

Economic Commission for Europe

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

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sixth meeting

Geneva, 7–10 November 2016

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Compliance and implementation

Suggested improvements to the questionnaires on the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol

Note by the secretariat

A. The Convention

1. Parties made a number of suggestions on how the report on implementation of the Convention may be improved. There was support from Austria, and Switzerland for the idea that in future countries should submit answers to the first part of the questionnaire that only relate to changes in national policies and legislation.

2. A number of general comments were made about the questionnaire, including those listed below:

(a) Some of the questions are too detailed, and it would be preferable to have simple and shorter questions (Austria);

(b) The layout is very difficult to work with: ticking boxes that are not tickable, open text fields and changing margins and enumerations make it chaotic and difficult to go through the questionnaire and find previous given answers. The layout of Table II.2 (a) makes it impossible to write case names etc. An editable .pdf format with rimmed text fields to fill in might be easier. Even better would be a web form; this might also facilitate processing the submitted forms. It is often unclear whether questions aim at domestic EIAs for projects with transboundary adverse effects, EIAs for transboundary projects and joint transboundary EIAs in which authorities from different countries cooperate (Netherlands);

(c) A web format would be preferable (Netherlands and Slovenia);

(d) For some questions more than one answer is possible or an explicit and clear answer, like “yes” or “no”, is not possible (Austria);

(e) It is not always clear whether a question should be answered by the Party of origin or as the affected Party (e.g. question I.7) (Switzerland);

3. Comments on specific questions include those listed below.
- (a) Is the question on public participation really to be addressed under point I.20 (consultations under s. 5)?
 - (b) In question I.20, what is understood by the “intended audience”?
 - (c) Question I.32b is not clear. What is the difference between this and question I.32a? (All Switzerland);
 - (d) In question II.2. it is difficult to define the length (mainly in months) of the steps referred to in the question. It would be more useful to have information on which phase of the notification took place (during the screening, the scoping or the EIA phase) (Germany);
 - (e) Does question II.7 require an example of best practices of some projects or of a common/nuclear project? (Switzerland)

B. The Protocol

The Netherlands was the only responding Party to suggest improvements to the report, considering that an editable PDF format with text fields to fill in might be easier, and that a web form would be even easier, and might also facilitate processing the submitted forms. The Netherlands also suggested that the scope of some questions was not clear.
