Scoping: practical issues

SEA Workshop for Planning Authorities and Consultants

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Hotel Laerton, 14 Iliko Kurkhuli St, Tbilisi, Georgia

Typical SEA stages and analyses

Screening	• Whether SEA is needed or not
Scoping	• What SEA should focus on
Baseline analysis	• What is the current status and likely future development without plan
Impact assessment	• What are the significant impacts related to the plan
Mitigation measures	• How impacts can be avoided or mitigated
SEA report	• Summary of all findings and recommendations

Consultations

Integrating SEA results

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Partnership for Environment and Growth

Purpose of scoping

Scoping shall identify development interventions and relevant **environmental and health issues**, which should be further considered within the SEA

Scoping can also identify, as far as possible:

- **territorial scope** of the assessment and key areas of concern,
- **stakeholders** to be involved,
- **data and information** to be considered

Guiding principles for scoping

Scoping out (i.e. excluding certain issues) is as important as scoping in (otherwise SEA is too wide and unfocused)

It is important to **keep the scope of SEA flexible** to allow its adjustments as the understanding of environmental implications of the proposed plan or programme unfolds.

Scoping approach

- SEA experts should, in consultations with relevant environmental authorities, identify key environmental and health issues that are relevant to the planning document and for each issue to define:
  - Geographical areas of concern
  - Stakeholders to be consulted
  - Sources of data and information

- In addition
  - Relevant environmental protection objectives should be identified and described
  - Topics/Guiding questions for further analyses shall be formulated

Scoping tools and methods

- Many variations of analysis or ranking matrices e.g. Rapid Impact Assessment Matrix
  - Used typically for expert and Delphi approaches to scoping and affective for
    - organizing scoping analyses,
    - and prioritizing issues
- Maps and GIS mapping overlay
  - Used typically for expert and Delphi approaches to scoping and affective for
    - quickly reviewing large amounts of spatial information
    - quickly identifying possible areas of concern
- SWOT
  - Most often applied for policy scoping
- Others:
  - Decision Trees / Networks
  - Decision Support System

SEA Scoping: Procedural aspects

- Scoping Report
- Scoping decision/opinion
- Public consultations

- Linked with SEA Baseline analysis

What is Good SEA Scoping?

- Allowing further assessment to focus only on the key sustainability issues which may be significantly affected by the plan or programme
- Providing the input for decisions on the appropriate methods and analytical tools for further analyses of the key sustainability issues of the PPP
- Ensuring that further SEA process reflects opinions of relevant stakeholders (i.e. consultations therefore should be a part of the scoping)
- Limitations of scoping:
  - It is usually based on a limited data / general analysis
  - It does not need (and it is not intended) to be detailed
  - results should be verified through further analysis, especially where PPP mitigation development requires more detailed input

Case Example 1:
SEA for Transport Sectorial Strategy 2

- Strategy deals with 1270 road projects in 260 clusters, 360 railway in 90 clusters, and 20 water transport projects in 3 clusters
- It applies Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) for selection of priority investments
  - Desirability of a project (transport, economic, social)
  - Realization obstacles (land-use planning, environmental)
  - Preliminary Cost-benefit analysis

- Transport model supplies information on present and future transport intensities on network and their changes in case implementing individual investments
- GIS data only for corridors (digital map with +/- 1 km accuracy)

Key issues addressed in scoping

Major issues:

- Biodiversity and Natura 2000
- Air quality
- Health

Minor issues:

- water, cultural heritage, forests, soil

Transboundary impacts

Specific concerns for biodiversity

- Natura 2000 sites
- Special protected areas
- Loss of natural habitats
- Supra-regional and regional territorial systems of ecological stability
- Important landscape features
- Landscape fragmentation (new projects in unfragmented area by traffic; in areas important for migration)
- Water regime of landscape (wetlands, protected areas for natural accumulation of water and large forest areas)

Specific concerns for air quality

Changes of transport intensities in:

- Urban areas (old and new roads, increasing and reducing intensities bellow 15,000 cars per day)
- Sensitive ecosystems (large-scale protected areas, forests, areas above 800 meters above sea level)

Total emissions in areas with poor air quality status

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Specific concerns for human health

- Air emissions in urban areas
- Noise (isolines 60 dB)
- Socio-economic impacts (accessibility for work-related travel and social and health services)

Minor issues

- **Water:** areas of natural water accumulation and water bodies for drinking water supply, protected areas of mineral waters, barrier effect in flood zones)
- **Soil:** general impacts on soil types
- **Cultural heritage:** nationally important cultural monuments and heritage reserves - impacts caused by vibration and aesthetic concerns
- **Climate change:** consistency with relevant targets for climate change mitigation in the transport sector

Scoped-out

- Waste
- Soil and forests

Suggestions for practical implementation of scoping procedure

- The SEA authority shall develop a capacity to properly consider:
    - Feasibility of required scope of SEA (time, costs, data availability)
    - Value added to the planning process (the ultimate aim is to help planning agency to prepare „greener“ plan or programme, not to hinder the planning proces)
    - Realistic potential for the environmental effects of the plan or programme (i.e. Steer the SEA to address key important environmental/health issues, to focus on aspects where the plan/programme can make a difference in the overall environmental situation, instead of insisting on analysing every theoretical (but in reality likely marginal) effect.