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# Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft Micro-Regional Combined Spatial Plan for Gegharkunik Region (Gegharkunik-2)

Kick-off meeting

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## What is SEA?

SEA is a systematic & anticipatory process, undertaken to analyze environmental effects of proposed plans, programmes & other strategic actions and to integrate findings into decision-making

Key principles:

- Undertaken by the authority responsible for the given Plan/Programme (e.g. sectorial, spatial)
- Applied as early as possible in decision-making process
- Focused on key issues
- Evaluates reasonable range of alternatives
- Provides appropriate opportunities for involvement of key stakeholders & the public
- Carried out with appropriate, cost-effective methods & techniques of analysis

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# International Legal Framework: EU SEA Directive

Defines plans and programmes that need to undergo SEA

- An SEA is mandatory for plans/programmes which are:
  - are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste/ water management, telecommunications, tourism, town & country planning or land use **and** which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the EIA Directive.
- Defines topics to be assessed: roughly 4:
  - environment,
  - nature,
  - human health and
  - cultural heritage

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# International Legal Framework: UNECE Protocol on SEA

Protocol to the so-called Espoo Convention (Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context)

Signed in 2003 in Kyiv, entry into force July 2010

- also known as „Kyiv“ Protocol
- Signatories: 38; Parties: 33

Similar to SEA Directive, but additional focus on:

- Impacts on human health
- Public consultation

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## SEA: What does it take?

- SEA runs in parallel with Planning (drafting of the Plan or Programme)
- SEA team of environmental specialists looks into the draft Plan/Programme and provide comments to planning (drafting) team about:
  - Potential impacts(risks) from the proposed actions to the environment, and
  - Measures to prevent, mitigate, and minimize identified risks
  - Measures to enhance likely positive effects
- SEA team put together Environmental Report summarizing its findings and recommendations
- SEA Environmental Report together with the draft plan are made available for public consultations
- Planning institution takes the SEA findings (Environmental Report) together with feedback from the public consultations into consideration when finalizing and approving the draft Plan or Programme

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## SEA main benefits

- Informs planners and decision-makers about environmental and sustainability issues at an early stage when multiple alternatives can still be taken into consideration, before higher political decisions have been made
- Addresses impacts that are difficult to grasp at the project level, and can handle cumulative and synergistic impacts of multiple development projects
- Facilitates stakeholder (including public) participation
- Helps to prevent costly mistakes that arise from neglecting environmental or health impacts

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