposed actions;
- to set conditions for environmentally sound implementation of strategic decisions.

2] Principles of effective SEA

SEA is an on-site approach that is applied early in the formulation of proposals when major alternatives and options are set upon and well before decisions are made. A number of guiding and procedural principles are gaining inter-national acceptance and can be adapted to the context and circumstances of transitional countries.

In order to be effective, SEA needs to meet the purpose it is designed for and the goals of the proposal, integrating them with environmental and other sustainable development objectives (see Box 1). Principles of SEA application include:

- SEA should cover all proposed policies, plans and programmes likely to have significant environmental effects. It should have a scope proportionate to the importance of the issues, recognising the potential for addressing them at other tiers in the decision-making hierarchy.
- SEA should be undertaken by proponents of a policy, plan or programme. It should provide relevant information for formulation of proposals and for decision-making.
- SEA should be integrated into the policy, plan and programme making process at key procedural stages. It should start as early as possible as an objective re-evaluation

1. Available in English, Russian, Polish and Czech under the Creative Commons license.
2. Adapted from UNEP, 1998.



Capacity development in EECCA region

- I. Countries' needs assessment : checking compliance of national systems with the SEA Protocol and identifications of gaps and needs

- II. Capacity development actions
 - Armenia: Pilot SEA of Yerevan Master Plan
 - Belarus: Pilot SEA of National Tourism Development Programme
 - Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine:
National introductory kits / manuals on SEA

- III. National strategies to develop capacity for SEA (Protocol) implementation



Capacity development in EECCA region

Results and lessons learned:

- Awareness on SEA benefits and concept raised
- First practical experience with SEA application
- Multi-stakeholders' dialogue increased
- Pilot project – effective way of capacity development

Future challenge: to align SER/OVOS system with internationally accepted SEA principles

More info at:

http://www.unece.org/env/sea/eecca_capacity.htm

The image shows the cover of a report titled "SEA Protocol Initial Capacity Development in Selected Countries of the Former Soviet Union". The cover is green and white. At the top, there are logos for REC, EEA, and UNDP. The title is in bold black text. Below the title, there is an "Executive summary" section, followed by an "Introduction" section. The text is small and difficult to read, but it appears to be a professional document.



Capacity development in EECCA region

Current capacity development activities:

National level:

- SEA pilot project in Azerbaijan and Ukraine (Crimea)

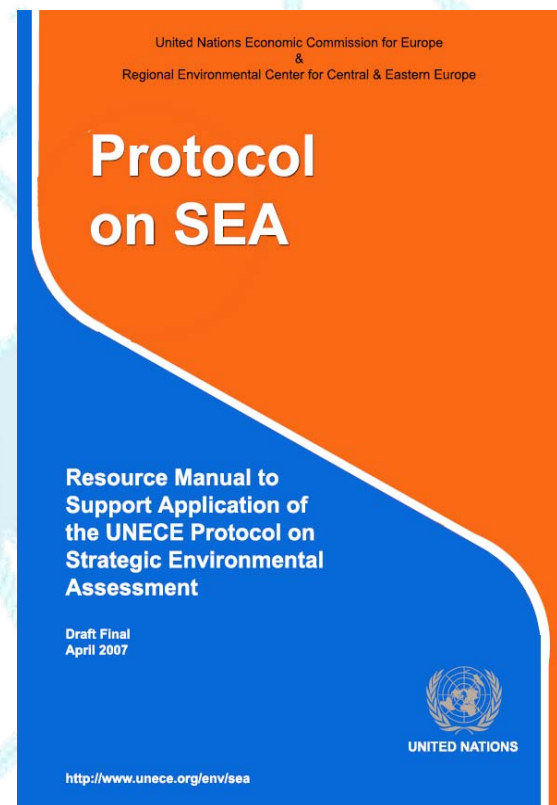
Regional level:

- Support to the 'Belgrade SEA Initiative' implementation
- SEA Training for trainers for EECCA countries



2(b) Resource Manual

- *Resource Manual to Support Application of the UNECE Protocol on SEA*
- Developed by UNECE & REC, as decided by Meeting of Signatories to Protocol in June 2004
- Overseen by small editorial group
- Now *“Draft Final”*
 - *Aims*
 - *Content*
 - *Use*





2(b) **Resource Manual** : aims

- Does not constitute formal legal advice
- Provides guidance to those applying Protocol or supporting others in doing so
- Highlights main requirements of Protocol
- Outlines key issues for applying Protocol in practice
- Provides materials for training & capacity-development programmes supporting Protocol application



2(b) **Resource Manual** :

Part A – Protocol application – chapters

1. Introduces SEA aims; outlines concepts, roles & evolution
2. Identifies linkages between SEA and plan- & programme-making processes
3. Describes how to determine whether SEA required under Protocol
4. Describes SEA of plans & programmes under Protocol
5. Provides overview of basic applicable tools that may be used in practice
6. Describes how Protocol may be applied to policies & legislation



2(b) **Resource Manual** :

Part B – trainer's guide – chapters

1. Outlines broad concept of capacity development for Protocol
2. Offers set of tasks that can be used to design practical work on case studies within SEA training & capacity-development programmes
 - Part on consideration of **health**
 - Further elements to be added later
 - climate change mitigation & adaptation?



2(b) **Resource Manual** : use

- Website provides links to numerous other resources
 - www.unece.org/env/eia/sea_manual
- Being adapted for training course in Prague for practitioners from Eastern Europe & Caucasus
- Consistent with training under OECD/DAC *Guidance on SEA in Development Cooperation*
- Preparation of off-the-shelf training packages being considered



2(c) **Lessons learnt from implementation of Sofia EIA Initiative**

- Presentation by Mrs. Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe



3. Way forward with Protocol implementation

Facilitated by Ausra Jurkeviciute, the REC

- a) National capacity development strategies for Protocol implementation in EECCA
- b) Proposed Belgrade SEA Initiative & its work programme
- c) Questions and discussion



3(a) National capacity-development strategies for Protocol implementation in EECCA

- Presentation by Aleksander Rachevsky, Head, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of the Environment, Belarus
- Presentation by Bobbi Schijf, Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment



3(b) **Belgrade SEA Initiative** & its work programme

- Belgrade SEA Initiative proposed in plenary
- Aim: to provide support for development of SEA systems in participating countries
- Means: a regional platform for open exchange of experience between government officials, complementing national actions
- Target group: government officials responsible for development of SEA systems in countries that have signed the Protocol or that have a clear programme for accession



3(b) **Belgrade SEA Initiative:** possible focus areas

- Alignment of existing environmental assessment & planning processes with SEA Protocol requirements
- Explaining benefits of SEA to decision-makers
- Developing institutional & human capacities for SEA, including through training
- Implementing effective SEA procedures
- Appropriate SEA guidelines



3(b) **Belgrade SEA Initiative:** proposed activities

- A. Regular informal meetings
- B. Comparative studies
- C. Preparation of briefing notes or policy recommendations
- D. Translation of most relevant publications & other documents
- E. Additional activities identified by countries



3(b) **Belgrade SEA Initiative:** key roles

- Lead countries (Armenia, Belarus) to supervise development of detailed workplan, deciding on topics and activities, and their implementation
- UNDP, UNECE and REC providing joint secretariat, supporting the participating countries, fund-raising
- UNDP committing start-up finance



Discussion

- What are the key obstacles to ratification of the Protocol and what can be done by the different stakeholders to overcome these obstacles?
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