

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT

Fourth meeting
Bucharest, 20–21 May 2008

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING

to be held at the Parliament Palace in Bucharest
starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 20 May 2008*

**DRAFT SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE
WORKING GROUP ON EIA, 21-23 NOVEMBER 2007**

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

A. First general segment

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 - (a) Opening of the meeting
 - (b) Constitution of the general segments
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda
2. Panel discussion on energy-related projects

B. High-level segment

3. Opening ceremony and statements by Ministers
4. The Convention ten years after its entry into force: future directions
5. Signing of a multilateral agreement by South-East Europe Ministers

C. Second general segment

6. Review of the work done by the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and adoption of decisions
 - (a) Review of implementation of the Convention
 - (b) Review of compliance with the Convention
 - (c) Subregional cooperation to strengthen contacts between the Parties
 - (d) Capacity-building in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
 - (e) Exchange of good practices
 - (f) Inquiry procedure

* Footnote regarding registration.

- (g) Workplan
 - (h) Budget and financial arrangements
 - (i) Financial assistance to representatives of countries with economies in transition, non-governmental organizations and countries outside the UNECE region
7. Date, venue and election of officers for the fourth meeting of the Parties.
 8. Other business.
 9. Presentation of the main decisions and closing of the meeting

II. ANNOTATIONS

1. The fourth meeting of the Parties will consist of two general segments and one high-level segment. The two general segments, dealing with items 1, 2 and 6 to 9 of the provisional agenda, will take place in the morning of Tuesday, 20 May, and in the morning of Wednesday, 21 May 2008. The high-level segment will be held in the afternoon of Tuesday, 20 May, starting at 3 p.m.
2. A forum for non-governmental organizations will be provided for in advance of the high-level segment. A press conference will be organized at the end of the high-level segment.
3. In the afternoon of Wednesday, 21 May, there will be a study tour. Additional practical information on the venue, accommodation and transport arrangements will be circulated at a later stage.

A. First general segment

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

Tentative timing: 10 – 11 a.m., Tuesday, 20 May 2007

(a) Opening of the meeting

4. A representative of Romania will open the meeting.

(b) Constitution of the general segments

5. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to elect Ms. Daniela Pineta (Romania), Chair of the Bureau, as Chair for the two general segments. The secretariat will report on the representation at the fourth meeting of the Parties and the credentials submitted by the Parties and Signatories.
6. The secretariat will inform the Meeting of the Parties about the status of ratification of the Convention and the declarations made by Parties upon deposit of their instruments of ratification of the Convention since the third meeting of the Parties. The secretariat will similarly inform the Meeting of the Parties about the status of ratification of the amendments to the Convention adopted at the second and third meetings of the Parties. Finally, the secretariat will also inform the Meeting of the status of ratification of the Convention's Protocol on Strategic

Environmental Assessment and the declarations made by Parties upon deposit of their instruments of ratification.

(c) Adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/MP.EIA/9 (Annotated provisional agenda for the fourth Meeting)

7. The Meeting is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 2: Panel discussion on energy-related projects

Tentative timing: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Tuesday, 20 May 2007

8. A panel comprising invited Ministers and other high-level representatives from governmental institutions, together with representatives from non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders from across the region, will provide insights into how the Convention is applied to energy-related projects likely to have significant adverse transboundary impact.

9. Thereafter, delegations will be invited to make short interventions from the floor in response to the panel discussion, based on guidance provided by the secretariat, providing specific examples of how the Convention has been applied to such activities in their countries.

10. Furthermore, representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organizations will also be invited to inform the Meeting how their activities contribute to the above issues.

B. High-level segment

Item 3: Opening ceremony and statements by Ministers

Tentative timing: 3 – 4 p.m., Tuesday, 20 May 2007

11. The Minister of the Environment of Romania will open the high-level segment of the fourth meeting of the Parties. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe will make an opening statement.

12. Delegations will be invited to make short interventions from the floor in response to the opening statement. Delegations wishing to speak on this agenda item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 4: The Convention ten years after its entry into force: future directions

Tentative timing: 4 – 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, 20 May 2007

13. The Bureau has invited a number of speakers to address the Meeting on the Convention, its past implementation and future directions as an instrument for decision-making in support of sustainable development in the UNECE region and beyond.

14. A representative of a non-governmental organization is expected to make a statement on behalf of the non-governmental organizations represented at the Meeting.

Item 5: Signing of a multilateral agreement by South-East Europe Ministers

Tentative timing: 5:30 – 6 p.m., Tuesday, 20 May 2007

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2007/10] (Multilateral Agreement among the countries of South-East Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context)

15. Within the framework of the workplan activity on strengthening subregional cooperation, countries of South-East Europe have negotiated a multilateral agreement among them for implementation of the Convention. Those countries of South-East Europe that wish to become future parties to the multilateral agreement will be invited to adopt and then sign it.

16. Countries of South-East Europe wishing to adopt and sign the multilateral agreement should bring with them full powers for presentation to the secretariat in advance of this agenda item.

17. The signing ceremony will be followed by press conference for Ministers.

C. Second general segment

Item 6: Review of the work done by the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and adoption of decisions

Tentative timing: 10 – 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, 20 May 2007

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2007/2] (Report of the tenth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment)

18. The Meeting of the Parties is expected to adopt the decisions drafted by the Working Group on EIA on the sub-items below addressing activities in the workplan for the period up to the fourth meeting of the Parties (decision III/9).

19. The Meeting is also to take note of progress on the activities in workplan for the period up to the fourth meeting of the Parties that have not been followed up by a draft decision:

(a) At its tenth meeting, the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) agreed to postpone any further discussion of the examination of the substantive relationship between the Convention and its Protocol until the Protocol had entered into force and some practical experience with its implementation and application had been gained.

(b) Also at its tenth meeting, the Working Group on EIA supported the proposal by the small group examining institutional and procedural activities under the Protocol on SEA (as annexed to ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2007/2).

(c) [*Capacity-development for the Protocol – welcoming of the Strategies, Initiatives, Resource Manual? Is a decision needed for this?*]

(a) Review of implementation of the Convention

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/1] (Draft decision IV/1 on Review of Implementation)

20. The Meeting of the Parties will adopt a review of the implementation of the Convention based on the information provided by Parties. The decision put forward for adoption suggests that all Parties should further strengthen their implementation of the Convention, indicating a number of practical means by which implementation may be improved. The decision will also initiate a third review of implementation and suggests that a failure to report on implementation might be a compliance matter to be considered by the Implementation Committee.

(b) Review of compliance with the Convention

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/2] (Draft decision IV/2 on Review of Compliance)

21. The decision put forward for adoption will encourage Parties to bring issues concerning their own compliance before the Implementation Committee of the Convention. The decision will adopt operating rules for the conduct of meetings of the Implementation Committee. The decision will also adopt a report to the Meeting by the Implementation Committee. Finally, the decision will adopt a number of recommendations regarding specific Parties' compliance with their obligations under the Convention.

(c) Subregional cooperation to strengthen contacts between the Parties

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/3] (Draft decision IV/3 on Strengthening Subregional Cooperation)

[ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2007/10] (Multilateral Agreement among the countries of South-East Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context)

22. This decision suggests welcoming the signing by the countries of South-East Europe of the subregional agreement implementing the Convention, as provided for in item 5 above. It also suggests the inclusion of subregional cooperation as an activity in the workplan to be adopted by the Meeting, recognizing that such cooperation improves the practical application of the Convention.

(d) Capacity-building in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/4] (Draft decision IV/4 on Capacity-building in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia)
[ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2007/5] (Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries)

23. This decision suggests the inclusion of an activity for further capacity-building in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in the workplan to be adopted by the Meeting, recognizing that capacity-building improves the practical application of the Convention in the subregion. The decision also suggests the endorsement of guidelines on transboundary EIA in Central Asia.

(e) Exchange of good practices

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/5] (Draft decision IV/5 on Exchange of Good Practices)

24. This decision suggests the inclusion of an activity for exchange of good practices in the workplan to be adopted by the Meeting, recognizing that such exchanges improve the practical application of the Convention

(f) Inquiry procedure

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/6] (Draft decision IV/6 on Inquiry Procedure)

25. This decision proposes measures to strengthen the inquiry procedure set out in Appendix IV to the Convention, in the light of experience with the first inquiry procedure.

(g) Workplan

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/7] (Draft decision IV/7 on Adoption of the Workplan up to the fifth meeting of the Parties)

26. The Meeting of the Parties is expected to adopt its workplan for the period up to its fifth meeting. The workplan put forward for adoption will provide for activities in support of the implementation and practical application of both the Convention and its Protocol.

(h) Budget and financial arrangements

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/8] (Draft decision IV/8 on Budget and Financial Arrangements for the period up to the fifth meeting of the Parties)

27. The Meeting of the Parties is expected to decide on the financial and human resources needed for implementing the activities in the workplan. Delegations will be invited to indicate funding for these activities according to the Meeting's priorities. The decision put forward for adoption will continue the share-based system intended to provide stable and predictable

funding, and will request Parties and non-Parties and international organizations to contribute financially.

(i) Financial assistance to representatives of countries with economies in transition, non-governmental organizations and countries outside the UNECE region

Documentation: [ECE/MP.EIA/2008/9] (Draft decision IV/9 on Financial Assistance to representatives of countries with economies in transition, non-governmental organizations and countries outside the UNECE region)

28. Recognizing the importance of broad participation by all member States, the Meeting of the Parties is expected to adopt a decision that will define criteria for providing financial assistance to representatives and experts from countries with economies in transition, from non-governmental organizations and from States outside the UNECE region.

Item 7: Date, venue and election of officers for the fourth meeting of the Parties

Tentative timing: 11:30 a.m. – noon, Wednesday, 20 May 2007

29. Following the rules of procedure, the Meeting of the Parties will elect its officers, who will remain in office until the next election at its fifth meeting: the Chair of the Bureau, the Chair and two Vice-chairs of the Working Group, and the Chair of the Implementation Committee. The Meeting will also elect four Parties that will each appoint a member of the Implementation Committee, replacing Armenia, Finland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Slovakia.

30. In accordance with rule 4 of the rules of procedure, the Meeting of the Parties will set the indicative dates for its fifth meeting and agree on its venue, which the Bureau suggests be Geneva. The Meeting may agree a *tentative calendar of meetings* of its subsidiary bodies until its fifth meeting. Delegations may also wish to put forward proposals for hosting such meetings.

Item 8: Other business

Tentative timing: noon – 12:15 p.m., Wednesday, 20 May 2007

31. Delegations wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 9: Presentation of the main decisions and closing of the meeting

Tentative timing: 12:15 – 1 p.m., Wednesday, 20 May 2007

32. The Chair will present the main decisions taken at the fourth meeting of the Parties. The secretariat will finalize the report of the meeting in consultation with the Bureau.

33. A representative of the host country will close the meeting.

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