

# THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE ESPOO CONVENTION

(June 3, 2004, Cavtat)

## United Nations Development Programme Regional Centre for Europe and CIS

### Main Conclusions and Statement Related to the

### *CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA PROTOCOL IN SELECTED EECCA COUNTRIES*

The conclusions reflect the key needs and priorities in SEA capacity building in the following countries: Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus, who take part in the UNDP project „*SEA – Promotion and Capacity Building*“, and implemented in co-operation with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, and the national stakeholders.

#### **I. Current environment for implementation of the SEA protocol (key issues)**

##### **Advantages**

- Elements of SEA are already in the national environmental legislation (law on Nature Protection, laws and regulations on environmental expertise, on environmental permits, etc.)
- Functioning OVOS (Environmental Impact Assessment) and state environmental review is a good basis for the development of the SEA

##### **Weaknesses**

The currently existing legislation or legislative provisions for impact assessment of strategic concepts is to a very small extent applied in practice due to:

- Absence of screening mechanism that prevent determination if strategic documents have environmental and health effects (too many or too few documents submitted for expertise);
- Absence of evaluation mechanism that accommodate strategic level of thinking and planning;
- Absence of methodological approaches and tools applicable to the programming, strategic and legal documents, thus absence of basis for SEA in the countries without prior preparation;
- Absence of mechanism for effective and early public participation in the planning and assessment process;
- Low awareness on the needs and benefits of SEA.

## **II. Key priorities for capacity development**

- Analysis of the current systems of environmental assessment and finding the consensus how to integrate SEA into existing legal provisions;
- General awareness raising on and promotion of SEA among various stakeholders and promotion of their mutual co-operation;
- Support in drafting SEA laws and regulations;
- Development of procedural schemes for different types of strategic documents;
- Development of criteria and methodologies on SEA;
- Methodological guidance on the analysis of the significant environmental impacts and good international practices;
- Methodological guidance on analysis of transboundary effects and organizing consultations;
- Guidance on public consultations in SEA and taking into account their opinion/recommendations
- Implementation of the SEA pilot case studies;
- Promotion of regional and sub-regional co-operation in the framework of the SEA Protocol in order to exchange experience between the countries with similar legislative base and similar problems and needs.

## **III. Statement**

UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS offers its support to EECCA countries in building their capacity for the SEA / SEA Protocol implementation. It encourages other intergovernmental and nongovernmental institutions to join in this initiative.