

## Decision V/6

### Assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment

*The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol,*

*Recalling* the preamble to the Protocol,<sup>1</sup> which acknowledges the benefits to the health and well-being of present and future generations that will follow if the need to protect and improve people's health is taken into account as an integral part of strategic environmental assessment,

*Recalling* also the Resource Manual to Support Application of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment,<sup>2</sup> and particularly its annex A1.1. on health, prepared in collaboration with the World Health Organization,

*Recalling further* its decision VII/3–III/3 on adoption of the workplan for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocol for the period 2017–2020, annex II, item IV.1,<sup>3</sup> which foresees the development of guidance for the assessment of potential health impacts of plans and programmes and for the involvement of health authorities,

*Recalling* its commitment to finalizing and formally adopting the guidance in the intersessional period 2021–2023, subject to the availability of resources,<sup>4</sup>

*Recognizing* that, despite the substantial efforts deployed, the work on the draft guidance could not be finalized as initially intended but that said efforts resulted in a document for information purposes,

*Recognizing also* the importance of consulting health authorities alongside the environmental authorities to ensure that environmental, including health, considerations are taken into account in the development of plans and programmes and, to the extent appropriate, in policies and legislation,

*Wishing* to assist Parties in complying with their obligations under the Protocol, and to promote its effective application,

*Wishing also* to assist future Parties in their efforts to develop compliant legislation and practice on strategic environmental assessment, including regarding the assessment of health impacts and the involvement of health authorities,

1. *Welcomes* the development of draft guidance in the period 2019–2020 by two consultants, with funding from the European Investment Bank, in consultation with the secretariat, the World Health Organization and a task force composed of representatives of Austria, Finland, Ireland and Slovenia;

2. *Welcomes also* the subsequent efforts in the period 2022–2023 by the Chair and volunteering members of the Bureau and the European Union and its member States to further develop the draft guidance, resulting in a document for information purposes;

3. *Acknowledges* the document entitled Assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2023/10) and agrees that it is to be made available to the public on the ECE website in English, French and Russian for information purposes, without being endorsed;

4. *Invites* Parties to take note of the contents of the above-mentioned document when applying the Protocol;

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<sup>1</sup> Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, seventh preambular para.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations publication, ECE/MP.EIA/17.

<sup>3</sup> ECE/MP.EIA/23/Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7/Add.1.

<sup>4</sup> ECE/MP.EIA/30/Add.1 ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13/Add.1, decision VIII/3–IV/3, annex, Vilnius Declaration, para. 13.; ECE/MP.EIA/30/Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13/Add.1, decision VIII/2–IV/2; and ECE/MP.EIA/30–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13, para. 33.

5. *Also invites* Parties to disseminate the document to authorities and relevant stakeholders;
  6. *Proposes* that the document be used in the capacity-building activities included in the workplan;
  7. *Expresses appreciation* for the good and long-standing cooperation with the World Health Organization in raising awareness of and supporting the implementation of the Protocol;
  8. *Invites* Parties to submit good practice examples on the assessment of health impacts and the involvement of health authorities in strategic environmental assessment.
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