

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991)

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Start-up workshop for pilot implementation project
Minsk, 22-23 June 2009

Introduction to the pilot implementation project

- Environment & Security Initiative
- Participation
- Funding
- Project foreseen
 - Objective
 - Scope
 - Results
 - Phases
 - Organization and implementation



Environment & Security Initiative (1/2)

- ENVSEC Initiative works to assess & address environmental problems that threaten (or are perceived to threaten) security, societal stability & peace, human health or sustainable livelihoods, within & across national borders in conflict prone regions
- Members
 - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**
 - **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**
 - **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**
 - Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)
 - *Associate member*: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)



Environment & Security Initiative (2/2)

- Through extensive regional consultations and multi-stakeholder participation the initiative seeks to:
 - Identify environment and conflict hotspots by carrying out desk & field assessments
 - Present results of assessments in graphically rich maps, reports and website and draw attention of politicians & people to situations and hot spots where risks are high
 - Help societies to deal with priority issues by raising awareness, building capacities and strengthening institutions
 - Support concrete action and catalyse specific solutions for the identified security-relevant environmental problems on the ground

Organizations participating

- Implementing Partners, within ENVSEC
 - UNECE
 - OSCE
 - UNDP Minsk
- Other project partners (*to include*)
 - Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus
 - Ministry of Energy, Belarus
 - Ministries of Environmental Protection in affected and neighbouring States
 - Proponent of power plant

Funding

- Start-up workshop
 - OSCE Minsk
 - In-kind from many
- Pilot implementation project
 - ENVSEC / OSCE / Canada
 - In-kind from many

Project objective

- **Overall objective** of project is to improve dialogue and cooperation and involve stakeholders and the public in the development and assessment of major projects in Belarus with a potential cross-border impact on the environment
- UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context is used as main instrument to achieve this
- **Specific objective** is to demonstrate effective implementation of Convention in Belarus and Lithuania, (Parties to Convention). Relevant authorities in Kaliningrad, Russian Federation (signatory to Convention), will be invited to participate

Project scope

- Full procedure of EIA in a transboundary context will be applied to planned hydroelectric power plant on the Neman River in Belarus
 - with involvement of Lithuania's and the Russian Federation's authorities and the public
 - as per Convention provisions
- On basis of experience from pilot
 - national implementation mechanisms will be developed
 - needed training implemented

Project results

- National implementation mechanisms for Convention, including national action plan to support implementation of Convention in Belarus
- Guidelines for implementation of Convention in Belarus
- Capacity building: Trained experts and officials, NGOs in Belarus
- Increased cooperation on environmental issues among the States concerned
- Pilot assessment of a planned activity, according to Convention procedures
- Dissemination of results of project to other countries of Eastern Europe as a basis to the future application of Convention provisions in these countries

Project phases

1. Initiating process: Start-up workshop
 - funded by OSCE Minsk, June 2009
2. Pilot EIA
3. Assessment of project results
4. Development of national procedures & capacity building
5. Subregional conference to disseminate project results
6. Publication of final project report
 - including detailed budget expenditure

Project phases (1)

Initiating the process: Start-up workshop
(funded by OSCE Minsk), June 2009

- To agree on institutional arrangements, financial aspects & time schedule for steps
- Workshop should address following topics:
 - Introduction to Convention, its procedure and guidance materials
 - Introduction to planned activity: Neman River hydropower plant
 - Environmental assessment systems in concerned States
 - Introduction to the Pilot Project: application of Convention to hydropower plant and follow-up activities
 - Practical arrangements: institutional, financial & timing
 - Agreement on next steps

Project phases (2)

Pilot EIA

- According to Convention provisions
 - Notification
 - Confirmation of participation
 - Preparation of EIA documentation
 - Distribution of EIA documentation
 - Public participation
 - Consultation between Parties
 - Final decision, transmittal of final decision
- Outputs ../..

Project phases (2)

Pilot EIA

- Outputs
 - An approved EIA in Russian and key parts available in Lithuanian and English prepared by the responsible authority in Belarus.
 - Other documentation such as Lithuania's and the Russian Federation's viewpoints and conclusions from public hearings in Belarus, Lithuania and Kaliningrad. These documents will be available in Russian with key parts or summaries available in Lithuanian and English prepared by the responsible authority in Belarus

Project phases (3)

Assessment of project results

- Pilot EIA assessed in expert meeting with participation of the Governments of Belarus, Lithuania and the Russian Federation, national legal experts, international experts and ENVSEC National Focal Points
 - Organization of an expert group meeting. Responsible: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus
 - Following documents to be prepared before expert meeting and revised after meeting on basis of meeting conclusions
- Outputs ../..

Project phases (3)

Assessment of project results

- Outputs (in Russian & English)
 - Description of EIA procedure as experienced in pilot assessment. Prepared by responsible authority in Belarus
 - Assessment of needs in terms of legal framework & capacity building in Belarus, Lithuania & Russian Federation, prepared by relevant national authorities & NGOs, if possible in collaboration. Documents to include proposed programme for project phase 4. Responsible: Ministries of Environment in concerned States
 - Expert review & assessment of EIA procedure in pilot assessment by group of international experts. Responsible: Convention Secretariat. Responsible for translation to Russian: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus
 - Draft guidelines for implementation of Convention in Belarus

Project phases (4)

Development of national procedures & capacity building

- National working group in Belarus will develop national procedures and drafts of legal texts providing details for national implementation of Convention
- Capacity-building activities organized in parallel to this
- International consultants will support work of national working group
- Outputs
 - Report from Belarus on development & implementation of national procedures and capacity-building activities (Russian, key parts in English)
- Responsible: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus

Project phases (5)

Subregional conference to disseminate project results

- Subregional conference for Belarus, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine arranged to disseminate project results, including final report of project and pilot study
- Outputs
 - Organization of subregional conference with participation from at least 4 of above-listed States
 - Published conference report including conference resolution, programme and list of participants (English and Russian)
- Responsible: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus

Project phases (6)

Publication of final project report,
including detailed budget expenditure

- Output
 - Printed project report possible to upload to the Internet (in Russian and English)
 - Will include edited versions of material of earlier project phases
- Responsible: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus

Project organization & implementation (1/2)

- OSCE/OCEEA, UNECE and UNDP Minsk
 - overall responsibility for project implementation
- Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus
 - implement project to a large degree
- Advisory group with representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Protection, Belarus, and Belarusian NGOs
 - develop draft workplans for different project phases

Project organization & implementation (2/2)

- UNDP Minsk
 - project management
 - administration of funds
 - financial and reporting responsibility
- UNECE Secretariat of the Espoo Convention
 - facilitate project
 - oversee substantive expertise
 - have a monitoring function
 - establish group of international experts to follow and give advice on project implementation