**May 2020**

**Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment** (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2020/7):

**Additional text suggested by the consultants, authors of the draft guidance, Ben Cave and Thomas Fischer, in consultation with EIB, UNECE and WHO to paragraphs 11 and 79**

**See also next page for a minor (but important) edit to Table 2**

10. When considering health in strategic environmental assessment, it is important to note that a relatively small group of health conditions is responsible for a large part of the disease burden in Europe.[[1]](#footnote-1) Noncommunicable diseases are particularly relevant, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and mental disorders. Many of the driving forces affecting these noncommunicable diseases come from outside the health sector and are associated with plans and programmes prepared in other sectors that fall under the remit of the Protocol. This highlights the importance of intersectoral cooperation when undertaking environmental health burden reduction activities.[[2]](#footnote-2)

11. While noncommunicable diseases dominate the burden of disease in high-income countries, communicable diseases, particularly for young children, are responsible for much of the burden of disease in low- and middle-income countries. This will need to be considered when applying health inclusive strategic environmental assessment there. Health inclusive strategic environmental assessment may consider the resilience of high-, middle- and low-income countries to communicable disease outbreaks, including emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and the ability to prevent an outbreak from becoming an epidemic or pandemic. Consultation with environmental and health authorities is addressed in section 5 of this document.

79. A central tenet of this guidance is that authorities conducting strategic environmental assessment should seek advice from health authorities (owing to specific requirements to consult health authorities contained in articles 5 (screening), 6 (scoping), 9 (reporting) and 10 (transboundary matters). Establishing joint working arrangements between health administrations and other key sector administrations (for example, regional development and spatial / land use planning) is good practice with regard to ensuring a shared understanding of the strategic environmental assessments coming forward and the coordination of inputs, including on health, into those assessments. When considering preparedness for, and responses to, communicable disease outbreaks a whole-of-society approach will be needed that encompasses governments, business and civil society and which operates from community level to the national and global level.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Table 2  
 **Illustrative determinants of health to consider in scoping**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Will the plan, programme, project lead to changes in: | Y/N | Links/Action |
| Health inequalities |  |  |
| Health inequalities between population groups |  |  |
| Health inequalities between geographical areas |  |  |
| Healthy lifestyles |  |  |
| Healthy lifestyles and leisure activity opportunities |  |  |
| Nutrition |  |  |
| Safe and cohesive communities |  |  |
| Housing, buildings and connecting routes |  |  |
| Poverty, social exclusion and crime |  |  |
| Socioeconomic conditions |  |  |
| Education |  |  |
| Employment (including quality) |  |  |
| Environmental conditions |  |  |
| Air quality |  |  |
| Water |  |  |
| Soil |  |  |
| Noise and vibration |  |  |
| Health- and social-care services |  |  |
| Access to, and quality of, health- and social-care activities/services |  |  |
| Occupational safety and health |  |  |

*Source:* Adapted from J. Nowacki, (2018); www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/health-impact-assessment/publications/2018/the-integration-of-health-into-environmental-assessments-with-a-special-focus-on-strategic-environmental-assessment-2018 .

1. WHO Regional Office for Europe, “Noncommunicable diseases”, available at www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/noncommunicable-diseases. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A. Prüss-Ustün and others, *Preventing disease through healthy environments: A global assessment of the burden of disease from environmental risks* (Geneva, WHO, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. World Health Organization. 2017. Pandemic Influenza Risk Management: A WHO guide to inform and harmonize national and international pandemic preparedness and response. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Geneva. https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/259893 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)