

THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE ESPOO CONVENTION

(June 3, 2004, Cavtat)

United Nations Development Programme Regional Centre for Europe and CIS

Main Conclusions and Statement Related to the

CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA PROTOCOL IN SELECTED EECCA COUNTRIES

The conclusions reflect the key needs and priorities in SEA capacity building in the following countries: Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus, who take part in the UNDP project „SEA – Promotion and Capacity Building“, and implemented in co-operation with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, and the national stakeholders.

I. Current environment for implementation of the SEA protocol (key issues)

Advantages

- Elements of SEA are already in the national environmental legislation (law on Nature Protection, laws and regulations on environmental expertise, on environmental permits, etc.)
- Functioning OVOS (Environmental Impact Assessment) and state environmental review is a good basis for the development of the SEA

Weaknesses

The currently existing legislation or legislative provisions for impact assessment of strategic concepts is to a very small extent applied in practice due to:

- Absence of screening mechanism that prevent determination if strategic documents have environmental and health effects (too many or too few documents submitted for expertise);
- Absence of evaluation mechanism that accommodate strategic level of thinking and planning;
- Absence of methodological approaches and tools applicable to the programming, strategic and legal documents, thus absence of basis for SEA in the countries without prior preparation;
- Absence of mechanism for effective and early public participation in the planning and assessment process;
- Low awareness on the needs and benefits of SEA.

II. Key priorities for capacity development

- Analysis of the current systems of environmental assessment and finding the consensus how to integrate SEA into existing legal provisions;
- General awareness raising on and promotion of SEA among various stakeholders and promotion of their mutual co-operation;
- Support in drafting SEA laws and regulations;
- Development of procedural schemes for different types of strategic documents;
- Development of criteria and methodologies on SEA;
- Methodological guidance on the analysis of the significant environmental impacts and good international practices;
- Methodological guidance on analysis of transboundary effects and organizing consultations;
- Guidance on public consultations in SEA and taking into account their opinion/recommendations
- Implementation of the SEA pilot case studies;
- Promotion of regional and sub-regional co-operation in the framework of the SEA Protocol in order to exchange experience between the countries with similar legislative base and similar problems and needs.

III. Statement

UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS offers its support to EECCA countries in building their capacity for the SEA / SEA Protocol implementation. It encourages other intergovernmental and nongovernmental institutions to join in this initiative.