


Guidelines for practical implementation of SEA and presentation of 2 cases from Slovenia

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Resource Manual to Support Application of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

- prepared by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) & Regional Environmental Center for Central & Eastern Europe (REC)
- http://www.unece.org/env/eia/sea_manual/welcome.html
- A tool for everyone!



The Idea of the Manual and its contents

- A tool for SEA in the context of SEA Protocol of Espoo Convention
- 2 parts:
 - Application of the Protocol
 - Trainers' Guide



Application of the Protocol

- A Brief Introduction To Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Integration Of SEA Into Plan And Programme Making
- Determining Whether Plans And Programmes Require Sea Under The Protocol
- SEA Of Plans And Programmes
- Overview Of Basic Tools For SEA
 - analytical And Participatory Tools In SEA
- Policies and Legislation



Trainers' Guide

- Chapter B1: Capacity Development Framework For The Protocol
- Chapter B2: Example Structure Of Practical Exercise For Use In Training Course On The Protocol
 - Tasks for case study



Important issues

- Early integration of Planners Team and SEA Team
- Scoping
- Health implications
- Public involvement



Early integration of SEA into the preparation of Plan/Policy

- Close cooperation of Planners Team and SEA Team should start early on!
- SEA Fully Integrated into Decision-Making
 - Hard work, but good yield!
- SEA partially Integrated into Decision-Making
- “ex-post” SEA that is separated from Decision-Making
 - Delays in the process, P/P not acceptable from environmental point of view?
 - Duplication of activities
 - Non compliance?



Scoping

- Involvement of authorities, relevant authorities and wider public
- Identification of key issues early on
- Consensus on methods, SEA objectives, procedures \Rightarrow relevant issues!



Health implications

- Greater integration of Public Health
 - pilot studies
 - procedures to satisfy Protocol requirements
 - guidance meeting institutional needs & context
- Challenges:
 - Determination of significant health effects
 - Consulting environmental & health authorities
 - Assessing expected impacts on health, including qualitative & quantitative

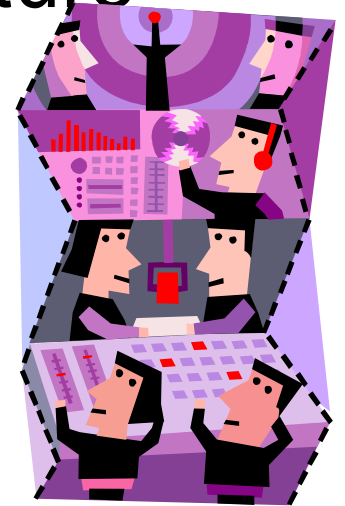


Involvement of Concerned Public

- Public participation
 - Scoping
 - Public consultation
 - workshops
- Consensus building
- Transboundary issues
 - Important for compliance with the convention
 - Start early on!

SEA of operational programmes in Slovenia in practice

- OP Regional Development (ERDF)
- OP Environment and Infrastructure (Cohesion Fund, ERDF)
- OP Rural Development
- OP Fisheries
- Cross-Border Cooperation Ops
 - AT-SLO, ITA-SLO, SLO-HU, SLO-CRO



SEA of OP for Regional Development 2007 - 2013

Source of Funding: European Regional Development Fund

Implementing Body: Government office for local-self-government and regional policy





Key characteristics of SEA process

- **Start of SEA:**
 - just before 1st draft was finalised
 - before screening was done at the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning
- **SEA Team:**
 - consultants + “SEA officer” of Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy
- **Methods:**
 - adjusted from GDRP Handbook on SEA for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, UK Guidelines...



SEA Process

- Scoping within SEA Team
- Analysis and first conclusions ⇒ report to the OP Team
- Participation at OP Team meetings and coordinations between sectors
- Assessment of impacts ⇒ report to the OP Team
- Check of new draft OPs and preparation of mitigation measures
- Consultation with the SEA Sector MESP
- Consultation with the public
 - Internet
http://www.svlr.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/podrocje_evropske_kohezijske_politike/kohezijska_politika_v_obdobju_2007_2013/programski_dokumenti_slovenije_2007_2013/
 - Public hearing



Priorities of OP Regional Development

- 1.1. Improvement of competitiveness and research excellence
- 1.2. Stimulation of Business
- 2.1. Economic Development Logistic Centres (infrastructural platforms)
- 2.2. Information Society
- 2.3. Infrastructure for Education and Research
- 3.1. Competitiveness of tourist sector
- 3.2. Networking of natural and cultural resources
- 3.3. Sports infrastructure
- 4.1. Regional Development Programmes
- 4.2. Development of border areas near CRO



Environmental Objectives

- Complex issue
- Overview of relevant strategic documents, legislation
- Overview of indicators and existing monitoring
 - KISS approach – Keep It Simple and Stupid



What have we achieved with SEA in OP Regional Development

- Environmental projects priority for funding (e.g. research, business,...)
- Change of activity: networking of natural and cultural potential ⇒ support for Natura 2000 and PA management
- Selection criteria:
 - Must do – obligatory measures
 - Scoring system: environmentally sound projects get more points

SEA of OP for CBC Programmes 2007 - 2013

Source of Funding: European Regional
Development Fund

Implementing Body: Government office for local-
self-government and regional policy

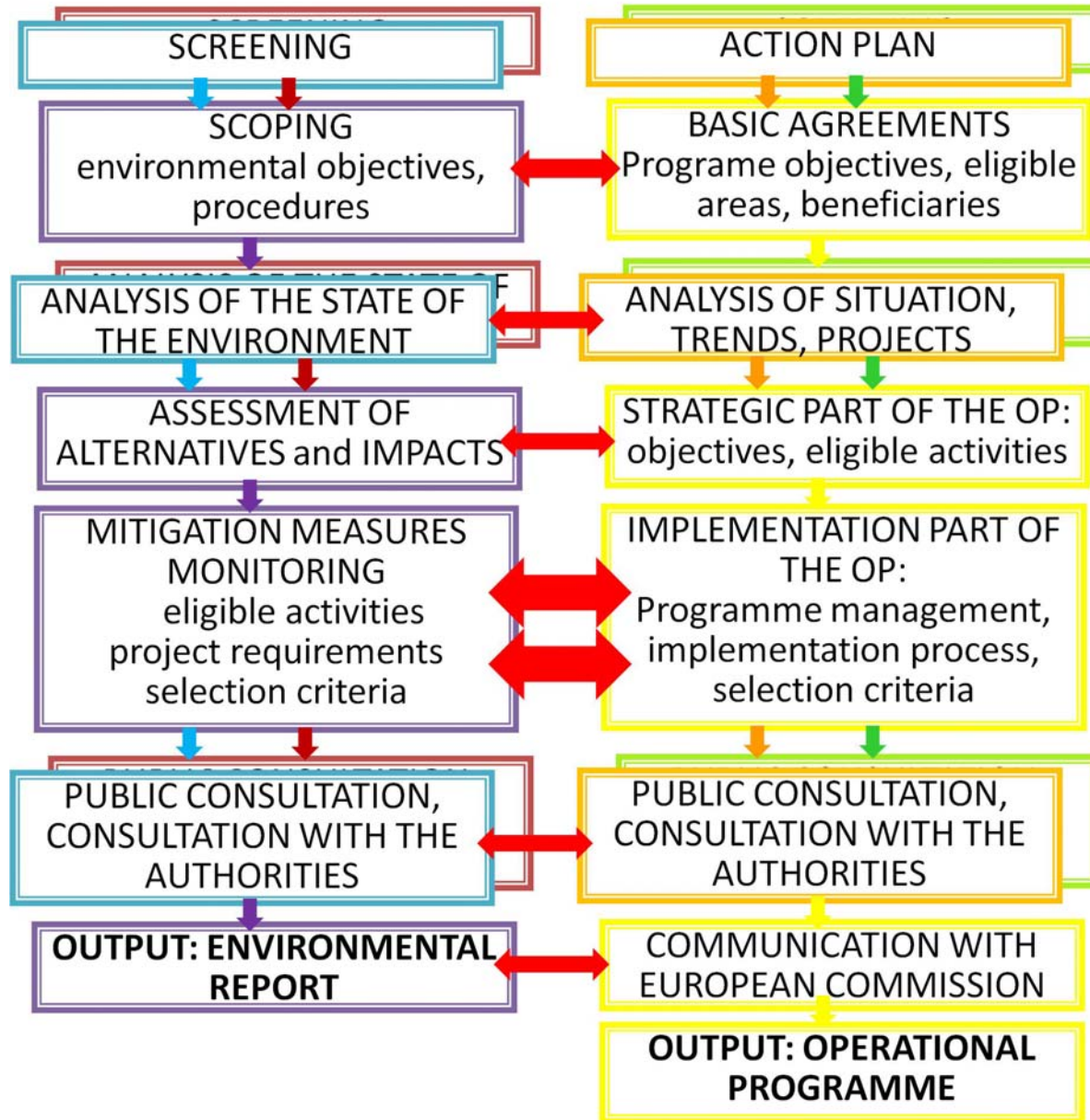




Key characteristics of SEA Team and Process

- Multilingual
- Consensus-building
- Extreme coordination due to differences in processes
 - ⇒ agreement was necessary
 - ⇒ many coordinating agencies, bodies
 - ⇒ SEA a novelty in Croatia

Bilateral Agreement





General observations

- Geographical diversity of the programming areas
 - Size and number of protected areas, Natura 2000 sites
 - Transport infrastructure
- Socioeconomic diversity of programming areas
 - Differences in legal framework
 - Different administrative/management structures
 - Differences in level of experience
 - Previous collaboration, but to varying degrees
 - Language differences can influence understanding of the issues in the programming and assessment processes



Technical observations

- There is no permanent joint body for cooperation in the programming and environmental assessment and consultation processes (so far only Ad hoc)
- Priority tasks and activities of the OPs were very general, with no geographic focus ⇒ difficulties at assessment of impacts on environmental objectives.
- Differences in databases in different states (different systems, methods, levels and time periods of monitoring) ⇒ environmental reports do not contain precisely comparable data for a certain environmental issue.
- Differences in procedures, languages (translations!), discussions and consensus building within the SEA Team from both countries, within the Programming Team from both countries and between the SEA and the Programming Team,... ⇒ The process of bilateral SEA requires time and resources!
- Administrative capacity has a large influence on the success of the process!



Recommendations

- **Begin SEA jointly with Operational Programme:** *Environment Authorities and Authorities in charge of programming should agree on procedures, methods, timing and deadlines as well as relevant issues. Calculate in the programming schedule time required for legal procedures and translations!*
- **Clearly define Terms of Reference for SEA:** clearly separate it from Ex-Ante Evaluation and get the Authorities in both countries agree on it. At outsourcing, demand experts from both countries and clearly define required expertise for experts from both countries.
- **Demand close collaboration** between the SEA Team and the Programming Team in both countries.
- **Organise an open scoping with a large number of various stakeholders from both countries.** Consult the public all the time – make draft Environmental Reports



Recommendations

- Collaborate on **joint/compatible environmental databases** in the programming areas and agree on action in case of poor data or lack of data.
- **Include alternatives in the programming process.** Consider conclusions, mitigation measures and recommendations from Environmental Report in finishing and agreement on Operational Programme.
- **Prepare for monitoring of environmental impacts** during OP implementation and at its closure (post project monitoring).
- **Establish joint body for bilateral collaboration** in programming and SEA Directive implementation, possibly in the earliest phase of programming.



Conclusions

- **With SEA we have achieved:**
- Improvement of the programmes of cross-border cooperation through inclusion of environmental objectives and environment-specific project selection criteria,
- cross-border cooperation between environmental experts and Authorities,
- improved understanding of joint environmental objectives and important environmental issues.

- **Our experience could easily be transferred to other UNECE region states.**

- **Experience with cross-border SEA in the cross-border collaboration programming process could be used in SEAs for other similar programmes.**

What have we learned with all SEAs of Operational Programmes?

- Process should start early
- Scoping with all stakeholders, especially sectors involved in SEA preparation
- Cooperation of authorities is essential
- OPs should be planned with environmental objectives in mind
- Internet as a useful tool for ongoing public consultation



Thank you!

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