

**Statement for high level session
MOP 3 of the Espoo Convention, 3 June 2004 Cavtat**

Capacity building, quality assurance and promotion of EIA and SEA in Estonia

Since MOP 2, February 2001 Sofia:

EIA

- Adoption of EIA and Environmental Auditing Act (including transboundary EIA) in 2000, enforced as of 1 January 2001;
- Capacity building and quality assurance:
 - nomination of responsible officers for EIA in every County Environmental Department (CED);
 - additionally 3 officials at state level (in MoE): 2 officials responsible for EIA and one for SEA and transboundary EIA;
 - licensing system for EIA experts;
 - efficient public participation during EIA procedure;
 - regular EIA information days (once a year for MoE and CEDs);
 - publication of an EIA handbook in 2002.

Espoo Convention

- Ratification of the Espoo Convention on 25 April 2001;
- Participation in the EIA Working Group meetings in Geneva.

Bilateral agreements

- Agreement with Latvia from 1997;
- Agreement with Finland from 2002;
- Joint-commissions meet once a year to exchange information and discuss possible transboundary EIA cases;
- First transboundary EIA experience in 2001-2002 (renovation of Narva Power Plants) with Finland;
- At present involved in a Russian transboundary EIA (Ust-Luga port development project).

International cooperation concerning guidelines

- Participation in elaboration of the guidance on public participation in EIA in a transboundary context (leading country: Russia, NGO - ECOTERRA);
- Participation in elaboration of the draft decision on strengthening subregional cooperation (leading countries Poland and Croatia);
- Translation and publication of the guidance on the practical application of the Espoo Convention;
- Updating the MoE website on transboundary EIA.

SEA Protocol

- Participation in the working group meetings drafting the SEA Protocol;
- Signing of the protocol in Kiev on 21 May 2003;
- Organisation of several seminars for local authorities in 2004 to introduce SEA and transboundary EIA;
- Organisation of SEA training for environmental authorities and environmental (EIA) experts in 2004;
- At present drafting of the new EIA and SEA law underway;
- Drafting guidelines for SEA procedure and quality assurance.