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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

**Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context
First meeting
(Oslo, 18-20 May 1998)
(Item 6 of the provisional agenda)**

DRAFT DECISION TO BE TAKEN AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Submitted by the preparatory meeting

DECISION I/6

ADOPTION OF THE WORK-PLAN

The Meeting,

Recalling Articles 9 and 11, paragraph (f), of the Convention stipulating that further research as well as additional action that may be required shall be undertaken to achieve the purposes of the Convention,

1. Adopts the work-plan for the period up to its second meeting, as included in the annex to this document;
2. Suggests that lead countries which carry out the relevant activities should consider the time schedule indicated in the addendum to this document;

3. Calls on the Parties and invites non-Parties to arrange, host and participate actively in task forces in order to facilitate the implementation of the Convention.

Annex

**WORK-PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION
FOR THE PERIOD 1998 TO 2000**

1. REVIEWS OF STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Objective: Parties and non-Parties will submit information biennially on recent developments in their national strategies and policies for applying environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context.

Method of work: A draft biennial review will be considered at the second meeting of the Parties. In the interest of uniformity, national presentations of information on strategies and policies should follow the agreed guidelines (ENVWA/WG.3/4, annex II).

Organizational aspects: The secretariat will prepare a draft biennial review based on the information provided by Parties and non-Parties for discussion and possible adoption at the second meeting of the Parties.

Time schedule: The draft 1998-2000 biennial review will be prepared in 2000 and incorporate the information received by the end of 1999 for consideration at the second meeting of the Parties.

2. ASPECTS OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

Objective: To share information and experience on what Parties and non-Parties have achieved through bilateral and/or multilateral agreements or arrangements to implement their obligations under the Convention.

Method of work: On the basis of a compendium of existing bi- and/or multilateral agreements or arrangements, a workshop will be held to develop a report containing further guidance for bi- and/or multilateral agreements or arrangements to apply the obligations under the Convention.

Organizational aspects: The Netherlands will act as lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat, especially in preparing the compendium. The report containing guidance will be presented to the Working Group and thereafter to the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

Time schedule: The compendium will be presented to the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment before the workshop takes place. The report containing the guidance will be presented to the Working Group for

consideration and thereafter to the Parties for possible adoption at their second meeting.

3. PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION

Objective: To collect and analyse information on the application of EIA in a transboundary context with a view to preparing relevant guidance.

Method of work: The lead countries will prepare a questionnaire to be sent to countries and will analyse the replies. The analysis, together with draft guidance, will be discussed at a workshop.

Organizational aspects: Finland and Sweden will act as lead countries, in cooperation with the European Community and with the assistance of the secretariat. The report containing relevant guidance will be presented to the Working Group for consideration and thereafter to the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

Time schedule: A summary of case studies will be presented to the participants before the workshop. The draft report based on the evaluation by the workshop will be presented to the Working Group for consideration and thereafter to the Parties at their second meeting for possible adoption.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT

Objective: To strengthen the application of public participation in environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention.

Method of work: On the basis of a report on experiences with public participation prepared by the Regional Environmental Center (REC), draft guidance in this respect will be prepared so that it can be discussed and further developed at a meeting of experts, with wide participation of representatives of countries in transition, which will prepare a report on this issue.

Organizational aspects: The Russian Federation will act as lead country, with the financial support of Italy and with the assistance of the secretariat, to prepare a workshop as well as draft guidance. The report containing guidance will be presented to the Working Group for consideration and thereafter to the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

5. NON-COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

Objective: To collect and analyse relevant experience with existing non-compliance procedures under international agreements with a view to considering the advisability of establishing non-compliance guidelines and to preparing relevant recommendations.

Method of work: On the basis of a discussion paper outlining the possible framework and options for a non-compliance system under the Convention, based on relevant experience under other international agreements, two meetings will be convened to develop a report containing possible approaches for non-compliance guidelines.

Organizational aspects: The United Kingdom will act as lead country. The report containing approaches for non-compliance guidelines will be submitted to the Working Group for discussion and thereafter to the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

Time schedule: The report containing possible approaches for non-compliance guidelines will be presented at the second meeting of the Working Group for discussion and finalization and thereafter to the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption.

6. RECENT EIA DEVELOPMENTS AND LINKS WITH OTHER ECE CONVENTIONS

Objective: To collect and analyse information on recent experiences in the application of environmental impact assessment as well as to study the links between this Convention and other ECE conventions with a view to further strengthening the application of the Convention.

Method of work: On the basis of a report analysing recent developments in environmental impact assessment as well as links with other conventions, a meeting will be convened to develop a report containing proposals for future work.

Organizational aspects: Italy will act as lead country, with the assistance of Canada, the European Community and the secretariat, and prepare a report on this issue. The report containing the analysis of possible future developments and recommendations for future work will be presented to the Working Group for discussion and thereafter to the Parties for possible adoption at their second meeting.

7. DATABASE ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Objective: To allow an exchange of information on matters related to EIA in a transboundary context and to provide support to Parties and non-Parties in the establishment and maintenance of a system of networking, by setting up, as a central resource, a computer database, accessible to users through the Internet and as a "stand-alone facility" in order to strengthen the application of EIA in a transboundary context in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

Method of work: The lead country will maintain the database on environmental impact assessment for a trial period up to the second meeting of the Parties.

Organizational aspects: Poland will act as lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat, in particular in relation to the translation of information. The Parties will monitor and review the use of the database at their second meeting.

Time schedule: For the next meeting of the Parties, Poland will prepare a report analysing the use of the database, with the assistance of a user panel.]

8. PARTNERSHIPS

Objective: To provide support to countries in transition through the exchange of information on matters related to EIA in a transboundary context by establishing bi- and multilateral partnerships between Parties and non-Parties.

Method of work: To strengthen the capabilities of countries in transition, partnerships between these countries and possible donors will be promoted and set up.

Organizational aspects: The secretariat will act as a clearing house and promote and set up partnerships between countries in transition and possible donors.

Time schedule: The secretariat will prepare a report analysing all relevant issues in relation to the establishment of partnerships for consideration at the second meeting of the Parties.

9. SUBREGIONAL PILOT WORKSHOP

Objective: To organize a subregional workshop to discuss the practical implementation of the Convention and the specific needs of countries in transition in the Balkan region and the Black Sea region. To strengthen their efforts to ratify and enforce the Convention. As a result of the workshop, draft action plans will be prepared to strengthen the capabilities of the countries in the region.

Method of work: Bulgaria will organize a two-day workshop analysing the necessary steps to meet the requirements of the Convention for projects undertaken in two or more countries in the region. Special attention will be given to the national EIA systems; the needs of the countries in transition will be discussed on the basis of case studies on EIA in a transboundary context in developed countries (e.g. Norway).

Organizational aspects: Bulgaria will act as lead country, with the support of Norway and the assistance of the secretariat. The estimated budget for the workshop is:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Costs in US\$</u>
Organization of the workshop	20,000.-
Expenses for participation of representatives from countries in transition	20,000.-

It is expected that two or three experts from the following countries in transition will be invited: Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Ukraine, as well as from some of Bulgaria's neighbours, with which it has signed bilateral agreements for cooperation on environmental protection.

Time schedule: The pilot workshop is scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 1999. The report of the workshop, including proposals for action plans, will be submitted for discussion at the annual meeting of the Working Group, and thereafter to the Parties for possible adoption at their second meeting.