



**National strategy for implementation  
of the UNECE Protocol  
on strategic environmental assessment for Armenia**

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#### DISCLAIMER

Elaboration of this document has been supported by a Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia, UNECE, the REC (implementing agency) and UNDP within the activity “SEA capacity building needs analysis in EECCA” based on the decision III/9 of the Third Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context.

The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, its Member States, UNDP or the REC.

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## List of Abbreviations

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RA	Republic of Armenia
REC	Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe

## 1. Introduction

This document has been prepared under the work plan of the Third Meeting of Parties to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (hereinafter the Espoo Convention).

The National Strategy for Implementation of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment has been developed with support of the UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS and Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (the REC).

The document will serve as the major policy document for introduction of the SEA system in the Republic of Armenia, which, however, can be changed and expanded in the future as the practical implementation of the SEA Protocol proceeds in Armenia.

## 2. Background

The Republic of Armenia (RA) ratified the Espoo Convention on May 14 1996, and signed its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (hereinafter the Protocol) on May 21, 2003.

Certain provisions of the Espoo Convention and the Protocol are regulated by the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Environmental Impact Review (hereinafter the Law) adopted in November 1995; the purpose of which is through the state environmental review to predetermine, prevent or minimize the potential negative impact of proposed activities and concepts (including concept documents, programmes, complex schemes and master plans) on the environment and human health.

The definition of ‘concept’ in the Law includes concepts of development of the social-economic, energy, urban development, transport, communication, agriculture, fishery, mining, industries, health, social, environmental, recreation, tourism and service sectors. It also involves territorial planning documents and complex schemes for use of natural resources. In the Law, the definition of ‘concepts’ is clearly distinguished from that of the ‘proposed activity’.

To build capacity for implementing the Protocol in Armenia, a pilot project on the strategic environmental assessment of the Yerevan Master Plan was conducted in 2004-2005 with assistance of the UNDP and the REC. The objectives of the pilot were to test and demonstrate opportunities for the practical application of the Protocol in Armenia and to provide recommendations for the environmental optimization of, and for modifications to, the Yerevan City Master Plan.

### 3. Needs Assessment

In the initial stages of the UNDP/REC supported SEA pilot project implemented during 2004-2005, a study was conducted to assess the SEA-related needs in Armenia, which provided a range of recommendations for capacity development. The needs assessment identified the necessity to enhance the normative legal foundation for the environmental review, including the development of manuals and methodological guides, as well as strengthening institutions and implementing pilot projects across various fields.

The needs assessment was based on a study of the existing practices of the state environmental review and feedback provided by state institutions in charge of developing strategic documents. The results of the needs assessment have been presented and discussed at a stakeholder consultation workshop.

The needs assessment found that although the Law regulates the legal, economic and organizational matters of the environmental review of proposed activities and concepts, the Law does not provide fully for implementing the requirements of the Protocol.

General inadequacies in the law were identified such as unclear definitions in the Law, long deadlines (70-180 days) for the environmental review, ambiguous procedures, vague scopes of rights, obligations and liabilities of stakeholders, unrealistic provisions for public participation, etc. Additionally, the Law does not clearly differentiate the assessment of environmental impacts from the state environmental review and thus, does not include any principal requirement for the former. In addition, the requirement for a public participation regulation to be adopted by the RA Government decree has not been fulfilled to date due to the lack of principles of public participation prescribed in the Law.

The Law also does not stipulate a specific methodological approach for environmental assessment of concepts and of proposed activities and does not include important provisions and procedures such as the following:

1. Mandatory requirement for conducting strategic environmental assessment (hereinafter SEA) and presenting in the form of an environmental report;
2. Requirements for preparation of the SEA report and its content (scope);
3. Straightforward and clear procedures for the submission of the SEA report, including deadlines and responsibilities;
4. Processes and deadlines for public discussion of the SEA report;
5. Economic mechanisms, including financial aspects related to the SEA and other requirements to be regulated by law.

Inadequate enforcement of the RA Law on Environmental Impact Expertise is conditioned not only by the deficiencies of the Law, but also by the inadequacies of the sub-legislative acts, a low level of awareness among developers and decision-makers, the poor quality of environmental sections of the developed documents, a lack of methodologies, problems related to the professionalism of specialists engaged in the review process, and a limited material resource base.

Given these deficiencies, it became necessary to improve the legislation of the state environmental review. For this purpose a new Draft Law on State Environmental Review (hereinafter the Draft Law) has been developed taking into consideration the existing Law and the 10 years of practice in its application. The Draft Law has been elaborated based on the requirements of the Espoo Convention, UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-

Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (hereinafter the Aarhus Convention) and the Protocol as well as on the provisions of the European Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment and 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment.

The Draft Law clarifies the range of documents subject to a SEA; differentiates definitions between a 'SEA' and 'state environmental review'; delineates the sequence for conducting a SEA and state environmental review and identifies the responsible entities. The Draft law also spells out requirements for the content of the SEA report including: time limitations, opportunities for identifying stakeholders and procedures for public notification and engagement and responsibilities of state government and local self-governments. Moreover, the Draft Law includes a provision that prohibits adoption of a strategic document without a positive conclusion of the state environmental review.

The Draft Law has been reviewed by the stakeholders and is currently being revised based on their feedback. Within one year of the adoption of the Draft Law, the supporting sub-legislative acts, including the methodological guide to SEA and the procedure for public notification and consultation will be developed and amendments to some of the existing laws proposed.

Principles for the implementation of the Protocol in the Republic of Armenia have to be prescribed by law, which is a requirement that follows from the RA Constitution and the RA Law on Legal Acts. According to the Constitution and the Law on Legal Acts, only by law shall be prescribed the rights, freedoms, constraints and responsibilities of legal and physical persons, procedures of control and oversight over their acts, types and sizes of liabilities, means and procedures for their enforcement, types, sizes and the order of payment of taxes, duties and other mandatory payments to be compensated by legal and physical persons.

Given that the institution of state environmental review exists in the country, along with reforms in the legal field it is necessary to carry out certain complementary activities directed at strengthening and building the capacity of participants involved in an environmental review process.

The range of participants (or stakeholders) of the SEA process includes:

- Relevant committees of the RA National Assembly and the RA Government that order or develop and adopt legal acts subject to SEA;
- Ministries and agencies, territorial administration and local government entities that within their jurisdiction develop, order and approve strategic documents subject to SEA;
- Focal points of environment-related international agreements and heads of environmental projects;
- Legal and physical persons that develop documents subject to SEA and/or conduct SEA of documents;
- Academic institutions that teach subjects related to the environment and environmental assessment;
- Non-governmental organizations that are concerned with protection of the environment;
- Concerned public;
- International organizations that support enhancement of EIA and SEA.

## **4. A Framework for the Action Plan for Implementation of the Protocol for 2006-2010**

In this section, an action plan for Implementation of the Protocol for 2006-2010 is presented as a series of medium-term measures aimed at developing system, institutional and human capacity as well as awareness raising activities of a general nature. Implementation of those will require allocations from the state budget as well as fundraising with international sources.

This strategy has been developed based on recommendations from the needs assessment as well as issues revealed during implementation of the SEA Pilot Project on the Yerevan Master Plan. It was then revised based upon feedback from the RA Ministry of Nature Protection and stakeholder discussions.

#### **4.1. Measures aimed at system capacity building**

1. Adoption of the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
2. Development and adoption of sub-legislative acts supporting enforcement of the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
  - 2.1. RA Government Decree on recognition of the authorized body according to the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
  - 2.2. Prime Minister's Decree on adoption of the timeline for development and passage of legal acts supporting implementation of the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
  - 2.3. A normative institutional legal act on adoption of the SEA methodology (guidelines).
  - 2.4. RA Government Decree on adoption of procedures for notification of the public and organization of discussions within the process of state environmental review (including the SEA).
  - 2.5. Draft Order of RA Minister of Nature Protection on approval of a sample procedure to be adopted by the RA Government for the state environmental review of strategic documents having transboundary environmental impact.
3. Development of draft laws on making changes and additions to the existing laws of RA:
  - 3.1. In the RA Code on Administrative Infringements;
  - 3.2. In the RA Law on State Duties;
  - 3.3. In the RA Law on Freedom of Information.
4. Development and adoption of a new law.
  - 4.1. RA Law on the procedure of suspension, abandonment and prohibition in case of infringement of environmental legislation.
5. Application of state environmental review of strategic documents that have been subject to state environmental review before the adoption of the RA Law on State Environmental Review, but do not have an environmental review conclusion.

#### **4.2. Measures aimed at institutional capacity building**

6. For the authorized body in charge of regulating the state environmental review process as well as for institutions carrying out SEA:
  - 6.1. Development of the necessary material resource base (including computer technologies, literature, etc.);
  - 6.2. Development of capacities for public affairs (including identification of stakeholders, organization of hearings, etc.).
7. For the authorized entity in charge of regulating the state environmental review process:
  - 7.1. Development of mechanisms for inter-agency consultations (development of procedures);

- 7.2. Development of methodological guidelines for the state environmental oversight over the compliance with requirements of the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
8. Development of mechanisms for cooperation between the authorized body in charge of regulating the state environmental review process and the concerned state government and local self-government entities (development of procedures).

### ***4.3. Measures aimed at human capacity building***

9. Training of personnel/staff of institutions participating in the state environmental review process (including SEA) according to relevant areas and topics.
10. Organization of seminars and conferences for the exchange of information among SEA experts and specialized organizations.
11. Teaching SEA in relevant institutions of higher education in Armenia and organization of training courses.

The establishment of an Environmental Assessment Centre to implement the above-mentioned measures targeted at building human resource capacity should also be considered.

### ***4.4. General awareness raising measures***

12. Establishment of an information system for state environmental review process (including SEA) in accordance with the provisions of the relevant European Council Directive 1210/90/EC.
13. Publication of normative legal acts regulating the state environmental review process (including SEA) and of information products (brochures, booklets) on those processes.
14. Publication of methodological guides and adaptation of the best international practices.
15. Pilot projects in specific areas to test SEA methodologies.
16. Carrying out initiatives to provide incentives to promote development of new methodologies, effective public participation and other good practices in SEA.

## 5. Action Plan to Introduce the System of Strategic Environmental Assessment for 2006-2010

N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
<b><i>Measures aimed at system capacity building</i></b>						
1.	Adoption of the RA Law on State Environmental Review	Legally regulating the SEA process	Submitting to the RA Government, and later to the RA National Assembly	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Government, RA National Assembly	During 2006	Not required
2.	Development and adoption of sub-legislative acts supporting enforcement of the RA Law on State Environmental Review					
	2.1. RA Government Decree on recognition of the authorized body according to the RA Law on State Environmental Review	Authorizing the Ministry of Nature Protection of the responsibilities for SER in accordance to the law	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Government	After adoption of the law, within one year	Not required
	2.2. Prime Minister's Decree on adoption of the timeline for development and passage of legal acts supporting implementation of the RA Law on State Environmental Review	Setting the timeframe for development of legal acts supporting the implementation of the law and their submission to the respective decision-making body, in order to guarantee mandatory and timely accomplishment of the tasks	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Government	After adoption of the law, within one year	Not required
	2.3. A normative institutional legal act on adoption of the SEA methodology (guidelines)	Providing methodological guidelines for implementation of SEA in accordance with the law and development of relevant reports to the entities developing strategic documents	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, organizations and individual experts implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding

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N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
	2.4. RA Government Decree on adoption of procedures for notification of the public and organization of discussions within the process of state environmental review (including the SEA)	Defining mechanisms for public notification and organization of discussions by the authorized body, territorial administration and local government bodies and the entities developing strategic documents in accordance with the law	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, NGOs, general concerned public	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
	2.5. Draft Order of RA Minister of Nature Protection on approval of a sample procedure to be adopted by the RA Government for the state environmental review of strategic documents having transboundary environmental impact	Identifying general principles for the content of RA Government Decree for every case of SER of a strategic document with a likely transboundary impact in accordance with the requirements prescribed by the international agreements and the law	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
3	Development of draft laws on making changes and additions to the existing laws of RA					
	3.1. In the RA Code on Administrative Infringements	Prescribing clear and specific sanctions for administrative liability in case of non-compliance or maladministration of the requirements of the law	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, RA Government, RA National Assembly	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
	3.2. In the RA Law on State Duties	Determining the amount of state duty prescribed by the law	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, RA Government, RA National Assembly	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding

N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
	3.3. In the RA Law on Freedom of Information	Meeting the requirements for access to environmental information and notification in accordance with the Aarhus Convention and Espoo Convention, SEA Protocol, laws and by-laws	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, RA Government, RA National Assembly, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
4	Development and adoption of a new law					
	4.1. RA Law on the procedure of suspension, abandonment and prohibition in case of infringement of environmental legislation	Setting mechanisms for suspension or stopping of the application of the strategic document or the activity implemented within its framework, which have been subject to SER in accordance with the Law, but have not received a positive SER conclusion	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, RA Government, RA National Assembly, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
5.	Application of state environmental review of strategic documents that have been subject to state environmental review before the adoption of the RA Law on State Environmental Review, but do not have an environmental review conclusion	Ensuring the process prescribed by the transitional provisions of the law to prevent or mitigate the negative environmental impacts	Inspection checks, SEA scoping and drafting terms of reference, preparing implementation of SEA, preparing SER conclusion	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within 2-3 years	RA state budget, international funding, local government budget, developers' funding
<b><i>Measures aimed at institutional capacity building</i></b>						
6.	For the authorized entity in charge of regulating the state environmental review process as well as for institutions carrying out SEA					

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N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
	6.1. Development of the necessary material resource base (including computer technologies, literature, etc.)	Creating the necessary material resource base for implementation of the law	Needs assessment of participants of the SER process, preparation and implementation of relevant development plans	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, organizations and individual experts implementing SEA	After adoption of the law, continuous	RA state budget, international funding
	6.2. Development of capacities for public affairs	Ensuring access to information and public participation prescribed by the Aarhus Convention and Espoo Convention	Training of public affairs officers within organizations participating in the SER process	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
7	For the authorized entity in charge of regulating the state environmental review process					
	7.1. Development of mechanisms for inter-agency consultations (development of procedures)	Ensuring the effectiveness of the environmental review process	Drafting the institutional legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget
	7.2. Development of methodological guidelines for the state environmental oversight over the compliance with requirements of the RA Law on State Environmental Review	Assisting the inspectorate system through detailed prescription of enforcement measures to ensure implementation of the law requirements	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Justice, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding
8	Development of mechanisms for cooperation of the entity in charge of state environmental review and the concerned state government and local self-government entities (development of procedures)	Ensuring the effectiveness of the environmental review process (including SEA)	Drafting the legal act, submitting for concurrence and adoption	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, other ministries and agencies, local government bodies	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget
<b><i>Measures aimed at human capacity building</i></b>						
9	Training of personnel/staff of institutions participating in the state environmental review process (including SEA) according to	Building the SEA capacity of the participants of the SER	Scoping of participants of the SER process and organizing training on relevant topics	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, Ministry of Science	After adoption of the law, within one year	RA state budget, international funding

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N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
	relevant areas and topics			and Education, other ministries and agencies, NGOs		
10	Organization of seminars and conferences for the exchange of information among SEA experts and specialized organizations	Improving qualification of the SEA specialists and exchanging experiences	Identifying challenges in SEA and newer technologies, organizing events to discuss those topics	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, other ministries and agencies, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, continuous	International funding
11	Teaching SEA in the relevant institutions of higher education in Armenia and organization of training courses	Preparing specialists in SEA and improving qualification	Developing curricula and submitting for approval	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Science and Education, universities, NGOs		RA state budget, international funding
<b><i>General awareness raising measures</i></b>						
12	Establishment of an information system for state environmental review process (including SEA) in accordance with the provisions of the relevant European Council Directive 1210/90/EC	Establishing a database related to the SEA Process and improving the quality of provision of information	Collecting data, creating and regularly maintaining a database and a website	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year and continuous	RA state budget, international funding
13	Publication of normative legal acts regulating the state environmental review process (including SEA) and of information products (brochures, booklets) on those processes	Ensuring requirements prescribed by the Aarhus Convention, Espoo Convention, SEA Protocol, laws and by-laws	Assessing the needs in information, preparing and publishing materials	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, RA Ministry of Finance and Economy, RA Ministry of Science and Education, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration, other ministries and agencies, organizations implementing SEA, RA National Assembly, RA Government, NGOs, mass media	After adoption of the law, within one year and continuous	RA state budget, international funding
14	Publication of methodological guides and adaptation of the best international practices	Application of newer SEA methods in Armenia	Studying the international experience, identifying methods applicable in Armenia, translating materials, summarizing and publishing	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, sectoral ministries and agencies, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, within one year and continuous	International funding

N	Measure	Objective	Steps	Stakeholders	Period	Financial sources
15	Pilot projects in specific areas to test SEA methodologies	Developing the theoretical knowledge of participants in an environmental review (including SEA), applying in practice and testing new methods for SEA in the Armenian context	Identifying relevant strategic documents for pilot projects, fundraising and implementing SER (including SEA)	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, entities developing documents subject to SEA, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, continuous	International funding
16	Carrying out initiatives to provide incentives to promote development of new methodologies, effective public participation and other good practices in SEA	Promotion and motivation for SEA processes	E.g. conferring of a certificate/award for the best organization of public discussions or preparation of a SEA report	RA Ministry of Nature Protection, organizations implementing SEA, NGOs	After adoption of the law, continuous	Not required

## 6. Short-term Priorities

The following short-term priority measures to be addressed before 2008 have been selected from the above-listed measures. The first and second measures relate to system capacity building issues, which need to be addressed first to allow for the full implementation of the RA Law on State Environmental Review and obligations prescribed by the international agreements. The third measure refers to the human capacity building and public awareness raising to ensure a high quality SEA process.

<b>Measure 1 (2.3)</b>
Development of SEA guidelines
<b>Objective</b> To provide methodological guidelines for the entities that develop strategic documents for carrying out SEA in accordance with the RA Law on State Environmental Review and for development of relevant reports
<b>Implementing organization</b> RA Ministry of Nature Protection
<b>Period</b> Within one year after the adoption of the RA Law on State Environmental Review
<b>Budget</b> 100,000 USD
<b>Funding organization</b> RA state budget, international sources
<b>Steps</b> International consulting, identification of good practices/methodology applicable in Armenia, translation of relevant materials into Armenian, development of SEA methodology based on the international practice and experience acquired from pilot projects implemented in Armenia, development and adoption of a legal act on the SEA guidelines based on the requirements of the Armenian legislation, organization of stakeholder discussions, publication of guidelines, training of human resources in SEA Protocol and SEA methodologies.
<b>Beneficiaries</b> State government or local self-government entities that develop strategic documents
<b>Linkage to other initiatives</b> UNDP/REC Pilot Project on SEA of Yerevan Master Plan

<b>Measure 2 (2.4, 2.5, 3, 4)</b>
Development of a package of procedures to support implementation of the RA Law on State Environmental Review
<b>Objective</b> To ensure enforcement of the RA Law on State Environmental Review.
<b>Implementing organization</b> RA Ministry of Nature Protection
<b>Period</b> Within one year after the adoption of the law
<b>Budget</b> 50,000 USD
<b>Funding organization</b> RA state budget, international sources
<b>Steps</b> Drafting of procedures supporting implementation of the RA Law on State Environmental Review and adoption of those as normative legal acts, including a) Procedures for notification of the public and organization of discussions within the process of state environmental review (including the SEA) to be adopted by a RA Government Decree; b) A sample procedure for the state environmental review of strategic documents having transboundary environmental impact to be adopted as a RA Minister of Nature Protection Order, which will serve as the guiding document for preparation of RA Government Decrees and multi-lateral agreements arranged for possible transboundary cases subject to SEA; c) Development of a proposal on relevant changes and amendments to the RA Code on Administrative Infringements, RA Law on State Duties and RA Law on Freedom of Information and adoption of those by respective RA Laws; d) Development of a procedure of suspension, abandonment and prohibition in case of infringement of environmental legislation and adoption by a respective RA Law; The above-mentioned steps will be accompanied by discussions with participation of stakeholders, publication of legal acts, training of human resources in SEA Protocol and given legal acts.
<b>Beneficiaries</b> State government or local self-government entities that develop strategic documents
<b>Linkage to other initiatives</b> - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Programme on Capacity Building of Environmental Inspection Systems - Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union and its Member States

<b>Measure 3 (9, 14,15)</b>
Implementation of 4-5 pilot projects in various fields and on-job training of human resources
<b>Objective</b> To develop theoretical knowledge of stakeholders of the state environmental review process (including SEA) and implement in practice, as well as to test new methodologies in Armenia.
<b>Implementing organization</b> RA Ministry of Nature Protection State bodies that elaborate strategic documents
<b>Period</b> 2006-2008
<b>Budget</b> 100,000 USD
<b>Funding organization</b> RA state budget, international sources
<b>Steps</b> Selection of cases (priority areas will be chosen based on the current legal requirements and the intent to develop strategic documents, likely including the urban development, energy, mining, forestry and water management fields), international consulting, identification of relevant international experience, training of experts in SEA protocol and SEA methodology, SEA scoping and implementation, organization of discussions with stakeholders, summarizing comments and presentation to relevant institutions, ensuring publicity of the process through mass media, improvement of SEA methodologies as a result of implementation of pilot projects and development of proposals for amendment of the SEA guidelines, as necessary.
<b>Beneficiaries</b> State government or local self-government entities that develop strategic documents Legal or physical persons that conduct SEA
<b>Linkage to other initiatives</b> UNDP/REC Pilot Project on SEA of Yerevan Master Plan

## **7. Implementation Arrangements**

Principles and content of this document -- the National Strategy for Implementation of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment -- form a strategic or concept document for development of policy and strategy of the state environmental review, including the SEA. In accordance to the RA legislation, these types of concept documents are adopted by the RA Government protocol-decrees and become legal acts for mandatory enforcement.

After relevant consultations and revision, this document, as a national strategic document for development of the field of state environmental review (including SEA) will be submitted to the RA Government for adoption.

After the adoption of the protocol-decree by the RA Government, in accordance with the procedure of the Ministry of Nature Protection, the action plan of measures included in this strategic document will be given to the decision of the Minister of Nature Protection, who will prescribe each measure, responsible institution and official in charge of its implementation and deadlines in compliance with those prescribed in the strategic document.

For implementation of the strategy there will be allocations from the state budget as well as fundraising with international donor organizations.

The responsible entity for coordinating the execution of this National Strategy for Implementation of the Protocol will be the RA Ministry of Nature Protection.

Activities mentioned in the National Strategy to be adopted by the RA Government can also be implemented by various stakeholder organizations, including non-governmental and private organizations, upon receiving the consent of the Ministry of Nature Protection on its expediency and content.