

Promotion of the SEA Protocol in the Lower Mekong Region (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand)

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Seminar on Globalization of the Espoo Convention and
the SEA Protocol and the role of IFIs

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Current status and challenges

- All countries have EIA systems, but few have SEA legislation:
 - Vietnam: SEA legislation come into effect since 2004
 - Laos, Cambodia, Thailand: no SEA legal requirements
 - In a broader context, most of ASEAN countries do not have established SEA legal framework.
- Traditional transboundary envi. issue is water related
- Emerging issues: forestry, biodiversity, nuclear power, transboundary movements of wastes
- Lack of regional awareness and consensus on addressing transboundary env. impacts

Suggested alternatives

- Bilateral agreements
- Potential accession to SEA Protocol:
 - Countries with established SEA system to consider accessing to SEA Protocol first
 - Regional initiatives to promote SEA Protocol (supported by donors e.g. WB, ADB or UN agencies, etc.):
 - Support to formalization of SEA in remaining countries
 - Awareness raising on Tb EIA/SEA: regional workshops
 - UNECE's technical advises to governments, UNECE Contact point/helpdesk
 - Regional pilot projects on transboundary SEA/EIA

Suggested alternatives

- Acknowledging the importance of the SEA Protocol, the region still needs an effective mechanism to handle transboundary envi. issues at project level
- Vietnam is willing to play an active and coordinating role in promoting this regional process.