

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

Subregional workshop
CITET, Tunis, 20-21 April 2010

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www.unece.org/env/eia



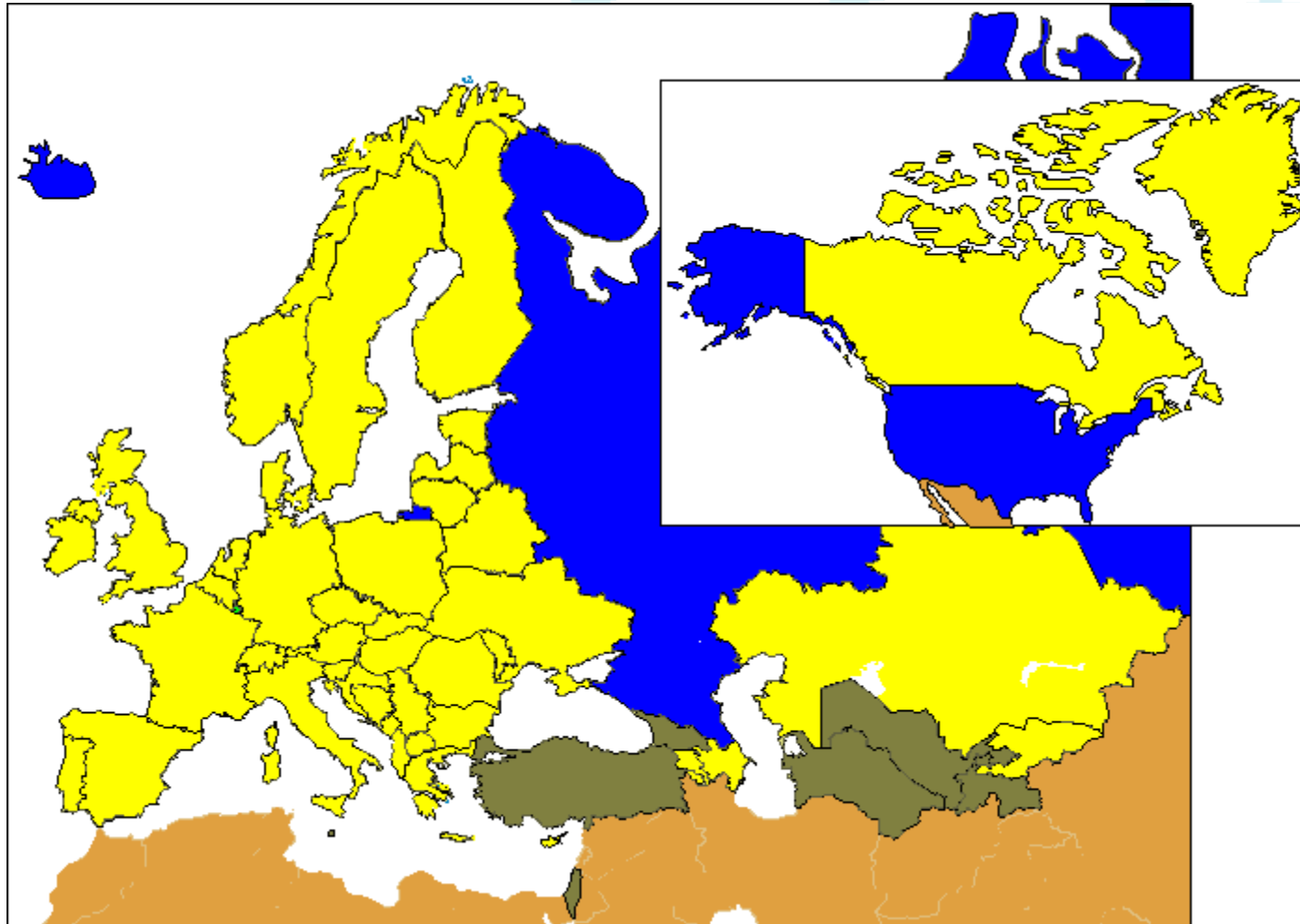
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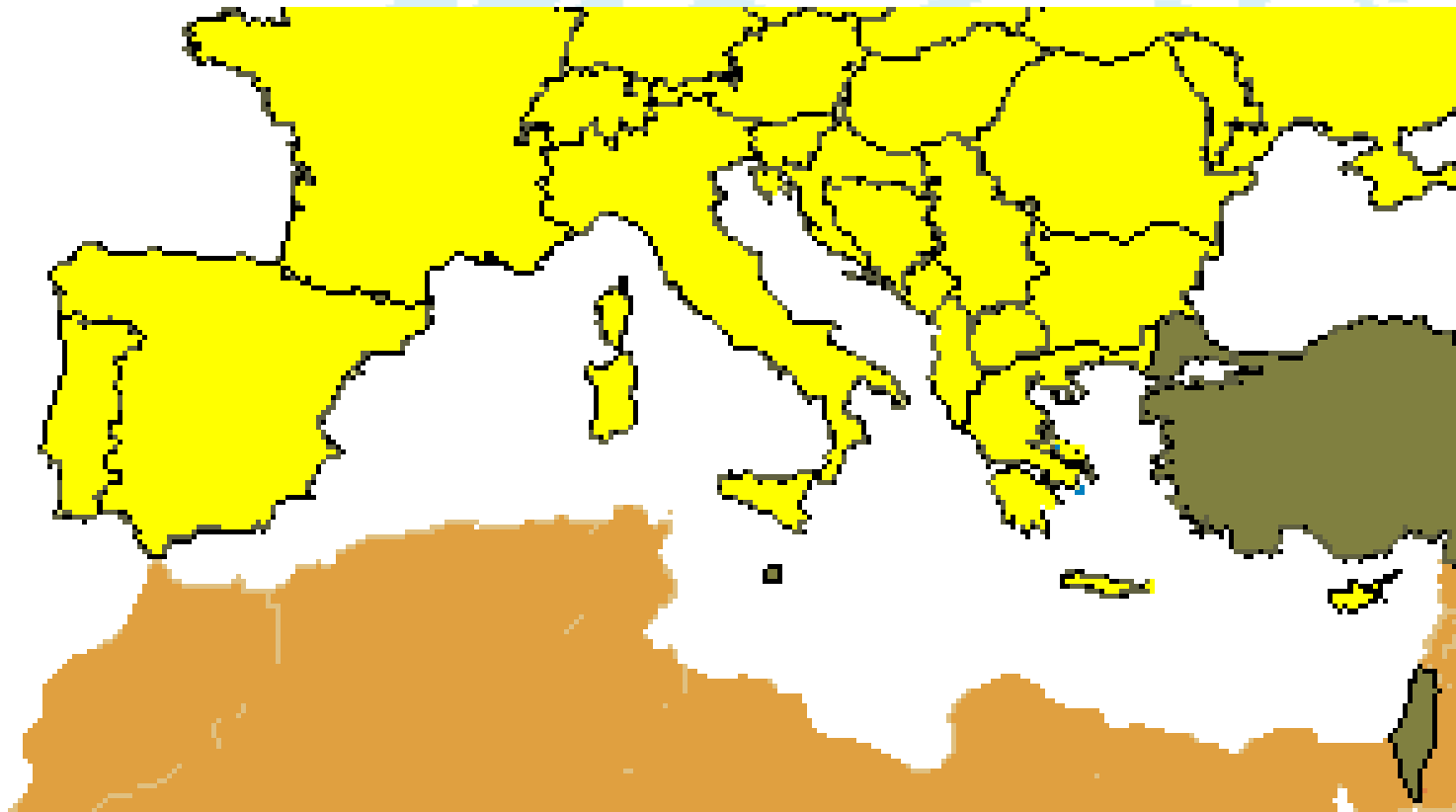
Espoo Convention in brief

- Adopted at [Espoo](#) (Finland) in 1991; entered into force in 1997
- Sets out obligations of Parties to
 - notify and consult each other on major projects under consideration likely to have significant adverse environmental impact across boundaries
 - assess environmental impact of such activities at early stage of planning
- Now has 44 Parties

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Status

State	Convention	1st amendment	2 nd amendment	Protocol
Albania	Party	Party	Party	Party
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Croatia	Party	Party	Party	Party
Cyprus	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
France	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Greece	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Italy	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Malta	_*	-	-	-
Montenegro	Party	Party	Party	Party
Portugal	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Slovenia	Party	-	-	Signatory ...
Spain	Party	Party	Party	Party
Turkey	-	-	-	-
European Union	Party	Party	Party	Party
56 member States	44 Parties	18 Parties	15 Parties	17 Parties

Status of amendments

- 1st amendment only 18 Parties (not in force)
Open Convention to all United Nations Member States
- 2nd amendment only 15 Parties (not in force)
Make the review of compliance and reporting mandatory
Take into account scoping
Revise and extend the list of activities subject to the Convention
Clarify when amendments come into force

Status of SEA Protocol

- SEA Protocol will enter into force on 11 July 2010
- Final meeting of Signatories in November 2010
- First meeting of Parties in spring/summer 2011



Points of contact & focal points

State	Point of contact	Focal point
Albania	Ministry of Environment	??, Ministry of Environment
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Mehmed CERO, MoE
Croatia	Nenad MIKULIC, MoE	
Cyprus	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Eirini CONSTANTINOOU, MoE
France	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Nicolas MANTHE, MoE
Greece	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Epaminondas TOLERIS, MoE
Italy	Carmela BILANZONE, MoE	Giuliana GASPARRINI, MoE
Malta	??, Environment Authority	
Montenegro	Brankica CMILJANOVIC-JOKANOVIC, MoE	
Portugal	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Cristina RUSSO, Environment Agency
Slovenia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Vesna KOLAR-PLANINSIC, MoE
Spain	Adrian VECINO VARELA, MoE	Angel MUÑOZ CUBILLO, MoE
Turkey	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Mustafa ER, MoE

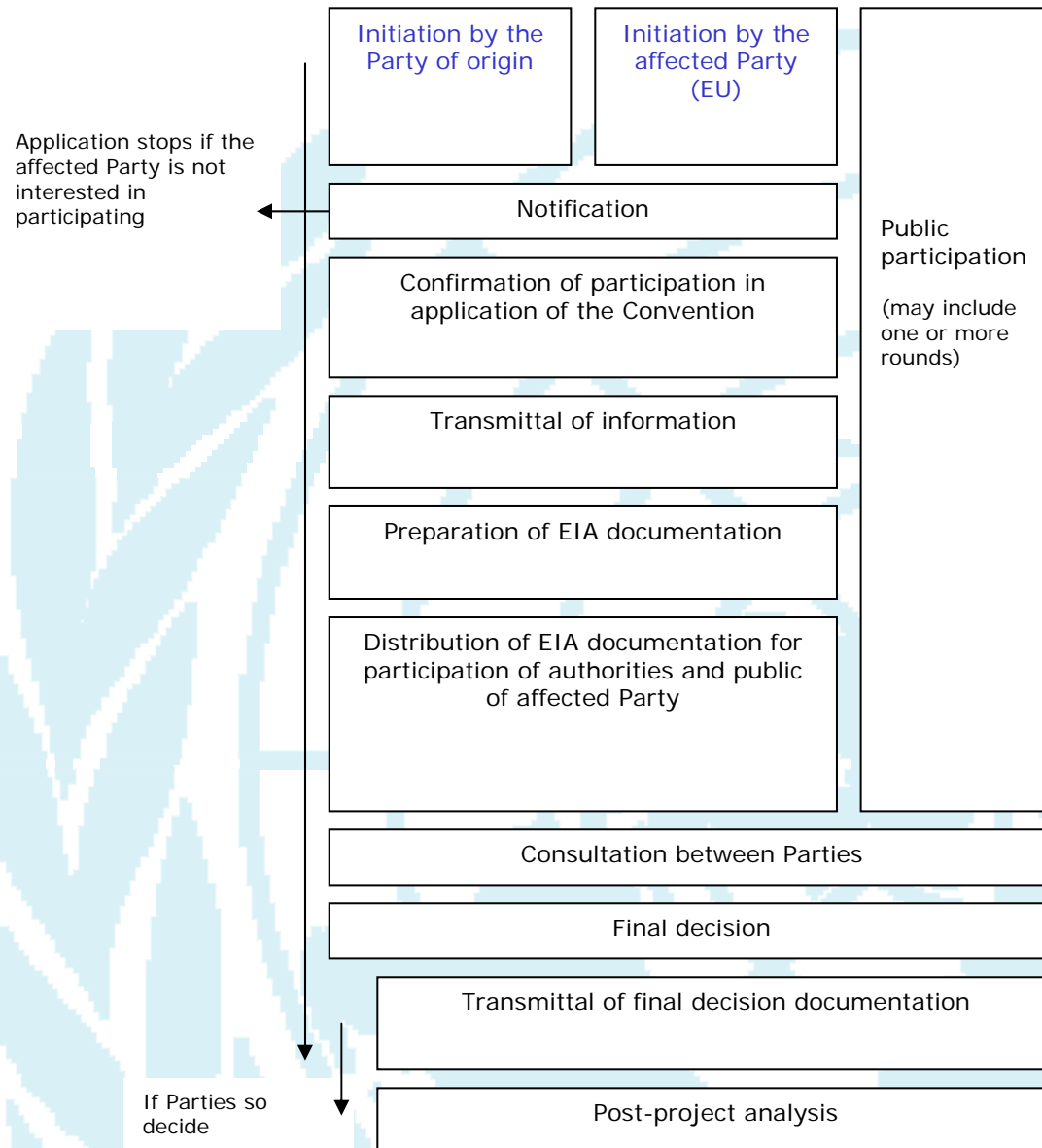
Application

- Increasingly routine – number of Parties and number of cases
- Very approximately 30-50 cases per year



What it involves

- Establishment of an EIA procedure
- Initiation (screening)
- Notification (Party of origin)
- Confirmation of participation (affected Party)
- Transmittal of information; (public participation)
- Preparation of EIA documentation
- Distribution of the EIA documentation for the purpose of participation of authorities and public of the affected Party
- Consultation between Parties
- Final decision and transmittal of final decision documentation
- Post-project analysis / monitoring



Benefits

- Providing information & leading to changes in design
- Improving decision-making
- More generally



Benefits

Providing information & leading to changes in design

- Identification of key environmental issues of project, & awareness of environmental consequences of project implementation
- Improvement of project design, & higher standards of mitigation
- Protection of environment, including avoidance of environmentally sensitive areas through project re-siting or re-design
- Identification of project alternatives and mitigation & compensatory measures that reduce environmental impact of project
 - Suggestions may come from the public, EIA experts, the developer and other stakeholders
- Opportunities to consider climate change adaptation

Benefits

Improving decision-making

- Better informed & more objective decision-making
- Better framework for preparing conditions & legal agreements to govern future operation of project
- Public participation in government decision-making



Benefits

More generally

- **Promotion of sustainable development in general**
- **Promotion of good governance in the longer term**, with public hearings providing “important indirect benefits that can contribute to the capacity for democratic governance and an active civil society”
- Promotion of understanding between community & developer
- Promotion of standards
- **Enhancement of international cooperation**, including
 - awareness of importance of environment in such cooperation
 - avoidance of conflict
- Encouragement of new approaches
- Enhancement of the developer’s environmental credibility

Work under Espoo Convention

- Compliance with & implementation of Convention
- Subregional cooperation & capacity-building
- Exchange of good practices
- Promoting ratification & application of SEA Protocol





Subregional cooperation

Subregion	Activities
Baltic Sea	Lithuania workshop (2009), ?(2010), Moscow?
Black Sea	Romania (2010) – seminar on EIA of large energy project in subregion
Caucasus	Georgia workshop (2010?)
Central Asia	Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan pilot project (2009) Tajikistan workshop (2010)
Eastern Europe	Belarus pilot project (2009-2010) 2 subregional workshops expected in 2010
Mediterranean Sea	Tunisia (2010) follow-up workshop on a specific topic (2010)
South-Eastern Europe	Bulgaria (2008), Montenegro (2009), Bosnia & Herzegovina ?(2010); only 2 countries from subregion approved agreement

Bucharest Agreement

- Multilateral agreement among the countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Espoo Convention (Bucharest, 2008)

State	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	
Bosnia & Herzegovina	-	
Bulgaria	20 May 2008	23 Jan 2009 AA
Croatia	20 May	
Greece	20 May	
Montenegro	20 May	2009 R
Romania	20 May	
Serbia	20 May	
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	20 May	

- Depository: Romania

Promoting ratification & application of SEA Protocol

- through UNDP
 - countries of West Balkans, September 2008
 - Belarus, August 2009
- national awareness workshops
 - Slovenia & Kyrgyzstan (with Tajikistan), 2010
- with WHO/Euro
 - health in SEA
- also GTZ/InWent further to OECD/DAC Guidance

Contacts

- For more about the Espoo Convention, visit our website:
www.unece.org/env/eia
- Or email: eia.conv@unece.org
 - nicholas.bonvoisin@unece.org

- Practice
- Costs (limited!)



EIA: practice

Enhancing benefits & reducing costs

In a transboundary context, also

- **Start early** – make transboundary contacts early on, informally at first if appropriate
- **Translate what? and enough** – to avoid delays when more information has to be translated
- **Consultations** where and when
- Establish agreements with neighbouring States

EIA: practice

Enhancing benefits & reducing costs

- **Scope carefully** – focus on what's important. Lack of proper scoping to determine direction and focus of EIA is likely to cause delays later
- **Scope with others** (if appropriate) – involvement, in scoping and preparing terms of reference, of competent authorities and other stakeholders helps to avoid nasty surprises later, as well as building relationships & understanding – **especially in transboundary context**
- **Don't short-cut** – make sure study is adequate. Failure to undertake systematic study and provide relevant / sufficient data may result in need for supplementary information causing delays
- **Involve the public** as early as possible, preferably during scoping
- **Operate strict timetable** for each stage of process, and formalize inputs from participants, to achieve shorter timescale

EIA: Costs

Domestic EIA: money

- Generally EIA costs less than 0.5 % of overall capital cost
- Costs over 1% unusual
 - for particularly controversial projects in sensitive environments
 - where good EIA practice not followed
- Actual costs of EIA tend to rise with capital cost of project

EIA: Costs

Domestic EIA: money – where it goes

- 60-90% of costs for assessment process (writing EIA report)
- Preliminary studies conducted in advance of formal EIA (screening - whether or not EIA required)
- Cost of reviewing EIA and reaching decision on project (except where fees are charged by competent authority) falls on competent authority



Extra costs associated with transboundary EIA

- Preparing and sending the notification
- Preparing and broadcasting announcements (e.g. in the media)
- Translation of documents into the language of the affected country
- Translation of comments and opinions received from the affected country
- Additional printing
- Distribution of documents in the affected country
- Organization of public hearings (hiring of hall, etc.)
- Interpretation costs
- Travel and accommodation
- Fees charged by the competent authority in the affected country for the review of the EIA documentation, where applicable

EIA: time (domestic)

- EIAs generally completed in under 2 years
 - EIA studies usually conducted in 6-12 months
 - If development in environmentally sensitive area, data for full year normally provided, but faster if information already to hand
 - Preparation of EIA report typically takes 2-3 months
 - Subsequent stages of consultation, review & decision-making may take 3-6 months, depending upon complexity of issues raised
- These timescales indicative: considerable variation from project to project
- Source: *EIA - A study on costs and benefits*, European Commission, 1996