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საქართველოსთვის

Project funded by the European Union

EU4Environment

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine

**Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial
Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre
Development Regulation Plan**

MEETING REPORT

**16 March 2022, 11:00 – 12:50 Tbilisi time
Tbilisi, Georgia**

Action implemented by:



Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan

16 March, 11:00 Tbilisi time; 08:00 Central European Time

Meeting report

1. *Kick-off event objectives*

The event has introduced the pilot SEA project for the draft Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan. It briefed on the status of and milestones for the development of these two spatial plans while outlining the benefits and potential main constraints related to the implementation of the pilot SEA project.

The following strategic benefits have also been pursued:

- the event positioned the pilot project as the reference case example it is intended to be for the application of SEA to spatial planning in Georgia;
- it also provided visibility to the leadership of the national stakeholders in the implementation of the pilot.

2. *Summary of the online kick-off event*

The event was conducted online on 16 March 2022 with the participation of the country's Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA), Gurjaani Municipality, national and international experts, environmental NGOs.

The event was opened by the **Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani**, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure. She highlighted the importance of the European Union's technical assistance to Georgia's implementation of reforms and the value of technical advice. Strategic environmental assessment is both new and important for spatial planning. MRDI has been supporting municipalities in spatial planning and in this regard choosing Gurjaani municipality is a way for the municipality to gain knowledge and then later share the experience with other municipalities. The Deputy Minister underlined that spatial and urban planning have an important role to play for the entire country's sustainable development. Both positive and negative impacts of the spatial planning should be identified and addressed appropriately. She also underlined a waste management dimension in preparing spatial plans for the Gurjaani municipality.

Then **Mr. Alexandre Darras**, Attaché, Team Leader, Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, took the floor with his opening remarks. He started by expressing words of support with regard to Ukraine in the context of the Russian Federation's 24 February invasion of Ukraine. He noted the value of practical learning through this SEA pilot project for stakeholders in Georgia, building on SEA provisions of the country's Environmental Assessment Code which is compliant with the European Union's Directive on SEA. The pilot is well placed to contribute to making Georgia a more sustainable place to live and more environmentally friendly.

EU4Environment Project Manager at UNECE, **Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk**, in his subsequent remarks highlighted the importance of the EU4Environment funded pilot SEA in Georgia in terms of hands-on learning for the effective practical application of SEA-related provisions of national legislation. Applying SEA to spatial planning helps bring nature back to cities, green investments and make infrastructure sustainable. He further underlined the need for systematic and effective environmental assessment remains pressing with the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

The event had two main substantive parts. After the opening, the introductory part focused on a presentation by **Ms. Salome Dvali**, Head of Strategic Planning Division, MEPA who spoke of the legal requirements and practice for the application of SEA in Georgia. She specifically outlined the challenges in the current SEA system, including lack of experience and the lack of sectoral experts, coordination with health authorities, large number of spatial plans subject to SEA, quality of SEA documentation and some methodology-related issues. This was followed by a presentation by **Ms. Nino Gventsadze**, Head of Spatial Planning Department, MRDI. Ms. Gventsadze expressed words of solidarity with Ukraine. She further provided a brief overview of the country's spatial planning arrangements as they relate to different levels of administration, along with recent progress and the role of MRDI and municipalities in this system. Currently, the SEA is a mandatory component and a spatial plan and its SEA must be complementary processes. Finally, she briefed on the current status of spatial planning process for the Gurjaani municipality (which had never had a spatial plan) and identified the most salient issues for the municipality. It was then followed a short Q&A session including on the current situation of the municipality's waste management system and status of a planned landfill in the context of the spatial plans to be prepared.

The second and final part of the event was dedicated to the presentation of the pilot SEA project. **Mr. Doug Hickman**, international SEA expert to UNECE, outlined the peculiarities and benefits of the SEA in spatial and urban planning. This comprised an overview of relevant international legal frameworks, particularly, EU's Directive on SEA and UNECE Protocol on SEA. Benefits of applying SEA to spatial and urban plans were highlighted to include a role in explicitly planning and

designing sustainable development at the level of spatial plans, holistic analysis as regards the cumulative impact of many small effects on the environment/public health and its pro-active approach, integrating public environmental and health priorities into planning from outset, and demonstrating coherence of spatial plans with qualitative and quantitative national objectives.

Following the above presentation, **Ms. Nino Malashkhia**, national expert to UNECE, made a presentation outlining a specific approach to conducting the SEA of the spatial plans for Gurjaani municipality.

These presentations were then followed by a short Q&A with a focus on added value of the pilot SEA and potential constraints and challenges to the application of SEA in this specific case. Leonid Kalashnyk, UNECE closed the event, once again thanking the European Union for its continued support under the EU4Environment and the MEPA and MRDI for the fruitful collaboration in the preparation of the pilot SEA project.

3. Conclusions

The kick-off event successfully introduced the pilot SEA project for the master plan of Ganja. It briefed on the status of and milestones for the master plan development and outlined the benefits and potential main constraints related to the pilot SEA project.



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Annex I

Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan

AGENDA

**16 March 2022, 11:00 – 12:50 Tbilisi time
Tbilisi, Georgia**

Due to COVID-19, this kick-off event will be delivered as a virtual event, using the Zoom platform. All registered participants will receive connection details to access the platform.

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Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan

16 March, 11:00 Tbilisi time; 08:00 Central European Time

Background

Within the framework of the European Union-funded “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment) programme (2019 – 2023), UNECE is assisting Georgia in strengthening its SEA system in line with the Georgian Environmental Assessment Code that fully transposes requirements of the Protocol on SEA to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and of the European Union’s Directive on SEA (2001/42/EC).

Since late 2021, to further enhance capacities for practical application of SEA in Georgia, at the request of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI), UNECE has supported the preparation of a pilot SEA project for the two interlinked draft spatial plans to be developed for Gurjaani municipality: Spatial Arrangement Plan of the Gurjaani Municipality and the Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan. The pilot SEA will be implemented in 2022-2023 in parallel with the development of the two plans.

The pilot SEA will provide hands-on learning for applying SEA to draft spatial plans (involving analytical and consultative tasks and including, as appropriate, methodological coaching on the preparation and quality control of relevant documentation etc.) This kick-off event will introduce the pilot to stakeholders and the public in Georgia and is to be followed back-to-back by a technical training on SEA procedures for national experts on the team of the pilot project.

Meeting objectives, expected outputs and outcomes

- to introduce a pilot SEA project for the draft Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan
- to brief on the status of and milestones for the development of these two spatial plans
- to outline the benefits and potential main constraints related to the implementation of the pilot SEA project

The following outputs/strategic benefits will also be achieved:

- the event will position the pilot project as the reference case example it is intended to be for the application of SEA to spatial planning in Georgia
- it will provide visibility to the leadership of the national stakeholders in the implementation of the pilot.

Participants

The meeting will gather up to 30 participants from MEPA, MRDI, a planning team tasked with the development of the two spatial plans as well as environmental NGOs active in this area.

Practical Information

The kick-off event will be organized as a virtual event via Zoom. All registered participants will receive connection details to access the platform. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Georgian will be provided.

About EU4Environment

The “European Union for Environment” (**EU4Environment**) aims to help the six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine preserve their natural capital and increase people’s environmental well-being, by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts.

The Action is funded by the European Union and implemented by five Partner organisations: OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank based on a budget of some EUR 20 million. The Action implementation period is 2019-2023.

For further information contact: EU4Environment@oecd.org

For further information specifically on activities on SEA and transboundary EIA implemented by UNECE, please contact: leonid.kalashnyk@un.org

AGENDA

| Time (Tbilisi) | Item |
|----------------|--|
| 10:50 – 11:00 | Connection testing |
| 11:00 – 11:25 | <p>Opening and welcome remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nino Tandilashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) • Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI) • Mr. Alexandre Darras, Attaché, Team Leader Connectivity, Energy, Environment & Climate Change, EU Delegation to Georgia (<i>TBC</i>) • Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, EU4Environment Project Manager at United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) |
| 11:25 – 12:10 | <p>Introduction</p> <p>The application of SEA to plans, programmes and other strategic documents in Georgia: legal requirements and practice – Ms. Salome Dvali, Head of Strategic Planning Division, Environmental Assessment Department, MEPA</p> <p>Spatial and development plans to be developed for Gurjaani Municipality and tasks to be accomplished – Ms. Nino Gventsadze, Head of Spatial Planning Department, MRDI</p> <p>Q&A</p> |
| 12:10 – 12:50 | <p>Presentation of the pilot SEA project</p> <p>Application of SEA to spatial plans and other strategic documents related to spatial and urban planning and its benefits – Mr. Doug Hickman, International SEA Expert to UNECE</p> <p>Approach to conducting the SEA of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan – Ms. Nino Malashkhia, National Expert to UNECE</p> <p>Q&A followed by a discussion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What added value is the pilot SEA expected to bring? - What are potential constraints and challenges to the application of SEA in this case? |
| 12:50 | Closure of the event |



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Annex II

Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

16 March 2022, 11:00 – 12:50 Tbilisi time
Tbilisi, Georgia

Action implemented by:



Kick-off event: Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Spatial Arrangement Plan of Gurjaani Municipality and Gurjaani Town Centre Development Regulation Plan

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 16 March 2022, Tbilisi, Georgia

Total participants: 26

Female participants: 16

| # | Name | Title | Organization | Email |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI) | | | | |
| 1. | Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani | Deputy Minister | Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) | m.giorgobiani@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 2. | Ms. Nino Gventsadze | Head of Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | m.gventsadze@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 3. | Mr. Kakha Potskhishvili | Deputy Head of Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | k.potskhishvili@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 4. | Mr. Kakha Inauri | Spatial Planning Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | k.inauri@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 5. | Ms. Sophiko Maisuradze | Spatial Planning Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | s.maisuradze@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 6. | Ms. Mariam Gogitidze | Spatial Planning Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | m.gogitidze@mrdi.gov.ge |
| 7. | Mr. Giorgi Kereselidze | Spatial Planning Department | Spatial Planning Department, MRDI | kerarchitecture@gmail.com |
| Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) | | | | |
| 8. | Ms. Venera Metreveli | Deputy Head of the Environmental Assessment Department | Environmental Assessment Department, MEPA | venera.metreveli@mepa.gov.ge |
| 9. | Ms. Salome Dvali | Head of the Strategic Planning Division | Environmental Assessment Department, MEPA | salome.dvali@mepa.gov.ge |
| 10. | Ms. Ketik Chokuri | Senior Specialist, Strategic Planning Division | Environmental Assessment Department, MEPA | keti.chokuri@mepa.gov.ge |
| 11. | Ms. Nino Kosiashvili | Strategic Planning Division | Environmental Assessment Department, MEPA | nino.kosiashvili@mepa.gov.ge |
| Gurjaani Municipality | | | | |
| 12. | Mr. Konstantine Berdzenishvili | Head of Economic Service | City Hall of Gurjaani | beridzishvili.kote@mail.ru |
| 13. | Mr. Ramaz Kitiashvili | Head of Infrastructure, Spatial Planning and Architecture Service | City Hall of Gurjaani | ramazkitiashvili@gmail.com |
| 14. | Ms. Marina Shavkatsishvili | | City Hall of Gurjaani | mshavkacishvili@mail.ru |

| Civil Society | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|--|--|
| 15. | Ms. Tamar Gugushvili | Senior Environmental Expert | GEO | tamar.gugushvili@geo.org.ge |
| European Union | | | | |
| 16. | Mr. Alexandre Darras | Team Leader Connectivity, Energy, Environment and Climate Change | Delegation of the European Union to Georgia | alexandre.darras@eeas.europa.eu |
| International Organizations and Consultants | | | | |
| 17. | Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk | EU4Environment Project Manager, Environmental Affairs Officer | UNECE | leonid.kalashnyk@un.org |
| 18. | Ms. Elena Kashina | EU4Environment Project Management Assistant | UNECE | elena.kashina@un.org |
| 19. | Mr. Malkhaz Adeishvili | Environmental Expert, EU4Environment National Coordinator in Georgia | OECD Consultant | adeishvili.m@gmail.com |
| 20. | Mr. Douglas Hickman | International SEA Consultant | UNECE Consultant | pha@xcountry.tv |
| 21. | Ms. Irma Melikishvili | National SEA Consultant | UNECE Consultant | irmamelikishvili@gmail.com |
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| Interpreters | | | | |
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