



**5th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
&
1st Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the
Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment
Geneva, 20-23 June 2011**

STATEMENT TO ECE/MP.EIA/2011/5 –SLOVENIA

**Discussion on the application of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment,
and a protocol for nuclear energy-related activities**

Slovenia welcomes the initiative to discuss the application of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for activities related to nuclear energy use. We can announce with proud that we have signed bilateral agreements on the exchange of information related to nuclear activities with all our neighbouring countries and that the cooperation in this field has so far been very transparent.

Slovenia has or plans several nuclear activities (nuclear power plant, nuclear reactor, repository for medium- and low-level nuclear waste). An environmental impact assessment for the nuclear power plant and the nuclear reactor was made many years ago.

With regard to the repository for medium- and low-level nuclear waste, however, the strategic environmental assessment has been completed, while an environmental impact assessment for the activity has not been started yet. Our experience shows that in case of nuclear activities the strategic environmental assessment is rather specific, since safety is the prevailing issue, which consequently requires the search for locations within the existing nuclear activities.

When considering this issue, the question also arises of the extension of operation of the nuclear power plant. The nuclear power plant in Slovenia has been designed for a 40-year operating life, which expires in 2023. The existing operating license is not limited in time, however there are some technical limitations in the license that would limit operation to 40 years. The operator has already filed an application for the extension of the operating life based on the thorough analyses and modifications that are justifying removal of those technical limitations for operation after 2023. In addition according to the Slovenian legislation the operator is obliged every ten years to prove that the nuclear facility is in good condition and safe by performing so called Periodic Safety Reviews. The existing nuclear power plant will be subject to such safety reviews in 2013 and 2023. In the reviews, Slovenia will also take into consideration the findings of EU stress tests. The operating life of the nuclear power plant could thus be extended after 2023 only if the recently submitted application for justification technical changes is approved and both Periodic Safety Reviews in 2013 and 2023 proved the plant continues to be safe. In our opinion, however, the issue of operating life extension is not a case for the application of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, since this is an existing activity, but it sure is an important safety issue.

With regard to the application of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, we have prepared the National Energy Programme and Environmental Report. It also contains the so-called nuclear scenario and the idea of a potential second power plant unit and the continuation of nuclear energy use. The strategic environmental impact assessment was prepared and all neighbouring countries so had been officially notified in the early stage of its preparation. They responded within the given time frame and we will soon send them the complete documentation and agree with them on all the processes and technical issues concerning the public presentation and comments.

We wish to contribute to the development of good practice both in the early stage of programming as stipulated by the Protocol and the Convention, and later in a few years also in the implementation stages, as in accordance with Annex I to the Convention our nuclear power plant will also be subject to international transboundary environmental impact assessment.

We are glad to see the exchange of experience in this field. Slovenia desires actively to contribute to the development of good practice in the field of both transboundary strategic environmental assessment and transboundary environmental impact assessment and hereby expresses its interest for active participation in the exchange of good practice experience.