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2nd Training workshop on SEA application for the municipal spatial plans: Baseline analysis

19 – 20 September 2019, Tbilisi

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Purpose of baseline analysis

- To present information on the relevant environmental and health issues
 - Past development trends
 - Current status
- To describe interactions between existing trends the plan or programme;
- To outline the likely evolution of these trends **without implementation of the plan or programme;**
- To provide this information for the purpose of the planning process as well as for the SEA.

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Purpose of baseline analysis

- It should result in baseline against which the potential effects of the development proposed by the plan will be evaluated in next stages of the assessment.

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Linkages to scoping

- Baseline analysis should be elaborated for the environmental and health issues identified in scoping
- Baseline analysis may lead to **adjustments of the scope of SEA** (based on new/more detailed information and data)
- In practice, initial baseline analysis should be carried already during scoping

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Legal requirements

- SEA Protocol (Annex IV, information to be provided in SEA report): The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment, including health, and the likely evolution thereof **should the plan or programme not be implemented**
- SEA Guidelines (Georgia):
 - Environmental and health baseline i.e.:
 - The current state of the environment and health and the likely evolution **without implementation of the strategic document (i.e. ‘business as usual’ scenario);**
 - The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
 - Existing environmental/health problems arising from the strategic document, its relationship with any environmental/nature protection areas or sensitive areas;

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Guiding principles

- SEA team needs to present sound judgments on the ongoing environmental and health changes which are relevant to the plan.
- Often, deficiencies in analysing current situation and trends do not usually arise from the lack of data but rather from poorly targeted analyses that focus on irrelevant issues.
- It is important to concentrate on the key environmental and health issues that have been identified during the scoping
- The SEA practitioners need to gather just enough information to answer key questions related to the identified issues

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Good baseline analysis

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- Is focused i.e. it addresses key environmental and health issues and does not overburden assessment of the situation with irrelevant information
- ‘Looks back and forward’ i.e.
 - Describes past trends and drivers affecting the trends
 - Outlines likely evolution of those trends, should the proposed plans or programme not to be implemented

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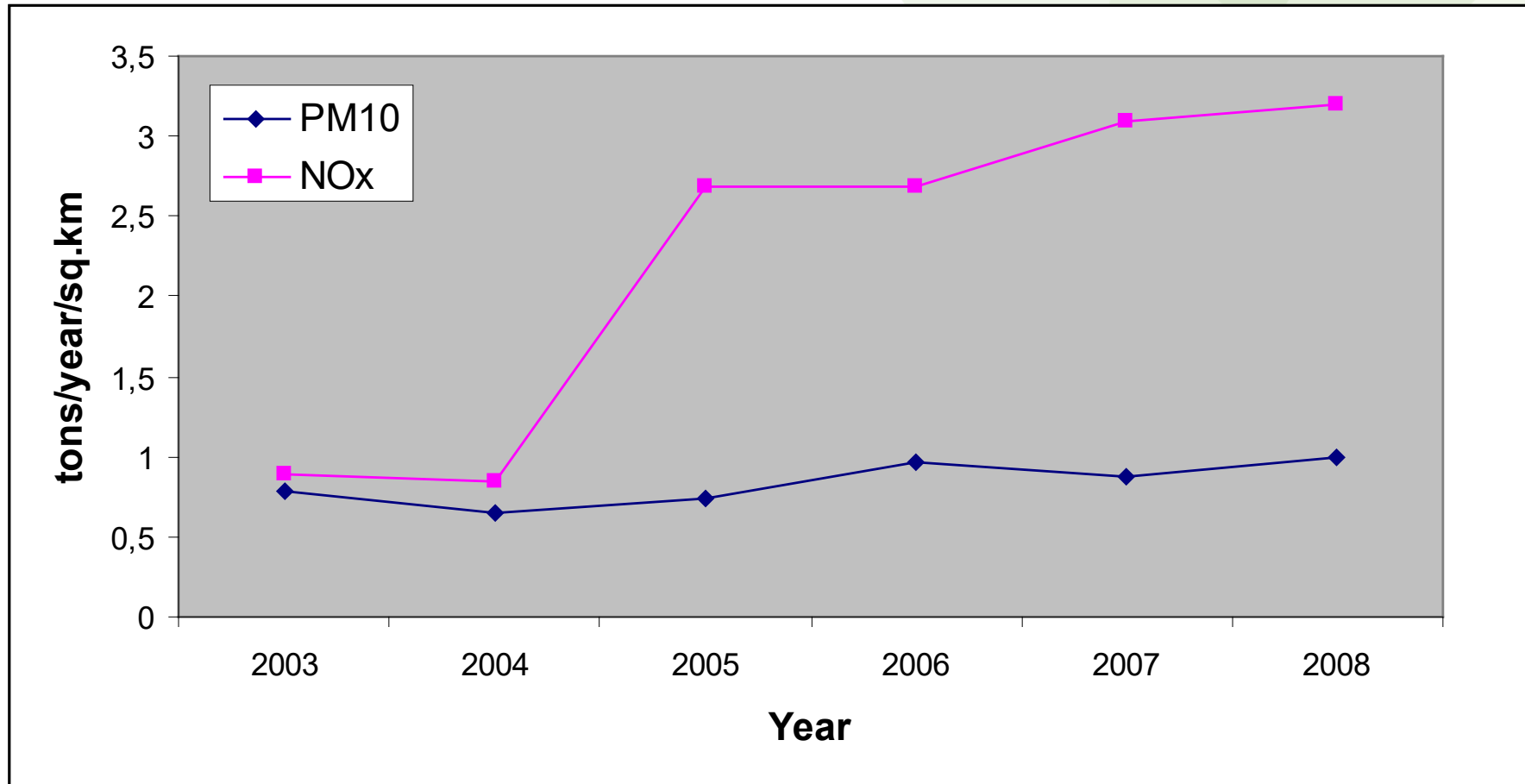


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Analysis or description?

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Likely future evolution

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The outline of the future trends is obviously constrained by **numerous uncertainties** (i.e. data available, economic developments, technological progress or advancements in regulatory frameworks that collectively influence future trends).

SEA experts are only required to outline the future trends as best as they can:

- **past trends** ('what happened')
- **key driving forces behind these trends** ('why it happened')
- **main uncertainties**

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Approached and tools

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Baseline analysis in SEA are often largely based on existing studies and reports

- State of the environment reports
- Data from general environmental and health monitoring
- Data from specific monitoring (programmes, projects)
- Previous SEAs, EIAs and other environmental analyses
- Special research projects

However, certain specific analyses can be conducted

- Spatial analysis (GIS, maps overlays)
- Trend analysis
- Biodiversity surveys
- Emission modelling

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Guiding questions

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1. What has been the trend so far?
2. What is driving these trends?
3. What are the legal and policy targets?
4. How far is the current situation from any established objective or targets?
5. How will the future trend evolve without the proposed plan or programme?
6. How is this future trend going to be influenced by other major developments (key policies or large projects, changes in the regulatory or policy framework, economic incentives, climate change etc.?)
7. Considering all this, how would you describe the realistic worst-case and the best case scenario if the proposed strategy is not implemented?
8. What are the key implications of the planning process?
9. Which population groups or economic sectors can be adversely affected by this trend?

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Practical tips

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- Collection of baseline information could go on indefinitely, thus **set a time limit for information collection**, and make arrangements to fill any major gaps for future reviews of the plans or programmes.
- **Focus the baseline analysis on key issues identified in scoping and on those drivers, which might be influenced by the plan and programme** – avoid the preparation of a generalized ‘State of the Environment’.
- The baseline analysis should **indicate the uncertainties** in estimating the likely future developments and possible lack of data, which are needed for proper evaluation of environmental and health effects of the plan or programme.
- **Involve relevant stakeholders** when preparing the baseline analysis, especially environmental and health authorities, universities, research institutions etc., which can provide very useful inputs (data, information, reports etc.).

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Practical tips

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- The baseline analysis might also provide **inputs into the analysis conducted by the planning team** for the plan or programme, and thus support integration of relevant environmental and health considerations into the plan or programme at an early stage of the planning process.
- Try to present the baseline information in a way that is **clearly understood and interpreted** not only by the authorities, but also by the public (for example use of maps, charts, diagrams, etc.).

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Case example: SEA of the Transport Strategy of Kosice Municipality (Slovakia) – noise

- Based on the transport model and composition of car fleet in the city the noise levels were calculated for current status (2015), for 2030 without the Strategy
- Results were displayed in the maps and linked to population density i.e. for how many inhabitants the noise levels will change (compare to current status)
- It enables to identify ‘hot spots’ to be addressed by the Strategy (and SEA)

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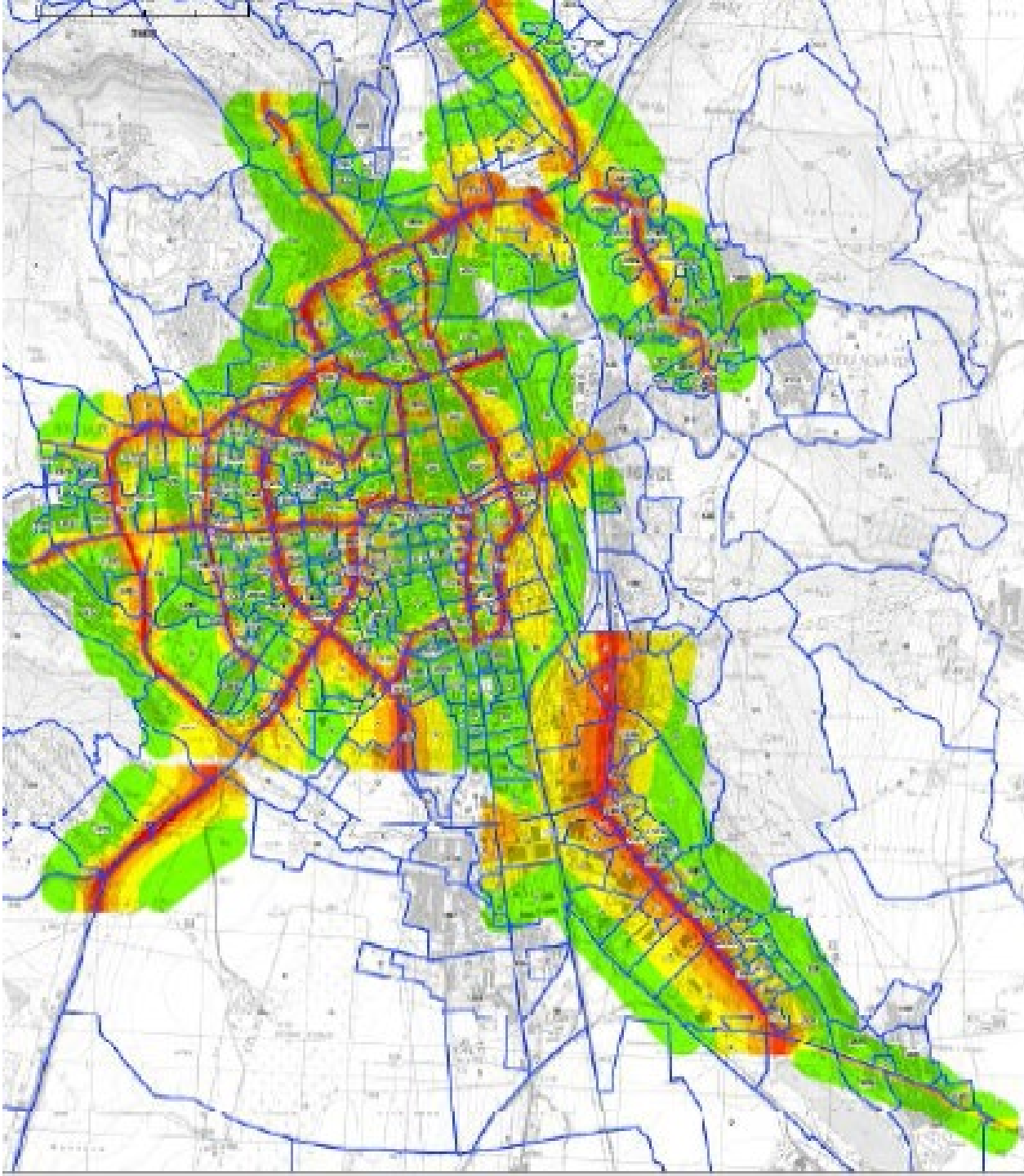
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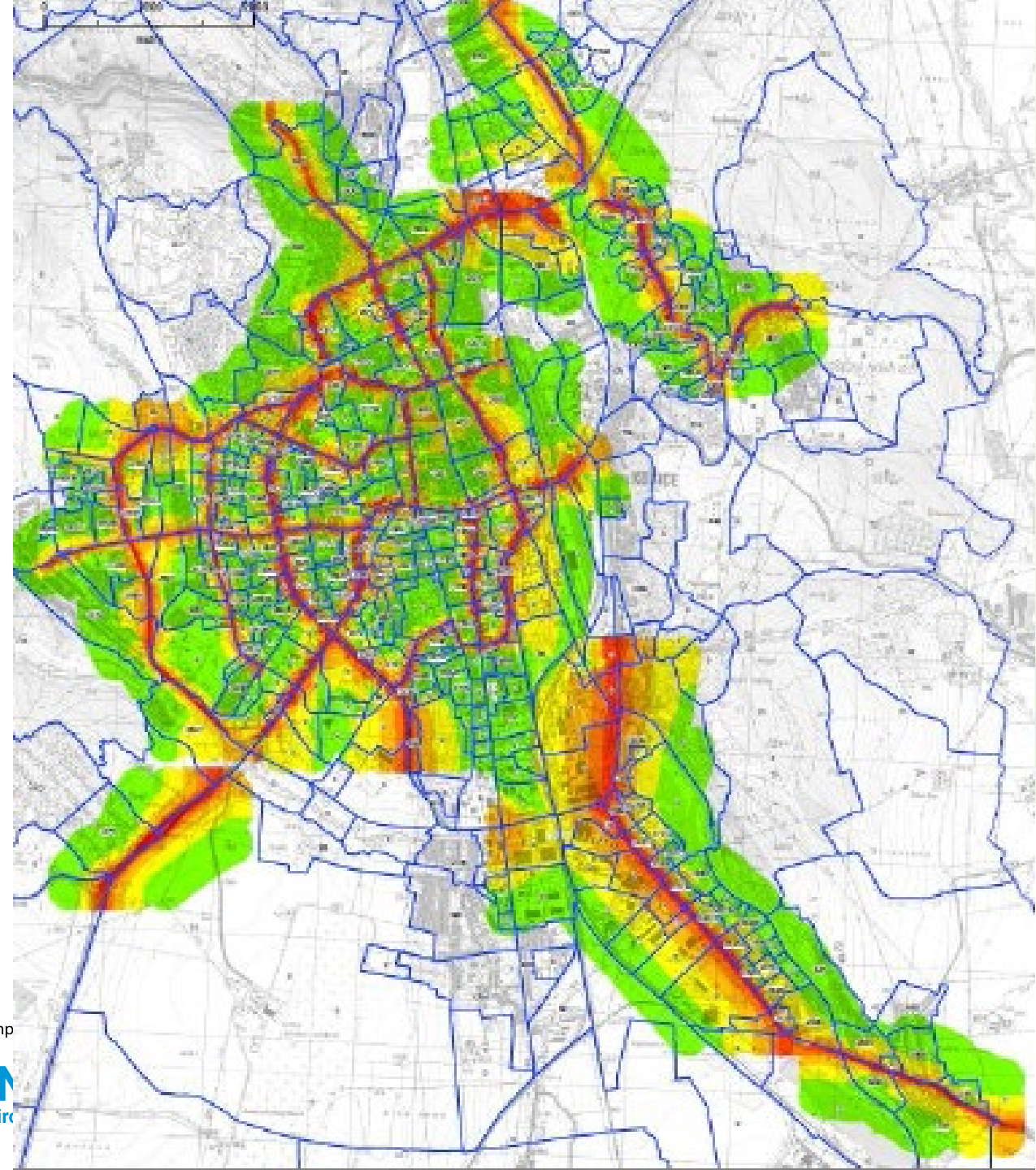
	Max. 45 dB (A)	45 – 50 dB (A)	50 – 55 dB (A)	55 – 60 dB (A)	60 – 65 dB (A)	Over 65 dB (A)
Night 2015	123,003	25,371	15,233	9,861	4,610	975
Night 2030	124,486	25,885	15,738	10,550	4,753	976

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Questions or comments?

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Group work assignment

1. Select 2 – 3 issues identified in scoping for Lebarde Resort
2. Develop outline of baseline analysis i.e. specify
 - What data and information are needed (and which are/might be missing, and how to fill in the gaps);
 - What approach to use (tools and methods, qualitative/quantitative approach);
 - Which factors have been influencing the trends so far?
 - What major drivers may affect future evolution?
 - What stakeholders to involve?
3. Present the results

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