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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context

Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment

Fourteenth meeting

Geneva, 24–26 November 2010

Report of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment on its fourteenth meeting

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I. Introduction

1. The fourteenth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment, under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, was held from 24 to 26 November 2010 in Geneva.

A. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by delegations from the following Parties to the Convention and other member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Belgium, then holding the Presidency of the European Union (EU), also made statements on behalf of the EU; in addition, representatives of the European Commission attended and made statements. Iraq and Viet Nam, as States Members of the United Nations, were also represented.

3. Representatives of the Convention secretariat attended the meeting. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were represented: Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), Eco-Globe (Armenia), ECOTERRA (Russian Federation), European ECO-Forum, International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC-CEE).

B. Organizational matters

4. The Chair of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Mr. A. Vesic (Serbia), opened the meeting.

5. The Working Group adopted its agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2010/4), which had been prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Bureau.

II. Status of ratification of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and its amendments

6. The secretariat informed participants about the status of ratification of the Convention and its amendments, highlighting the accession of Malta to the Convention.

7. The Chair invited member States of UNECE that were not Parties to the Convention to report on their preparations for their ratification and implementation of the Convention and to identify measures to support their ratification. The Chair also invited Parties to the Convention to report on any planned ratifications of the two amendments to the Convention.

8. In the light of the informal information provided by delegates on their plans for ratification of the two amendments, the Working Group requested the Bureau to prepare a draft decision on a general procedure for accession, upon approval by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, by Member States of the United Nations not members of

UNECE. The draft decision should be forwarded to the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties for consideration.

III. Compliance with and implementation of the Convention

9. The Chair of the Implementation Committee reported on the Committee's review of compliance with the Convention, presenting the report of the Committee's nineteenth session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2010/4). He highlighted:

(a) The Committee's continuing follow-up of decision IV/2 of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/10) with respect to Armenia and Ukraine;

(b) The Committee initiative (ECE/MP.EIA/6, decision III/2, appendix, para. 6) on Azerbaijan;

(c) The Committee's decision not to follow up further on information provided regarding Slovakia's compliance with the Convention;

(d) The Committee's continuing follow-up on information provided regarding compliance with the Convention by Belarus and the Republic of Moldova;

(e) The public availability of a compendium of the Committee's opinions.

10. The Working Group took note of this information. The Chair of the Committee also introduced a draft decision on the review of compliance, including the proposed revision of rule 16 of the Committee's operating rules (decision IV/2, annex IV).

11. The Presidency of the EU (Belgium) urged Ukraine to comply with decision IV/2 before the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

12. Delegations made a number of suggestions on improving the draft decision on the review of compliance, which the Chair of the Implementation Committee indicated would be communicated to that Committee. These included:

(a) Clarification of the proposed amendment of the operating rules of the Committee, as annexed to the draft decision;

(b) Focusing of the Committee's recommendations as set out in the general part of the draft decision;

(c) Clarification of the alternative approaches proposed for the issue of a caution to Ukraine;

(d) Explanation of the status of considerations and recommendations presented in the general part of the draft decision.

13. The delegation of Ukraine questioned whether the draft decision was up to date given the measures taken by Ukraine. The draft decision should also be more specific about the steps Ukraine was expected to take to bring the Danube-Black Sea Deep Water Navigation Canal in the Ukrainian sector of the Danube Delta into compliance, as well as more specific in defining the information to be provided by Ukraine to the Committee.

14. The delegation of Armenia informed the meeting that amendments to the EIA legislation in Armenia were expected to be adopted before the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, thus necessitating amendment of the draft decision.

15. The secretariat reported on the receipt of completed questionnaires on the implementation of the Convention in the period 2006–2009, which several Parties had still not submitted — i.e., Albania, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Serbia, the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. The delegations of Serbia and Ukraine confirmed that they would be submitting their questionnaires by the end of 2010.

16. The Working Group requested the secretariat to incorporate into the draft third review of implementation (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2010/L.3) all completed questionnaires received by 31 December 2010. The secretariat should also address any comments received on the draft review and issue a revised draft by the end of February 2011. Parties would then have a further three weeks to comment on the draft review before the secretariat finalized the draft text and submitted it for processing in time for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

17. Finally, the Committee Chair invited delegations to come forward with candidates for members of the Committee for the period after the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

IV. Exchange of good practices

A. Seminar on climate change in environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment

18. A representative of Austria chaired a seminar on climate change in EIA and strategic environmental assessment (SEA), as foreseen in the Convention workplan. The Working Group congratulated Austria on the organization of the seminar, expressed its thanks to the speakers from Austria, Serbia and United Kingdom, and asked that presentations be posted on the website (see annex for an abridged version of the Chair's summary of the seminar).

B. Complex activities

19. A representative of the European Commission reported on the preparation of a working document that could become the basis for the follow-up on complex activities. The document was to be shared with the secretariat for comment and then made available publicly in May 2011. The document might be discussed by the Meeting of the Parties.

20. The Commission representative also informed the meeting of the holding of a conference on 18 and 19 November 2010 in Leuven, Belgium, celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the EU Directive on EIA,¹ and concluding a public consultation on the review of the EIA Directive.

C. Other activities foreseen in the workplan

21. The Working Group agreed not to hold a half-day seminar on large-scale projects crossing several countries, as originally foreseen in the Convention workplan for the current intersessional period (decision IV/7).

¹ European Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

D. Application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities

22. The secretariat presented an informal background paper on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities, based on the discussions in the previous meeting of the Working Group and on comments received from a number of Parties to the Convention.

23. The Working Group welcomed the paper and agreed that a panel discussion on the subject should be organized within the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. A number of Parties, as well as the representative of European ECO-Forum, expressed an interest in participating in the panel. It was suggested that a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency be invited to join the panel, together with representatives of the European Commission's Directorate-Generals for Energy and for Environment, with the latter perhaps moderating the panel discussion. The panel might address solutions to problems identified by the secretariat in the background paper.

24. The Working Group agreed that the secretariat would circulate for comment the informal list of nuclear energy-related activities until six weeks before the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. The secretariat would also circulate the informal background paper for further comments until the end of February 2011.

25. The delegation of Lithuania informed the meeting on procedures, in which it was involved as an affected Party, for planned nuclear power plants in Belarus and the Russian Federation, and encouraged other Parties to participate in those procedures.

E. Practices in States outside the region

26. The Working Group welcomed the presentations by the representatives of Iraq and Viet Nam on their national EIA systems, and asked that the presentations be placed on the Convention's website.

27. IAIA highlighted the importance of striving continually to improve EIA systems, noting the experience of Viet Nam in this regard.

V. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

28. The delegation of Belarus reported on a pilot implementation project based on the application of the Convention to a proposed hydroelectric power plant in Belarus, upstream of Lithuania. The project would conclude with subregional workshops on 5 November and 3 December 2010 and with the issuance of a final decision on the power plant. Belarus also reported on the ongoing negotiation of bilateral agreements with Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. The meeting welcomed that information.

29. The representative of Tajikistan reported on a national workshop, held in Dushanbe on 22 and 23 July 2010, which had raised awareness of the opportunities provided by the Convention and of the concrete steps that need to be taken to revise national legislation to implement the Convention. Participants in the workshop had asked that capacity-building be continued, including two- or three-day training workshops, and that perhaps a pilot project be carried out with Kyrgyzstan. The Working Group welcomed that information. The representative of Tajikistan also informed the Working Group of the development with the assistance of the World Bank of an environmental and social impact assessment of a planned hydroelectric power plant at Rogun, Tajikistan. Consultations with downstream countries were being planned to examine the technical conditions for the project.

30. The secretariat reported on a planned Mediterranean Sea area workshop, which might be held in Morocco in April 2011. The delegations of France and Portugal indicated that their Governments might be able to assist in the organization and financial support of the workshop, but requested further budgetary information. The delegation of Spain also indicated that its Government might also support the organization of the workshop.

31. The representative of Georgia reported on the planned workshop for the Caucasus subregion, expected to be held in Tbilisi in March 2011, and underlined the commitment of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia to host the workshop. That workshop would be a step forward towards strengthening the capacity of participating countries in EIA in a transboundary context and would significantly contribute to subregional cooperation and the exchange of information.

32. The representative of Georgia also expressed his thanks to the secretariat for providing information on a nuclear power plant construction in Armenia. The Government of Georgia accepted the invitation of the Government of Armenia and declared its intention to participate in the EIA procedure for the planned power plant.

33. The representative of Armenia informed the meeting that Armenia did not have any obligations under the Convention with respect to Georgia, as Georgia was not a Party to the Convention. In addition, Georgia had refused to sign a bilateral agreement under the Convention with Armenia. Further, the secretariat had been informed about the official position of Armenia regarding the transboundary EIA procedure for the planned power plant unit through diplomatic channels and neighbouring countries should have been informed of that.

34. A representative of Ukraine expressed a wish to participate in the workshop to be held in Tbilisi and was invited by Georgia.

35. The Working Group took note of information provided by the secretariat on the planned seminar on the EIA of large energy projects in the Black Sea area. Romania had not been able to organize the seminar as planned because of budgetary constraints. However, REC-CEE and the European Commission, with the financial support of the Netherlands, were to hold the seminar in Hungary in the week following the present meeting.

36. The Working Group took note of information provided by the delegation of Sweden that the second Baltic Sea area workshop would be arranged in spring 2011, perhaps in Espoo, Finland.

37. The representative of Azerbaijan reported on a capacity-building workshop held in Baku from 16 to 18 June 2010, organized with the support of Switzerland within its programme of national EIA workshops in Central Asia and Azerbaijan. The delegation of Switzerland indicated that a next workshop would be held in Uzbekistan in spring 2011, that discussions were continuing with the Government of Turkmenistan on holding a workshop in Ashgabat, and that a concluding subregional conference was expected late in 2011 or early in 2012. The results of that programme could be presented at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. The Working Group welcomed that information.

38. The Working Group took note of information provided by delegations regarding the multilateral agreement among the countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention (Bucharest Agreement):

- (a) Bulgaria and Montenegro were already parties to the Agreement;
- (b) In Croatia, the ratification procedure was under way;
- (c) Romania expected ratification by the end of 2011;
- (d) Serbia expected ratification by June 2011.

39. The Chair, who was from Serbia, observed that the countries of South-Eastern Europe were using the Agreement in practice, pending its entry into force. The Agreement required three parties for its entry into force.

VI. Budget and financial arrangements

40. The Working Group took note of the biannual financial report for the period to 30 June 2010 and the informal list of contributions received subsequently.

41. The Working Group took note of an informal document prepared by the secretariat regarding secretariat staff resources, which had been submitted in response to the Working Group's request to the secretariat to provide more information about the possibilities of financing its additional staff resources and the need for such resources. It also took note of the conclusions of the third session of the Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on SEA regarding that issue (ECE/MP.EIA/AC.3/2010/2, chap. V).

42. The Working Group agreed that securing proper staffing of the secretariat had priority above financial support to participants in formal meetings and that, among participants, priority should be given to representatives of Parties, then of non-Parties and then of NGOs. The Working Group also concluded that a long-term and stable solution for staffing could only be provided through the regular budget of the United Nations.

43. The Working Group agreed to set priorities at the sub-activity level in the draft budget for the period between the fifth and sixth sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

44. In the light of the discussions on budgetary difficulties and the limited secretariat staff, echoing the conclusions of the Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol, and while recognizing that there were both synergies and differences between the Convention and the Protocol, the Working Group considered it appropriate that a single working group be established to oversee the implementation of the workplan under both the Convention and its Protocol. The Working Group requested the Bureau to prepare a joint draft decision accordingly, for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

45. The Working Group welcomed information that an associate expert to support the secretariat for a period of up to two years, funded by Finland, would be starting early in 2011.

46. The Working Group agreed that the draft decision on the budget, to be considered by the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, should ask the Bureau, possibly with the support of a small group, to develop a strategy for carrying out the work under the Convention given the financial constraints.

VII. Financial assistance to representatives of countries with economies in transition, non-governmental organizations and countries outside the region

47. The Working Group took note of the decisions by the Bureau regarding financial support to a Member State of the United Nations not member of UNECE for the present meeting — Viet Nam — and for the expected participation of other States — China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon and Mongolia.

48. The Working Group also took note of the information provided by the secretariat regarding travel outside the UNECE region, to Japan and the Republic of Korea, which had resulted in expenditure from the Convention's trust fund of approximately \$500. That information was provided as decided by the Meeting of the Parties.

VIII. Preparations for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention

49. The Chair presented Bureau proposals on draft decisions (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2010/L.2 and ECE/MP.EIA/AC.3/2010/L.1) for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention. Three small groups were formed comprising the EU member States; the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia; and other countries represented in the meeting. NGO representatives joined different small groups. The small groups then examined the description of the activities set out in the draft decision on the adoption of the workplan (ECE/MP.EIA/AC.3/2010/L.1, decision V/4).

50. In plenary, the Working Group revised the description of these activities and asked the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to prepare a revised text for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

51. The Working Group then revised the draft decision on the budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance (ECE/MP.EIA/AC.3/2010/L.1, decision V/5), reflecting the earlier deliberations on the budget and financial arrangements (chap. VI above). It also decided that the new joint working group should meet three times, and the Implementation Committee not more than eight times, in the intersessional period. The new joint working group should meet in spring 2012, spring 2013 and late 2013. The Working Group agreed to forward the draft decision to the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

52. The Working Group then reviewed and, in some cases, revised a series of draft decisions:

(a) The review of implementation (decision V/1), which the meeting revised to remove reference to development of a revised questionnaire and a further review of implementation specific to the Convention alone, as those would instead be covered by a joint decision between the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;

(b) Reporting and the review of implementation (ECE/MP.EIA/AC.3/2010/L.1, decision I/4), a draft decision that the Working Group agreed with the Meeting of the Signatories should be revised to be a joint decision between the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;

(c) The application of the compliance procedure to the Protocol (decision V/3), was approved without revision;

(d) Interpretation of article 14 of the Convention (amendments) (decision V/6), was approved without revision;

(e) Amendment of rule 7 of the rules of procedure (decision V/7), was approved without revision.

53. The Working Group asked the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to submit the revised draft decisions to the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

54. The Working Group reviewed and agreed on an outline programme for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, while also considering that further programme proposals could be submitted to the secretariat until 31 January 2011. The Working Group requested the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to prepare the annotated provisional agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

55. The Working Group did not provide nominations for the Chair of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. However, the delegations of Lithuania, Poland, Serbia and possibly Ukraine expressed an interest in serving in the Bureau in the intersessional period between the fifth and sixth sessions of the Meeting of the Parties

56. The delegations of Armenia, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine expressed an interest in each providing a member of the Implementation Committee. The Slovenian Vice-Chair of the Committee was willing to chair the Committee.

57. There were no proposals for the timing and location of the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

IX. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting

58. The Working Group agreed on the main decisions taken at the meeting, as presented by the secretariat. The Chair closed the meeting on Friday, 26 November 2010.

Annex

Chair's summary of seminar on climate change in environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment

1. The seminar on climate change in EIA and SEA was organized by Austria and held on 24 November 2010. Its main aim was to provide a forum for participants to exchange experiences with respect to taking climate change considerations into account in EIA and SEA, offering information in the field of climate change on international and EU levels, available guidance and good practice examples.
2. Human activities have a long history in significantly influencing the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere. In particular, the use of fossil energy (oil, natural gas, lignite and hard coal), transport, agricultural production and land use changes (such as forest clear-cuts) are among the main causes of the continuous increase. Global GHG emissions have steadily grown since pre-industrial times and amounted to around 49 billion tons in 2004 (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report, 2007^a). This trend is also found in the UNECE region. Industry and manufacturing, transport, energy production, heating and further small consumers, as well as agriculture, are responsible for about 95 per cent of GHG emissions.
3. The above-mentioned main causes mostly fall as appendix I activities under the scope of the Espoo Convention. The call for considering aspects of climate change arises from the international commitment under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change, and is also to be found at the EU level in the White Paper "Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action" (Commission of the European Communities, 2009^b) with particular reference to EIA and SEA.
4. The following summary highlights the most relevant points arising from the presentations and discussions in the seminar, also summarizing the main outcomes of three break-out groups.

Opening of the seminar

5. The seminar was opened by the Chair, Dr. Christian Baumgartner, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria. The Chair emphasized the need to act on the challenges posed by a changing climate. Despite the fact that GHG emissions were caused by various human activities, which to a great extent did not fall under the scope of EIA and SEA, all involved EIA, and SEA experts should take the opportunity to use the instruments they were entrusted with. External factors, such as lack of political will, also often hindered decisions to be taken in favour of the environment despite thorough impact assessments. In addition, there was a need for adequate tools to identify appropriate measures in dealing with climate change and other relevant environmental issues.
6. After his opening statement, the Chair invited participants to assemble along a virtual line in the meeting room by their level of experience in dealing with climate change

^a Available at <http://www.ipcc.ch/>.

^b Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0147:FIN:EN:PDF>.

issues in EIA and SEA. That initial “formation” showed a clear picture with the majority of participants gathering at one end of the virtual line with little or no experience. Only three participants (two presenters and the representative of Canada) met at the other end of the line, as having a lot of experience in considering climate change in EIA/SEA.

Presentations

7. The first presentation by Sabine McCallum, Environment Agency Austria, gave an overview of the international and EU climate change regime. She highlighted relevant mechanisms and noted how EIA and SEA could facilitate successful “climate proofing”. She pointed to a variety of guidance documents, highlighting their main foci, and concluded with her impressions of the outcomes of the most recently organized IAIA special symposium on Climate Change and Impact Assessment in Aalborg, Denmark.

8. Maria do Rosário Partidário, the IAIA representative, noted the impressive amount of guidance available and asked which ones it would be advisable to use. In that connection, Sabine McCallum noted that, in screening all the guidance documents, she had observed that they all followed the same core methodology and it would be possible to summarize in a few pages the essential points that needed to be considered when dealing with climate change in EIA/SEA.

9. The second presentation was made by Lucia Susani from the Environment Agency of the United Kingdom on their Climate Change Guidance for SEA. After showing the core parts of the guidance, Ms. Susani mentioned the current revision of the 2007 guidance with an update to be expected in March 2011. That revision would be more web-based to allow for continuous updating and easier access and would include more practical examples.

10. The subsequent discussion and questions raised issues on how the guidance could be used as checklist for the plan/programme to be assessed, and whether the guidance could also be applied for climate change mitigation. Participants also asked for clarification about the timing of SEA together with the plan/programme preparation and if there was any experience with taking transboundary effects into account. The United Kingdom SEA guidance could indeed also be used as a checklist for the plan/programme to examine how climate change had been considered up until the final consultation phase. With regard to climate change mitigation, the issue was an important factor when comparing alternatives. Another question was related to experiences in dealing with occupation in vulnerable areas, where displacement of inhabitants was not executed, but subsidies and gradually higher insurance rates could steer further development.

11. The next presentation was given by Micun Stanic, Ministry of Science and Environment protection of Serbia, who provided practical examples in dealing with requirements for adaptation to climate change in EIA procedures. He highlighted different perceptions and stated a general reluctance of engineers to base their assessments on climate change scenarios.

12. In the subsequent discussion, Mr. Stanic mentioned that from his experience many engineers/developers simply denied climate change and therefore were not willing to adapt their project design. The main challenge was to raise awareness and change habits. Further, some examples in the transport sector were presented by participants from Tajikistan, Norway and Sweden, where taking climate change into consideration had influenced the project design or led to the realignment of the transport infrastructure. Canada noted that any guidance should better link to climate change models and information on adaptation, in particular to downscaling and data in better resolution.

13. The last presentation, by Susanna Eberhartinger-Tafill from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria, introduced the

content and use of the new “climate and energy concept”, which was a part of the Environmental Impact Documentation that every applicant had to submit in Austrian EIA procedures. Ms. Eberhartinger-Tafill drew attention to EIA project types of particular relevance for climate change, highlighted requirements for proper assessments and further gave examples of measures to reduce GHG emissions and to increase energy efficiency. She presented a guideline for drawing up a climate and energy concept containing certain thresholds for energy consuming activities that would have to be exceeded when requiring detailed energy consumption data and measures.

14. Questions were raised with regard to whether a screening threshold was necessary or acceptable and whether the requirements for the Austrian climate and energy concept were also reflected in the substantive criteria for granting development consent (that was only partly the case). It was clarified that the guideline did not provide a questionnaire or checklist, but information on the requirements for a climate and energy concept. The document was only available in German.

Break-out groups

15. After the presentations participants held discussions in three break-out groups on the following questions:

(a) From your national experience, which formats (e.g., checklists, guidelines, provision of good practice examples) could support taking climate change into account when dealing with EIA/SEA?

(b) From your personal point of view, what are the major difficulties to expect?

(c) How can the UNECE assist you in addressing climate change?

The following summarizes the main outcomes of the break-out groups:

1. Break-out group comprising EU member States A–L

Formats to support taking climate change into account when dealing with EIA/SEA:

- For SEA, guidance
- For EIA, checklist and guidance (for screening); type, size, mitigation measures, adaptation measures and life cycle

Major difficulties to expect:

- Making assessments meaningful for decisions
- How to manage uncertainties? Which scenario to use?
- Convince developer that climate change is taken into account at EIA/SEA when doing evaluation of impacts
- Legal requirements are necessary

Assistance from UNECE:

- To summarize the essential points in all the guidance documents on climate change that needed to be considered
- Short checklists for mitigation and adaptation
- Collection and analysis of good practice examples (separate for EIA and SEA)
- Provide concrete examples for different sector (activities)

2. Break-out group comprising EU member States M–Z, and others

Formats to support taking climate change into account when dealing with EIA/SEA:

- Combination of all approaches (e.g., checklists, guidelines, provision of good practice examples) should be used
- Project examples are good to illustrate experience
- There is a need for better models/tools/scenarios, made useful for EIA community
- Web-based tools are found to be helpful, should be easily accessible and need to be kept up to date

Major difficulties to expect:

- Lack of clarity/understanding on how to handle uncertainties in climate projections
- Guidance is needed for assessing uncertainties:
 - must be strategic
 - quantification of project emissions
 - interaction of GHG emissions from project EIA with Government GHG target

Assistance from UNECE:

- Collect good-practice cases, especially in a transboundary context (but not develop new guidance)
- Uncertain of whether UNECE should take on more work / organize another seminar

3. Break-out group comprising countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

Formats to support taking climate change into account when dealing with EIA/SEA:

- Recommendations, guidance documents as presented in the seminar are important to support assessment of climate change in EIA/SEA
- Exchange of good practice is also needed

Major difficulties to expect:

- There is no practice in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in assessing climate change as part of EIA/SEA. Only a few projects are carried out where climate change issues are evaluated (e.g., road construction projects in Tajikistan)
- There is also no methodology available and no knowledge of best available technology (BAT). Especially important would be knowledge of assessing alternatives and having information on appropriate alternatives

Assistance from UNECE:

- Suggest evaluating already available guidance documents (recommendations) and making use of them
- Suggestion to translate at least one guidance document into Russian language, including information on available best practice examples
- Recommendations on transboundary climate change issues shall also be reflected in the guidance documents made available in Russian