



TURKMENISTAN

ACTION PLAN

**TO PREPARE FOR INTRODUCING AND
DEVELOPING A NATIONAL STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)
SYSTEM**

The Action Plan developed in the framework of the project “Strengthening national and regional capacities and co-operation on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) in Central Asia, including as a response to climate change” implemented by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

This version of the Action Plan considers the results of the discussion that took place during the Final Regional Conference on Strategic Environmental Assessment in Central Asia (November 10, 2021), <https://unece.org/info/events/event/359548>.

November 2021

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment (OVOS) |
| EU | European Union |
| MAEP | Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment |
| SEE | State Environmental Expertise |
| SSEP | State Service for Environmental Protection (under the MAEP with five regional divisions and SSEP in the city of Ashkhabad) |
| UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |

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EFFECTIVE SEA SYSTEM AND BENEFITS OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION FOR TURKMENISTAN

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is internationally recognized as the key instrument for integrating environmental and health considerations into strategic planning and decision-making to prevent and mitigate possible damage from economic and regional development. It sets out the obligatory consultation of environmental and health authorities and the public to provide decision-makers early warning of unsustainable options and contributes to the reduction and management of health risks. It promotes sustainable development goals and principles, supports efforts towards the transition to a green economy, and increases the legitimacy of planning and decision-making processes and their outcomes. Moreover, it may allow countries to consider health risks and mitigation measures for pandemics as part of their planning processes, promoting healthy lifestyles, enhancing socioeconomic conditions to enable people to thrive and improving access to good quality health and social care.

The introduction and implementation of the effective SEA system in line with the Protocol on SEA for Turkmenistan will contribute to achieving the goals of strategic documents of Turkmenistan and provides the following main benefits:

- ✓ **National Programme of Socio-economic Development of Turkmenistan for the period 2011-2030**
- ✓ **National Climate Change Strategy of Turkmenistan**
- ✓ **In the spirit of the President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov's book "Turkmenistan Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals"**
- ✓ **Presidential Program for Social and Economic Development for the period 2019-2025**
 - **In support of:**
 - ✓ **2014 Law on Environmental Expertise**
 - **2009 Sanitary Code (as revised in 2019)**



EXISTING CHALLENGES FOR INTRODUCTION AND EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF SEA IN TURKMENISTAN

Based on the Needs Assessment carried out in 2020-2021 the following challenges for effective application of SEA in Turkmenistan were identified:

- The lack of the national legal framework for SEA developed in line with the Protocol on SEA (including laws and by-laws)
- The lack of knowledge of how to carry out SEA among experts;
- Low awareness of environmental, health and other relevant authorities, including those responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes, on SEA-related responsibilities and the lack of capacities to perform these tasks
- Limited awareness of the decision-makers of SEA benefits for greening the economy and strengthening the regional cooperation

CURRENT SEA SYSTEM IN TURKMENISTAN VIS – A – VIS THE PROTOCOL ON SEA

The aim of this section is to demonstrate the main elements of an effectively developed SEA system in line with the Protocol on SEA compared to the prerequisites for SEA system in Turkmenistan (based on conclusions from the Feasibility and Opportunity Assessment Report). The main elements of modern SEA system developed in line with the Protocol on SEA represent the objectives to be achieved by implementing the Action Plan.

THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF MODERN SEA SYSTEM DEVELOPED IN LINE WITH THE PROTOCOL ON SEA

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK
on SEA is in force and aligned
with the Protocol on Strategic
Environmental Assessment

PROCEDURAL STEPS of SEA,
including consultations with
environmental and health
authorities, public participation
and transboundary
consultations, are well
established and followed in
practice

**APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL
MEANS** for carrying out SEAs
are allocated by the
governmental budget;

STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF SEA IN TURKMENISTAN

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON SEA

There is no legislation on SEA in Turkmenistan. Nor are there any overarching requirements for EIA for strategic documents. It is presently unknown if Turkmenistan plans to include the SEA provisions in the environmental laws and / or by-laws that are being updated within the framework of the project “*Strengthening the dialogue for sustainable development*”, European Union – Central Asia Water, Environment and Climate Change Cooperation (WECCOOP).

PROCEDURAL STEPS

There is no legal procedure for SEA in Turkmenistan.

The 2015 SEA Guidance for Turkmenistan was drafted based on the minimum requirements of the EU Directive on SEA (within the frame of the project “Support to the introduction of Sustainable Development policies - Rationale use of natural resources in the energy-environment sectors in Turkmenistan”, implemented in 2013 – 2016 (EuropeAid/133013/C/SER/TM)). Generally, it outlined the stages of SEA as per the Protocol on SEA and good practice in the countries with the State Environmental Expertise (SEE) and EIA components. The SEA Guidance will need to be revised according to the SEA legislation when it is developed. The application of the SEA Guidance has not been tested in practice yet; there has been no pilot SEA projects conducted in Turkmenistan so far.

ALLOCATION OF APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL MEANS FOR CARRYING OUT SEA

According to the survey, the budgetary aspects have not yet been considered, and there is low awareness about the SEA-related costs. Thus, dedicated discussions will be necessary to address budgetary implications for carrying out SEA for governmental strategic documents, including

with regard to involving 'in-house' expertise (i.e., governmental staff), sub-contracting practitioners and consulting companies, both national and foreign, organizing efficient public participation, collecting environmental and health data, and conducting relevant analyses.

AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARATION OF THE PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

are aware of their SEA-related responsibilities and tasks and have sufficient capacities to perform these tasks

AWARENESS OF AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING THE PLANS AND PROGRAMMES ABOUT SEA-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS AND CAPACITIES TO PERFORM THESE TASKS

Awareness about SEA and its benefits, and capacities within governmental authorities to initiate, coordinate and supervise the SEA procedures is identified via the survey as limited. Very few SEA awareness raising events were conducted so far with support of international donors between 2013 – 2016 and 2020 – 2021, including the drafting of the SEA Guidance document in 2015, thus further and continuous efforts are still needed to reach and sustain the knowledge on SEA. The Feasibility and Opportunity Assessment Report estimated that, at the existing planning rate for the next 5-10 years, to carry out the necessary SEA-related tasks, each planning authority might need approximately 40 – 60 person-days for one SEA process, the body that can be potentially responsible for SEA expertise (SEE) - the State Service for Environmental Protection (SSEP) - will need 10 to 15 person-days per an SEE procedure, and the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry will need about 5 - 10 person-days per SEA review procedure.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES are aware of their SEA - related tasks and responsibilities have sufficient capacities to perform these tasks

AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES ON THEIR SEA-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS AND CAPACITIES TO PERFORM THESE TASKS

The Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan (MAEP) of Turkmenistan is the lead environmental authority, and the survey concluded that very few staff of the MAEP were aware of their potential SEA-related tasks, if SEA would be introduced. The SEE bodies (SSEP under the MAEP with five regional divisions in five velayats and the SSEP in the city of Ashkhabad) have no experience of reviewing or preparing SEA reports. In fact, organising trainings and awareness raising events particularly for environmental and health authorities ranked almost the highest during the survey, which implies that the authorities feel a need for such capacity building.

HEALTH AUTHORITIES are aware of their SEA-related responsibilities and tasks and have sufficient capacities to perform these tasks

THE PUBLIC IS AWARE of the opportunities to participate in SEA processes

THE DECISION-MAKERS ARE AWARE of their SEA-related responsibilities and tasks and have sufficient capacities to perform these tasks

AWARENESS OF HEALTH AUTHORITIES ON THEIR SEA-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS AND CAPACITIES TO PERFORM THESE TASKS

The Ministry of Health and Medical Industry and its subdivisions are in charge of a sanitary and hygienic expertise of strategic documents. Unfortunately, these authorities did not respond to the survey questionnaire.

As noted above, organising trainings and awareness raising events particularly for environmental and health authorities ranked almost the highest during the survey. In fact, the experience from other regions, e.g., from the EU Eastern Partnership countries¹, shows that health authorities should receive specific attention and training to perform their functions within the SEA systems.

The Feasibility and Opportunity Assessment Report estimated that approximately 10-15 person-days might be needed for one SEA review process for the respective health authority to carry out their SEA-related tasks.

AWARENESS OF THE PUBLIC ON THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SEA PROCESSES

The SEA awareness raising events, including the study tour to Germany, were attended by the representatives of the MAEP and NGOs. However, only few representatives of NGOs or educational institutions were informed and possess information about SEA. Engaging these groups in the trainings and awareness raising events was rated quite high during the online survey.

AWARENESS OF THE DECISION-MAKERS ON THEIR SEA-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS AND CAPACITIES TO PERFORM THESE TASKS

There have been only limited opportunities for decision-makers so far to get familiar with SEA during the awareness raising event in 2013-2016 and 2020-2021. Therefore, the level of awareness on SEA and capacities to perform the relevant tasks among decision-makers is limited. This is also supported by the survey's findings identifying awareness raising events for decision-makers as a priority.

¹ <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/policy/eastern-partnership>

THERE ARE PRACTITIONERS/EXPERTS ABLE TO CONDUCT SEA

RELEVANT METHODS AND TECHNIQUES are known and used/can be used in SEA by environmental assessment practitioners

A SEA QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM is established and performed

MECHANISM/PLATFORM enabling information sharing on SEA processes is in place

CAPACITIES AND ABILITIES OF THE PRACTITIONERS / EXPERTS TO CONDUCT SEA

The survey results suggest that there is no expert knowledge of SEA in Turkmenistan; however, there are EIA / environmental experts² that may be potentially trained to carry out SEAs on a regular basis. Training experts has been identified as one of the key priorities. Thus, providing training and methodological support on SEA to experienced EIA project managers and experts, and NGOs/CSOs should be considered as one of the crucial elements in developing good national SEA practice.

KNOWLEDGE ON RELEVANT METHODS AND TECHNIQUES TO BE USED IN SEA

The respondents of the survey are unaware of the existing guiding documents on SEA. Capacity building on methods and techniques to be used in SEA thus will be required, potentially as part of the pilot projects. Then, further national SEA practice, including examination of data availability, will help identify and develop SEA methods and techniques most suitable for the planning practice and the content of the plans and programmes developed by the governmental authorities of Turkmenistan.

A QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM IN SEA

If the SEE procedure is extended to cover SEAs, the SEE can be perceived as an element of a quality control system. In addition, a voluntary public environmental expertise, if extended to cover SEA, can be considered as an element of an SEA quality control system as well. One more element of quality control is the consultation with the relevant authorities and public participation.

MECHANISM/PLATFORM ENABLING INFORMATION SHARING ON SEA PROCESSES

According to the interviews, the databases of EIAs and SEEs exist at the developers and the MAEP. They are not disclosed for the public use and in many cases are considered to be confidential. The online survey identified introducing national SEA and EIA database and establishing a network of environmental experts as moderate priorities, developing and launching similar system or register is a challenging process. Therefore, initiation of the debate about the design, functions and technical features of the register is recommended.

² such as the staff of state scientific and research institutions, experts of the Aarhus Centre in Ashkhabad, or the licenced EIA consulting companies, e.g., "Ynamly Kepil" Individual Enterprise and "Keyik Mirasy" and others.

PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE SEA SYSTEM IN TURKMENISTAN IN LINE WITH THE PROTOCOL ON SEA

PREPARED BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE FEASIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The aim of this strategy is to prepare Turkmenistan to the development of SEA system in line with the Protocol on SEA

P1

Support to practical application of SEA: conducting pilot SEAs has proven to be the most efficient capacity building as it provides 'hands-on' opportunity for the relevant stakeholders to participate in the SEA, and can be effectively combined with training and awareness raising activities.



P2

Delivery of trainings and awareness raising for environmental and health authorities, state planning agencies, decision-makers, environmental assessment practitioners, and CSOs.



P3

Organising exchange of experience on SEA with other countries from selected countries to gain insights in the existing SEA systems and to enable exchange of experience.



P4

Development and adoption of a legislative framework for SEA: There is no SEA legislation in place, however there are pre-requisites for its development as Turkmenistan implements its Law on Environmental Expertise and the related by-laws.



P5

Preparation of guiding documents on SEA to facilitate application of SEA: launching SEA practice (after adopting the SEA legislation) is often challenging due to a lack of understanding on how the legal provisions should be practically carried out; thus it is necessary to provide detailed guidance on SEA procedure and on specific SEA-related topics



P6

Supporting networking and information sharing to enable exchange of experience and distribution of information on SEA, which is very important for enhancing the SEA practice as well as for efficient public participation and consultations.



P7

Determining the financial resources and institutional arrangement needed to support the application of SEA at various levels of program-making.



LIST OF SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES TO PREPARE FOR INTRODUCING AND DEVELOPING THE SEA SYSTEM IN TURKMENISTAN

The table below lists specific activities to introduce and develop SEA in the country together with their prioritisation, which follows the priorities formulated above. Each specific activity is tentatively assigned a 'high', 'medium', or 'low' priority, using the following ranking:

- High priority (H): A specific activity should be implemented in 2022 - 2023;
- Medium priority (M): A specific activity should be implemented in 2024 – 2026 (assuming that the SEA provisions will be adopted in 2026);
- Low priority (L): A specific action can be implemented after the SEA provisions are adopted.

| Activity | Tentative Priority Ranking | Description | Target group |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| Priority 1: Support to practical application of SEA | | | |
| 1.1 Identification of sectors / specific plans and programmes to be a subject to pilot SEAs. | H | At the initial stages of introducing SEA system, efforts on application of SEA should be focused on plans and programmes in the sectors of industry, energy, waste management, industry, and agriculture (i.e. sectors with high potential to cause significant environmental and health effects as resulted from the survey). Optimally the SEA pilot should be conducted for one of the state programmes in the above sectors to test the SEA procedures and draft SEA Guidance before developing the SEA provisions. Another pilot can be conducted for a sub-national plan/programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities |
| 1.2. Organizing a workshop on SEA for the sectoral ministries in the selected sectors | H | <p>The purpose of the workshop would be to explain the key principles of SEA and to discuss preliminary selection of the plans and programmes to be a subject to the pilot SEA.</p> <p>The two main criteria to be considered when selecting the strategic documents are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timing of the planning process: The SEA pilot – in order to demonstrate benefits of SEA – has to be carried out in parallel to the preparation of a plan and programme. 2. Readiness to consider the SEA inputs: The aim of SEA is to integrate environmental and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities |

health considerations in the plan or programme. Therefore, the planning authority and the team should be ready and open for the discussion on recommendations formulated by the pilot SEA and – if agreed – to integrate them in the draft strategic document.

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| 1.3 Conducting pilot SEAs | H | <p>In order to effectively utilize the learning opportunities provided by the SEA pilot application, it is essential to include capacity-building activities in the SEA pilots (i.e. training and awareness raising events) and open them to a wide range of stakeholders including health authorities, CSOs, and the public.</p> <p>Linking the SEA pilots to the training and awareness raising activities (see activities 2.1 – 2.3 below) can be recommended.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-makers • Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Public • Practitioners/experts |
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Priority 2: Training and awareness raising

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| 2.1 Preparing an information leaflet on the benefits of SEA | H | <p>A leaflet will describe the importance and expected benefits of SEA for Turkmenistan. It can be built on promotional materials produced e.g., by the UNECE.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level decision-makers • NGOs • General public |
| 2.2 Organizing awareness raising events on SEA for the high-management (ministers and deputy-ministers) of sectoral ministries, and relevant state governmental bodies / committees | H | <p>High-level events would promote an importance of implementation of SEA in general and cover the draft SEA provisions and may also serve to discuss the preparation of the primary and secondary SEA legislation. Importance of SEA should be supported by presentation of examples of the good SEA practice illustrating its benefits. The budgetary aspects (i.e., allocation of appropriate finances from the national budget) should also be discussed at the events.</p> <p>The agenda of the events should not exceed 2 hours, participation of representatives of international organisation (including UN agencies), EU member states, and/or international SEA experts is desirable.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level decision-makers |
| 2.3 Organizing awareness raising events on SEA for planning authorities | H | <p>Several awareness raising events should be organized to explain the procedural SEA steps and the task and responsibilities to be performed by the planning authorities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of plans and programmes |

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|-----|---|---|--|---|
| 2.4 | Organizing awareness raising events on SEA for the public | M | Several awareness raising events should be organized to explain the procedural SEA steps and how to use the opportunities the SEA provides to participate. | (including local executive bodies of administrative territorial units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public |
| 2.5 | Organizing training workshops on methods and tools in SEA | M | A series of the workshops should be organized to present and discuss the methods and tools to be used in SEA. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners |
| 2.6 | Organizing workshop on quality control in SEA | L | A dedicated workshop for the staff of environmental authorities and health authorities involved in managing the SEA processes should be based on the quality control checklist (activity 5.2) and introduce the quality control criteria and their application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities |
| 2.7 | Developing a comprehensive training course on SEA | L | A training course on SEA can be developed in cooperation with international agencies and academic sector. Opening such course for the participants from other Central Asian countries may also be considered. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners |
| 2.8 | Organizing workshop on transboundary consultations in SEA | L | A workshop should introduce and explain the tasks related to transboundary consultations in SEA and it should illustrate a good practice in accordance with the Protocol on SEA using practical examples. Such event should ensure that the planning and environmental authorities have sufficient capacities to carry out transboundary consultations and to consider their outcomes in SEAs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of plans and programmes • Environmental authorities |

Priority 3: Exchange of experience on SEA with other countries

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|-----|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Workshops / conferences on SEA with the Eastern Neighbourhood countries | H | Dialogue – type conferences or webinars / workshops with some of the Eastern Neighbourhood countries to discuss the way to introducing national SEA systems, challenges, achievements, and other aspects of interest. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners |
| 3.2 | SEA Study tour to Kazakhstan | H | A study tour to Kazakhstan can be organised to share the experience from the pilot SEA project(s) and the legal | |

| | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|--|---|
| | | | drafting and development of SEA legislation. The environmental and health authorities, as well as the sector planning bodies can be visited during the tour. | |
| 3.3 | Support in establishing an international network of state and non-state experts interested in SEA | L | Establishing a platform for state and non-state experts interested in SEA across the Central Asian and Eastern Neighbourhood countries can allow them to exchange the information on SEA and support each other with practical advice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners |
| 3.4 | Provision of access to SEA reports from the Eastern Neighbourhood countries and Kazakhstan | H/M | Creating a catalogue with the SEA report sources (including links to the open SEA/EIA/SEE databases, where available) can help the experts find the analogue reports for specific sectors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners |

Priority 4: Development of legislative framework for SEA

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|-----|--|----------------|---|---|
| 4.1 | Developing and adopting SEA legislation | M (initiation) | The existing laws should be revised, or another piece of legislation on SEA be developed, and adopted. Optimally, it should be aligned with the Protocol on SEA or SEA Directive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level decision-makers • Environmental authorities |
| 4.2 | Preparing and adopting secondary legislation | M | The law dealing with SEA should be supported by due by-laws. Optimally, the secondary legislation would reflect experience with application of SEA procedure from the SEA pilots. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level decision-makers • Environmental authorities |

Priority 5: Preparation of guiding documents on SEA

| | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---|---|
| 5.1 | Updating the general guidance on SEA | M | <p>The general guidance on SEA should be updated as per the SEA legislation in order to provide details on procedural steps outlined in the legal act and to explain how to perform relevant tasks and responsibilities assigned to the key actors.</p> <p>It should also outline the opportunities for the public to participate in the SEA and describe how to proceed with transboundary consultations.</p> <p>An overview of the usual methods and tools used in SEA for evaluation of the likely effects should be included in the guidance as well.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners • CSOs/the public |
| 5.2 | Preparing the quality control checklist | M/L | A quality control checklist should be primarily used by the environmental and health authorities when conducting the quality control of the SEAs. However, it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of |

can also help other key actors to get better understating what kind of quality criteria a good SEA should meet.

It should cover both procedural and substance-related aspects of an SEA (in particular the content and information to be provided in the SEA report). The criteria should follow requirements of the SEA provisions and the principles of a good SEA practice.

- plans and programmes
- Environmental authorities
- Health authorities
- Environmental assessment practitioners
- CSOs / the public

5.3 Preparing SEA L
guidelines on specific topics

Preparation of specific guidelines is recommended – on methods and tools for evaluating the impacts, quality control, how to consider climate change, biodiversity or else in SEA, etc. The topics may be determined after the secondary legislation on SEA is developed (which may cover a wide range of aspects).

- Environmental authorities
- Health authorities
- Environmental assessment practitioners

Priority 6: Networking and information sharing

6.1 Developing the M
technical description of
the SEA (and EIA)
online information
system

The information system on SEA (and EIA) should be established as the centralised register for SEA and EIA documents and other relevant information (e.g., information about the public consultation meetings, etc.), which should be publicly available. The MAEP should be responsible for managing the system – uploading the documents, publishing the information on ongoing SEA processes etc. However, providing an access to the system and the rights to make changes regarding specific SEA processes to the planning authorities could be considered in future.

In principle, the structure of the information/documents to be provided for an individual SEA process should reflect the steps outlined in the draft SEA provisions (or SEA legislation to be adopted).

- Environmental authorities
- Authorities responsible for preparation of plans and programmes³

³ The role of the planning authorities regarding the SEA online information system will depend on the design of the system – its management can be solely ensured by the MAEP, but it also may allow the planning authorities to upload documents and information to the system, which relate to the SEA applied for the strategic documents under the responsibility of a given planning authority.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| 6.2 Establishing the SEA (and EIA) online information system | L | Based on the technical outline (activity 6.1) a full system should be developed and established. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of plans and programmes • Environmental authorities |
| 6.3 Organizing regular annual coordination meetings | L | <p>After establishing the SEA practice, regular meetings, inviting all main actors in SEA, would provide an opportunity to discuss existing challenges of SEA application, and steps and activities to further enhance the SEA system in the country.</p> <p>These meetings should be organized by the MAEP and should invite the representatives of planning authorities, health authorities, practitioners, as well as CSOs/the public active in the field of SEA.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners • CSOs/the public |
| 6.4 Organizing the national SEA/EIA conference | L | Several years of SEA application should provide sufficient experience to be discussed at the national level. As there are many common features and linkages between SEA and EIA, organizing the first national conference jointly for SEA and EIA can be recommended. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-makers • Authorities responsible for preparation of plans and programmes • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners • CSOs/ the public |
| 6.5 Establishing a training centre on environmental assessment | M | The training centre on environmental assessment should ensure sufficient national expert capacity to carry out SEAs in Turkmenistan, and it can also serve as a regional training 'hub' for experts from all Central Asian countries, which would – among other aspects – significantly contribute to effectively addressing transboundary SEA consultations. Considering many common features of SEA and EIA, the Centre may provide capacity building on EIA as well. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities • Environmental assessment practitioners • CSOs/ the public • Central Asian countries |

Priority 7: Institutional and financial arrangements for SEA

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|---|---|--|---|
| 7.1 Organizing workshop on institutional arrangements for SEA | M | The application of SEA in the scope stipulated by the Protocol on SEA will represent a significant workload, in particular for the SSEPs and the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry. Therefore, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental authorities • Health authorities |
|---|---|--|---|

the event could introduce institutional arrangements for SEA in the selected countries as a basis for further discussion on how to manage the expected number of SEAs in Turkmenistan.

Experience from SEA pilots can also be used (in particular, it should enable to better estimate the workload connected with an individual SEA for the environmental and health authorities).

7.2 Conducting financial analysis regarding costs of SEA M

Precise SEA-related cost estimates should be made for the sectors covered by the draft SEA provisions as a basis for allocating appropriate financial means for SEA application in the national budget (and/or in the budgets of respective sectoral ministries).

- Decision-makers
- Authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes
- Environmental authorities
- Health authorities

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTION PLAN

While the major role to coordinate the national SEA system may be assigned to the MAEP and SSEPs in the future, for effective implementation of the Action Plan it is essential to involve also other key stakeholders, in particular the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry and planning authorities. For this purpose, it is recommended to establish an inter-sectoral working group on SEA to be managed by the 'coordinator' representing the MAEP. Besides governmental agencies the working group on SEA should also invite representatives of academic sector and CSOs.

The initial task of the working group is to prepare an implementation plan with specific steps and time-schedule to implement the activities proposed by the Action Plan (a possible format for the implementation plan is provided in Annex).

The working group shall be responsible for coordinating and supervising the implementation of the Action Plan. Working group meetings should be organized on a regular basis (e.g., every three months). Short annual monitoring reports should be prepared by the working group (see a proposed template in Annex).

ANNEX

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation of the Action Plan should be managed by the inter-sectoral working group on SEA, which shall coordinate the implementation of the activities with the relevant partners. To streamline implementation of the Action Plan, it is recommended to prepare an implementation plan following a format proposed below:

| Activity | Implementing period | Main responsibility for implementation | Potential partners for implementation | Comments |
|---|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1.1 Organizing several high-level awareness raising events on SEA for the high-management (ministers and deputy-ministers) of sectoral ministries, and relevant parliamentary committees. | November 2021 – November 2022 | MAEP | UNECE, OSCE | |
| 1.2 Preparing an information leaflet on the benefits of SEA | March – August 2022 | MAEP | UNECE, OSCE | The leaflet should be distributed to the participants of the events to be organized under 1.1 |
| ... | | | | |
| ... | | | | |
| ... | | | | |
| ... | | | | |

MONITORING

In order to ensure monitoring of the Action Plan implementation, the inter-sectoral working group on SEA should prepare short annual monitoring reports. The monitoring report can follow the format proposed below and shall serve for the discussions with the relevant partners on necessary adjustments of the Action Plan.

| Activity | Status of implementation | Proposed adjustments to the activity | Comments |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1.1 Organizing several high-level awareness raising events on SEA for the high-management (ministers and deputy-ministers) of sectoral ministries, and relevant parliamentary committees. | One event was organized in 2021, next two are planned for the second half of 2022. | Extension of implementing period until December 2022. | |
| 1.2 Preparing an information leaflet on the benefits of SEA | Leaflet prepared in July 2022 | | The activity has been fully completed and can be excluded from the Action plan. |
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