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Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the
Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Working Group on the Development of the Convention

Seventh meeting

Geneva, 12–14 April 2016

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Joint guidance and workshop on land-use planning, the
siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects**

Joint guidance and workshop on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The workplan adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) at its eighth meeting in December 2014 (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, annex II) envisages the sharing of good practices on safety and land-use planning in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA) to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management.

At its sixth meeting, in December 2015, the Working Group on the Development of the Convention took note of the proposed organization of a joint workshop on the topic with the Protocol on SEA and the Committee on Housing and Land Management. The Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Protocol on SEA had agreed to proceed with the suggested joint activities, with a view to promoting synergies on the application of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol. The joint workshop will be instrumental for the preparation of a guidance document on land-use planning and related safety aspects, as decided by the treaty bodies under the two instruments.

The present document provides background information on the workshop, to be held on 13 April 2016 in Geneva. The provisional agenda will be shared with national focal points and other stakeholders in advance of the workshop.

I. Background and mandate

1. At its eighth meeting (Geneva, 3–5 December 2014), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) requested the Working Group on the Development of the Convention (Working Group on Development) to review a guidance document on land-use planning drafted by an external consultant (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, para. 45). The workplan adopted by the Conference of the Parties under the Industrial Accidents Convention at its eighth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, annex II) also envisages the sharing of good practices on safety and land-use planning in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA) to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management and the European Union/European Investment Bank, as the lead Party/organization for this workplan activity.

2. To promote synergies and consistency in the application of relevant provisions of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA, the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Protocol, taking into consideration the proposal by its Bureau and the support provided by the European Investment Bank, agreed at its fourth meeting (Geneva, 26–28 May 2015) to implement the following activities: the development of guidance on safety and land-use planning; and the organization of a related workshop (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2015/2). The Committee on Housing and Land Management decided at its seventy-sixth session (Geneva, 14–15 December 2015) to include the organization of the joint workshop in its programme of work.

3. The draft joint guidance is being developed under the leadership of the consultant in consultation with Parties and stakeholders. It builds on, among others, information gathered through a survey that was circulated to the Parties and other stakeholders in December 2015 for completion by 18 January 2016. The European Union/European Investment Bank provides financial support for the development of the joint guidance and the organization of the joint workshop.

4. At its fifth and sixth meetings (Geneva, 11–13 May and 30 November–2 December 2015, respectively), the Working Group on Development took note of the proposed development of the guidance, including its outline (see ECE/CP.TEIA/WG.1/2015/11, annex), the preparation of a related survey and the organization of the joint workshop.

5. The joint workshop is an important step in the preparation of the guidance document on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects,¹ as it provides an opportunity for Parties and other stakeholders to be informed of and provide their views on the work undertaken so far. The outcomes of the workshop will inform the further development of the draft guidance.

¹ In order to clarify the scope of the guidance, the small group of experts on land-use planning recommended to reflect more specifically that it concerns land-use planning and related safety aspects with respect to industrial hazardous activities. The title “Guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects” is thus being proposed by the secretariat, in cooperation with the consultant preparing the guidance and the European Investment Bank as lead organization. The reference to siting should, however, not be understood in an exclusive way, as the guidance should not only refer to the siting of new hazardous activities, but also modifications to existing hazardous activities and developments in areas that could be affected by the transboundary effects of an industrial accident (see ECE/CP.TEIA/WG.1/2015/11, annex).

II. Objective

6. The workshop is being organized jointly under the aegis of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA, in collaboration with the Committee on Housing and Land Management. It focuses on relevant experiences, good practices and challenges encountered by Parties and stakeholders in the field of safety and land-use planning, in particular with respect to the siting of hazardous activities. More specifically, the joint workshop will provide a forum for:

(a) Discussing and further developing the draft joint guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects that draws on, among others, the information gathered from national focal points and stakeholders through a questionnaire survey;

(b) Sharing relevant experiences, good practices, challenges and lessons learned in the field of land-use planning and siting throughout the ECE region;

(c) Identifying means to improve the application of the relevant provisions of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA to the siting of hazardous activities in a mutually consistent and complementary manner, as well as in taking due account of the other existing instruments and policies.

7. During the joint workshop the participants will be invited to:

(a) Provide general and specific comments on the draft guidance in view of the further development of the document;

(b) Share available expertise, experience and good practices, as well as lessons learned, concerning safety and land-use planning with respect to the siting of hazardous activities.

This information will be reflected to the extent feasible in the guidance document.

8. Participants will also be given an opportunity to provide detailed comments in writing prior to and after the event.

III. Topics addressed during the joint workshop

9. The workshop also aims at providing information to participants on the following topics:

(a) The existing legal obligations and guidance related to land-use planning and the siting and modification of hazardous activities under the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA;

(b) The existing guidance from the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management on this topic;

(c) The conclusions and recommendations of the joint seminar on land-use planning around hazardous industrial sites (The Hague, 11–12 November 2010).

10. Participants in the joint workshop will be invited to consider:

(a) A presentation on the draft guidance document for comments by Parties and other stakeholders;

(b) Examples of experiences, good practices and lessons learned in implementing the respective ECE legal obligations by Parties and other countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(c) Coordination, complementarities and synergies in the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on SEA.
