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PART ONE – CURRENT LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

In this part, please provide the information requested, or revise any information relative to the previous report. Describe the legal, administrative and other measures taken in your country to implement the provisions of the Convention. This part should describe the framework for your country’s implementation, and not experience in the application of the Convention.

Article 2

General Provisions

1. List the general legal, administrative and other measures taken in your country to implement the provisions of the Convention (art. 2, para. 2).

The main legal framework for the implementation of the Espoo Convention is Law 2540/1997 regarding its ratification. Procedural, technical and administrative matters are mainly covered by provisions in the following:

- Ministerial Decision (MD) 1958/2012 “Classification of public and private sector projects and activities in categories and subcategories according to art. 1 par. 4 of Law 4014/2011” as amended by MD 20741/2012.
- Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) 21398/2012 “Establishment and function of a special website for posting decisions regarding approval, renewal or amendment of environmental permits.”
- JMD 48963/2012 “Specifications of the content of the Decisions for the approval of environmental terms for projects and activities under category A of MD 1958/2012.”
- JMD 167563/2013 “Specialization of the procedures and the particular criteria for the environmental permitting of projects and activities of art. 3,4,5,6 & 7 of Law 4014/2011, etc.”

Moreover, Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) 1649/45/2014 “Specialization of the opinion giving procedures and ways of informing the public in public consultations during the environmental permitting of category A projects and activities of MD 1958/2012 etc.” which was just published on 15th January 2014, and in particular article 8, covers the requirements of the Espoo Convention for projects and activities of a transboundary nature.

All these legal provisions reflect Greece’s commitment towards improving environmental permitting processes both domestically, as well as with neighbouring and other countries by implementing the provisions of the Espoo Convention.

2. Indicate any further measures to implement the provisions of the Convention that are planned for the near future.
Greece is in the process of completing the ratification of both Amendments to the Espoo Convention. The ratification of the SEA Protocol to the Espoo Convention is intended in the near future, as well. Moreover, the forthcoming MD on the specialization of the contents of the environmental permitting files (covering EIA documentation) will also constitute a significant contribution.

3. **List the different authorities that are named responsible for the implementation of the EIA procedure in the transboundary context and domestically.**

The authority responsible for the implementation of the EIA procedure in the transboundary context is the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change. The implementation of the EIA procedure domestically falls within the competency of the following authorities depending on the project or activity:

- the central environmental authorities of the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, or
- the decentralized environmental authorities (for limited cases of projects and activities listed in Appendix 1 of the Espoo Convention).

4. **Is there an authority in your country that collects information on all the transboundary EIA cases? If so, please name it.**

The Special Environmental Service of the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, as the focal point for administrative matters regarding the Espoo Convention, maintains an unofficial record of the cases in which Greece has been involved in the implementation of Convention.

5. **Does your country have special provisions for transboundary EIA procedures for joint cross-border projects (e.g., roads, pipelines)?**

Special provisions in our national legislation for transboundary EIA procedures concerning joint cross-border projects do not exist. Such provisions are usually included in bilateral or multilateral agreements for specific projects or activities.

**IDENTIFICATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT UNDER THE CONVENTION**

6. **Is appendix I to the Convention transposed fully into your country’s national legislation? Please describe any differences between the national list and appendix I to the Convention.**

Appendix I to the Espoo Convention has been fully transposed into our national environmental permitting legislation and there are no discrepancies between the two lists.

7. **Does your country’s legislation already cover fully the revised appendix I in the second amendment (ECE/MP.EIA/6, decision III/7)?**

As regards to the revised Appendix I in the Second Amendment, albeit it is still in the process of transposition into national law, the existing national legislation concerning the environmental permitting of projects and activities covers those included in the revised list.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

8. **How does your country, together with the affected Party, ensure that the opportunity given to the public of the affected Party is equivalent to the one given to your country’s public as required in article 2, paragraph 6?**

**REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ESPOO CONVENTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT**

4
Greece as a Party of origin provides the affected Party with a reasonable timeframe for public participation in the EIA process and transmittal of the opinions of the interested public, in accordance to article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014. This timeframe is usually agreed upon on a case by case basis, or else the relevant national legal timeframes are applied. There may also exist additional provisions included in bilateral or multilateral agreements regarding e.g. durations, deadlines etc. Comments and opinions of the interested public are treated with the appropriate manner, irrespective of origin and/or other differences.

Article 3

Notification

Questions to Party of origin

9. Describe how your country determines when to send the notification to the affected Party, which is to occur “as early as possible as and no later than when informing its own public”.

After having received an EIA application for a proposed project or activity listed in Appendix I of the Espoo Convention and as soon as it is recognised that the proposed project or activity is likely to cause a significant adverse impact on the environment of an affected Party, the competent environmental authority notifies the Party in question within two (2) working days from checking the completeness of the relevant documentation and at any rate not later than the beginning of the domestic public participation process (as foreseen in article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014).

10. Indicate whether and how the following provisions are reflected in your national legislation:

   a. The stage in the EIA procedure when your country usually notifies the affected Party (art. 3.1);

      When the competent environmental authority ascertains that a proposed project or activity listed in Appendix I of the Espoo Convention is likely to cause a significant adverse transboundary impact, it proceeds to notify the affected Party. This may take place during the scoping stage or the proper EIA procedure. In either case, notification takes place before initializing domestic public consultations (article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014).

   b. The format for notification. Please indicate whether this is the format as decided by the first meeting of the Parties in its decision I/4 (ECE/MP.EIA/2, annex IV, appendix). If not, does your country use a format of its own (in which case, please attach a copy of it)?

      Greece utilizes the format for notification suggested by Decision I/4 (ECE/MP.EIA/2, annex IV, Appendix) of the first meeting of the Parties of the Espoo Convention.

   c. The time frame for the response to the notification from the affected Party (cf. art. 3, para. 3, “within the time specified in the notification”), the consequence if an affected Party does not comply with the time frame, and the possibility of extending a deadline;

      A reasonable time frame is given to the affected Party for responding to a notification. This is set on a case by case basis and depends on the time restraints for the completion of the EIA procedure according to Hellenic Legislation. A lack of response is usually considered to be an indication that the affected Party has no
intention of participating in the transboundary EIA. If deemed necessary and feasible, an extension to a deadline may be agreed upon by the Parties involved.

d. The request for information from the affected Party (art. 3 para. 6), necessary for the preparation of the EIA documentation:

The gathering of all necessary information in order to draft the EIA documentation for a proposed project or activity falls within the responsibilities of the developer and/or consultant.

e. How your country cooperates with the authorities of the affected Party on public participation (art. 3, para. 8);

Consultations between concerned Parties may take place in order to better regulate public participation procedures, but generally matters concerning public participation and the specification of "the public" in the affected Party are dealt with according to the national legal and other provisions of the affected Party. Bilateral or multilateral agreements may also provide additional provisions to facilitate and coordinate public participation processes.

f. When and how the public in the affected Party is notified (what kinds of media, etc., are usually used). What is normally the content of the public notification?

If the affected Party states its intention to participate in the consultation process of the environmental permitting for a proposed project or activity, the relevant documentation is then forwarded to the official Espoo Convention focal point of the affected Party. The public in the affected Party is hence notified. The manner and content of the public notification is left to the affected Party, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the Parties concerned.

g. When and how the public in the Party of origin is notified (what kinds of media, etc., are usually used). What is normally the content of the public notification?

Greece notifies its own public on a regional level. If the EIA documentation for a proposed project or activity is deemed to be complete by the competent environmental authority, it is forwarded —both in written and digital form— to the Regional Council(s) of the Region(s) involved. The Regional Councils then notify the public by announcements in newspapers, notice-boards, web sites, that invite the public to be informed and the interested public to express their opinions by placing at the public’s disposal any environmental information. The contents of the notification are specified by national legislation (article 5 of JMD 1649/45/2014) and include details regarding the project (title, category-group, location), the developer, the competent environmental authority, the regional services responsible for providing the relevant information, the dates for the duration of the public participation.

h. Whether the notification to the public of the affected Party has the same content as the notification to your country’s public. If not, describe why not.

All relevant information in the domestic public notification is sent to the affected Party in order to be utilized in the notification of the public of the affected Party.

11. Does your country make use of contact points for the purposes of notification, as decided at the first meeting of Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/2, annex III, decision I/3), and as listed on the Convention website (http://www.unece.org/env/eia/points_of_contact.htm)?

Greece always makes use of the official list of contact points for the purposes of notification decided at the first meeting of the Parties and listed on the Espoo Convention’s website.
QUESTIONS TO AFFECTED PARTY

12. Indicate whether and how the following provisions are reflected in your national legislation:

a. How your country decides whether or not to participate in the EIA procedure (art. 3, para. 3)?

The decision to participate in a transboundary EIA procedure is taken by the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, following the proposal of its competent environmental authorities, on a case by case basis, by considering mainly the likelihood, extent and significance of the potential adverse transboundary impacts of the proposed activity.

b. The request from the Party of origin for information (art. 3, para. 6), necessary for the preparation of the EIA documentation;

When information is requested by the Party of Origin for the preparation of the EIA documentation, it is provided “promptly” i.e. within a requested timeframe, if any, or else as soon as possible, and as long as it is “reasonably obtainable” i.e. existing information readily available to the relative authorities.

c. How your country cooperates with the authorities of the Party of origin on public participation (art. 3, para. 8);

See 10(e).

d. When and how the public is notified (e.g., what kinds of media, etc., are usually used).

When a proposed project or activity is likely to cause a significant adverse impact on Greek territory and as soon as Greece decides to enter into a transboundary EIA procedure, the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change ensures that the information regarding the description of the proposed project or activity, its likely significant transboundary impacts and the nature of the decisions to be taken are made available to the public and that the interested public has the possibility to express comments or opinions on this information, within a time frame designated by the Party of origin. The process followed is the same as described in 10(e), unless otherwise agreed upon by the Parties concerned.

Article 4
Preparation of the environmental impact assessment documentation

QUESTIONS TO PARTY OF ORIGIN

13. Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to:

a. The content of the EIA documentation (art. 4, para. 1; appendix II);

Currently there are general mandatory specifications concerning the contents of the EIA documentation for projects and activities, set out in Law 4014/2011, which include the information described in Appendix II of the Espoo Convention. However with the upcoming MD on the contents of environmental permitting files, these will be further specified and according to project type.
b. The procedures for determining the content of the EIA documentation on a case-by-case basis (scoping procedure) (art. 4, para. 1):

The developer of a project or activity may request from the competent environmental authority to specify further the required contents of the EIA documentation for the project or activity in question, by submitting an application for “Preliminary determination of environmental requirements” (scoping on a case by case basis as foreseen in Law 4014/2011). It is worth noting that the contents of the relative documentation for scoping will also be specified in the upcoming MD on the contents of environmental permitting files.

c. The identification of “reasonable alternatives” in accordance with appendix II, paragraph (b):

“Reasonable alternatives” i.e. alternative solutions, particularly in regards to location, size and/or technology, including the “do nothing” case are identified, described and assessed in the submitted EIA documentation for the proposed activity or project, unless the competent environmental authority requests a different or complimentary proposal for alternatives during the EIA process.

d. The procedures and format for providing the EIA documentation domestically:

The EIA procedures according to project category and the requirements for the EIA documentation are all described in Law 4014/2011. The proposed project or activity may be submitted to a preliminary assessment which includes scoping and consultations. In any case, the developer of a project or activity submits the EIA documentation, which includes an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) file with any associated documents and supporting drawings. The competent environmental authority then reviews the file for its formal completeness within 15 or 10 working days (depending on project categorization) from the date of submission. The EIA documentation is then sent to the relevant administrative services and bodies and publicized, 2 working days after completing the quality review. The opinions of the relevant administrative authorities and the views of the public and other bodies are collected (consultation process), within a period of 45 or 35 working days (depending on project categorization) from the date the EIA documentation was forwarded and publicized. In the 20 working days that follow, the competent environmental authority assesses and evaluates the received opinions and views, as well as any views the developer has expressed regarding these opinions. Then the competent environmental authority, within 25 or 15 working days (depending on project categorization) from the completion of the previous phase, compiles a draft of the final decision based on the assessment of the received opinions and views, and irrespective if all co-competent authorities have expressed their opinion. The final decision (environmental permit) is then issued.

e. The procedures and format for providing the EIA documentation to the affected Party. If there is a difference between the procedures and format domestically and for the affected Party, please explain:

Initially, an official letter at Ministerial level together with a completed format for notification and as well as any other useful information reaches the appointed Points of contact of the affected Party through the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the case when a positive response is received, a transboundary EIA is conducted with the affected Party. The submitted EIA documentation translated into English—which does not differ in any other way from the original text—reaches the competent environmental authorities and the public of the affected Party (transboundary
consultation process) through the appointed Points of contact. The overall process may be facilitated by provisions in bilateral or multilateral agreements signed by the interested Parties.

f. **The procedures for the examination of, and the deadlines for comments on, the EIA documentation domestically, and how the comments submitted domestically are addressed;**

The collection and examination of comments during the EIA procedure may take place in more than one stage. If the project or activity undergoes a "Preliminary determination of environmental requirements", which is optional, the submitted by the developer documentation, after being reviewed by the competent environmental authority for its completeness, is forwarded to the relevant public authorities for consultations, providing them with the opportunity to express their opinion in 30 working days after receipt of the documentation. During the second stage, which is the mandatory EIA process, the EIA documentation after having been reviewed for completeness by the competent environmental authority, is forwarded to other relevant public authorities and the public for consultations, providing them with the opportunity to express their opinion in either 45 or 35 working days following receipt of the EIA documentation (depending on project categorization). Opinions are of a non-binding consultative nature, unless otherwise explicitly foreseen by legal provisions. The developer is given the opportunity to respond to the submitted comments. All reasoned opinions and views are assessed and evaluated by the competent environmental authority and are sited in the final decision.

g. **The procedures for the examination of, and the deadlines for comments on, the EIA documentation from the affected Party, and how the comments submitted by the affected Party are addressed;**

The timeframe for the receipt of comments from the affected Party on the forwarded EIA documentation usually will not exceed the domestic limit for the proposed project or activity (see 13(f) above). Nevertheless, in view of possible administrative delays or other technical difficulties its duration might be extended on a case by case basis and following consultations between the Parties involved. Also a different deadline for the receipt and evaluation of comments by the affected Party may be mutually agreed upon beforehand. Upon expiration of the imposed deadline the competent environmental authority of the Party of origin may proceed to the assessment and evaluation of the comments and opinions received from the affected Party in the same manner as for domestic opinions.

h. **The procedures for public hearings domestically;**

Law 4014/2011 foresees public participation during the EIA process for a proposed project or activity through Regional Council meetings of the Regions concerned, which are a form of public hearing open to everyone. The possibility for additional public hearings to be held, at the developer’s initiative, is also provided for in Law 4014/2011. Details regarding a public hearing may be arranged by concerned environmental and other authorities and the proponent.

i. **The procedures for public hearings held on the territory of the affected Party.**

The possibility and details for a public hearing to be held in territory of the affected Party is the responsibility of the competent environmental authority of the affected Party. Nevertheless this may be discussed and agreed between concerned Parties and the developer for the particular project or activity.
14. **Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to:**

a. **The procedures and deadlines for comments on the EIA documentation to be submitted to the Party of origin:**

The Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change places the relevant EIA documentation at the disposal of the co-competent authorities and opinion-giving bodies as well as the public and the interested public, providing them with the opportunity to express their opinions or views within the timeframe set by the Party of origin, according to article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014 (or else the national timeframe for comments on the EIA documentation may apply).

b. **The procedures for public participation in the review of the EIA documentation domestically, and the authority responsible for the execution of the aforementioned procedures:**

The procedure for public participation is foreseen Law 4014/2011 and further specified in JMD 1649/45/2014. Public participation takes place on a regional level. If the EIA documentation for a proposed project or activity is deemed to be complete by the competent environmental authority, it is forwarded – both in written and digital form – to the Regional Council(s) of the Region(s) involved. The Regional Council then notifies and invites the public to be informed and the interested public to express their opinions by placing at its disposal any environmental information and by carried out a scheduled Regional Council meeting open to everyone. The authority responsible for forwarding the EIA documentation to the Regional Councils for publication is the competent environmental authority of the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change.

c. **The procedures for the examination of the EIA documentation domestically:**

The procedure for the examination of the EIA documentation of a proposed project or activity by the competent environmental authority is set out in Law 4014/2011 and described in 13(d).

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**Article 5**

**Consultations**

**QUESTIONS TO PARTY OF ORIGIN**

15. **Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to the following provisions:**

a. **The procedures for cooperation with the affected Party related to consultations:**

If the affected Party states its intention to participate in the consultation process of the environmental permitting for a proposed project or activity, the EIA documentation (translated into English) is then forwarded by the competent environmental authority to the official Espoo Convention focal point of the affected Party, thus providing the relevant environmental authorities of the affected Party with the opportunity and reasonable timeframe to become informed and submit their comments to the national...
competent environmental authority of the Party of origin. Requirements for cooperation in regards to consultations may be further enforced through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

b. The stages, procedures and deadlines for consultations with the affected Party:

The consultation process with the affected Party is described above (see 15(a)). Reasonable timeframes for the duration of the consultation period are usually set on a case by case basis when the EIA documentation is sent to the affected Party. For further details refer to 13(g).

c. The stages, procedures and deadlines for consultations domestically, and who participates in the consultations.

According to Law 4014/2011, consultations occur during two stages:

Preliminary Determination of Environmental Requirements (PDER) (scoping procedure) — optional stage:

- Possibility of a public hearing on the developer/consultant’s initiative regarding the basic technical characteristics of the proposed activity or project and its potential consequences (art. 2 para. 2 of Law 4014/2011)

- Among the responsible authorities and institutions for which it is mandatorily to give their opinion regarding the proposed activity or project is the Hellenic Ministry for Culture & Tourism under special preconditions according to art. 2 of Law 4014/2011. The same is valid for Forests Service in particular cases.

- For projects and activities belonging to A1 subcategory, the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change as competent environmental authority forwards the relative file to all responsible authorities and institutions for them to express their opinion in 30 working days time upon receipt

Submission of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) file — mandatory stage:

- For projects and activities belonging to A1 subcategory the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change as the competent environmental authority forwards the EIS file to all responsible authorities and institutions for them to express their opinion, publish the EIS to inform the public and collect the comments expressed by the “interested” public within 45 days upon receipt. In particular cases, the Central Council for Environmental Permitting may be requested to give its opinion for the proposed project or activity in 15 working days deadline after the competent environmental authority has finished processing the opinions and comments gathered by responsible authorities and institutions and the “interested” public (25 working days upon receipt).

- For projects and activities belonging to A2 subcategory the Decentralized Administration as competent environmental authority forwards the EIS file to all responsible authorities and institutions for them to express their opinion, publish the EIS to inform the public and collect the comments expressed by the “interested” public within a 35 working days deadline upon receipt. In
particular cases, the Council for Environmental Permitting may be requested to give its opinion for the proposed project or activity in 15 working days deadline after the competent environmental authority has finished evaluating the opinions and comments collected by responsible authorities institutions and the "interested" public (20 working days upon receipt)

Art. 3 par. 4 of Law 4014/2011 foresees that, when the competent environmental authority so requests and providing sufficient justification, the General Secretary of the Hellenic Ministry for Environment Energy and Climate Change may issue a decision to double the relevant deadlines for a proposed project or activity.

QUESTIONS TO AFFECTED PARTY

16. Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to the following provisions:

a. The procedures for interaction with the Party of origin related to consultations;

When a proposed project or activity is likely to cause a significant adverse impact on Greek territory and as soon as Greece decides to enter into a transboundary EIA procedure, the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change ensures that the information regarding the description of the proposed project or activity, its likely significant transboundary impacts and the nature of the decisions to be taken are made available to the co-responsible authorities and opinion-giving bodies, as well as the public. It also makes sure that the opinion-giving bodies and the interested public have the possibility to express comments or opinions on this information, within a time frame designated by the Party of origin.

b. The stages, procedures and deadlines for consultations domestically, and who participates in the consultations.

The consultation process carried out domestically is described above (see 16(a)) and in 14(b). Co-responsible authorities and opinion-giving bodies are generally designated by national legal provisions, but can also be supplemented on a case by case basis.

Article 6

Final decision

QUESTIONS TO PARTY OF ORIGIN

17. Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to the following provisions:

a. The definition of "final decision" related to the implementation of the planned activity; the content of decisions; and procedures for their adoption;

The form of the “final decision” (i.e. the environmental permit for a project or activity called “Decision of Approval of Environmental Terms”) depends on the categorization of the proposed activity or project (as foreseen by Law 4014/2011) and is either:

- a Ministerial Decision (MD) for A1 subcategory projects and activities, or
- a decision signed by the General Secretary of the competent Decentralized Administration for A2 subcategory projects and activities.
The environmental permitting procedures are set out in Law 4014/2011 and the contents of the “Decision of Approval of Environmental Terms” are further specified in JMD 48963/2012.

b. For each type of activity listed in appendix I, identify what is regarded as the “final decision” to authorize or undertake a proposed activity (art. 6 in conjunction with art. 2, para. 3); also provide the term used in the national legislation in the original language. Do all projects listed in appendix I require such a decision?

All types of activity listed in Appendix I of the Espoo Convention require by law an environmental permit (which also constitutes a pre-requisite for its development consent) in the form of Ministerial Decision (MD), called “Decision of Approval of Environmental Terms” («Απόφαση Έγκρισης Περιβαλλοντικών Όρων»), authorized by the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change. An exception may be made for activities of major national importance or magnitude that may be approved through a law voted by the Hellenic Parliament on a case by case basis.

c. The procedures for informing of the "final decision" domestically and for the affected Party;

When the “Decision of Approval of Environmental Terms” of a proposed activity or project is issued, it is published, as soon as possible and no later than a month after the issue date, on the relative governmental website for all final decisions, in the section designated for the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change (http://et.diavgeia.gov.gr/ypeka), as well as on the Ministry’s website designed for the sole purpose of publishing environmental permits, according to JMD 21398/2012 (http://aepo.ypeka.gr). The affected Party is also informed and sent the final decision through the official Points of contact listed in the Espoo Convention, as foreseen in article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014.

d. Are the comments of the authorities and the public of the affected Party and the outcome of the consultations taken into consideration in the same way as the comments from the authorities and the public in your country (art. 6, para. 1)?

The competent environmental authority ensures that during the process of assessing and evaluating the received opinions and comments all are treated equally and respectfully regardless of national boundaries or other implications and they are sited in the final decision.

e. The opportunity to review the decision if, before the activity is implemented, additional information becomes available according to article 6, paragraph 3.

In case it is deemed necessary, the opportunity to review the issued environmental permit for proposed activity or project, in view of new environmental information, is given by Law 4014/2011.

**Article 7**

**Post-Project Analysis**

18. Indicate the legal requirements in your country, if any, related to:

   a. Post-project analysis (art. 7, para. 1);
Appendix II of Law 4014/2011 provides for specific requirements to conduct post-project analysis and monitoring of the proposed activity or project including special parameters, indicators, methods and timeframes, as well as specialized studies that shall be integrated in an environmental management plan. This plan constitutes an integral part of the EIA documentation for the proposed project or activity.

b. Procedures for informing of the results of post-project analysis.

Provisions for informing on the results of post-project analysis are imposed in the environmental permit for the proposed project or activity.

Article 8

Bilateral and multilateral agreements

19. Does your country have any bilateral or multilateral agreements based on the Convention (art. 8, appendix VI)? If so, list them. Briefly describe the nature of these agreements. To what extent are these agreements based on appendix VI and what issues do they cover? If publicly available, also attach the texts of such bilateral and multilateral agreements, preferably in English, French or Russian.

Greece is a Signatory to the “Multilateral Agreement among the countries of south-eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context”. Other Signatories are Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The main purpose of the Multilateral Agreement is to support the implementation of the Espoo Convention, especially in the region of south-eastern Europe. It is publicly available through the official website of the Espoo Convention. No other bilateral or multilateral agreements have been signed by Greece till today. As regards to Appendix VI of the Espoo Convention, it should be mentioned that the Multilateral Agreement sets the framework for further elaboration of all aspects related to the implementation of the Espoo Convention.

20. Has your country established any supplementary points of contact pursuant to bilateral or multilateral agreements?

Greece’s official Points of contact are listed in the relevant part of the Espoo Convention’s website and are identical for both the Convention itself and any multilateral or any other agreement that may occur in the future.

Research programmes

21. Are you aware of any specific research in relation to the items mentioned in article 9 in your country? If so, describe it briefly.

We are not aware of any formal research regarding the items mentioned in article 9 of the Espoo Convention.

Ratification of the amendments to the Convention and of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

22. If your country has not yet ratified the first amendment to the Convention, does it have plans to ratify this amendment? If so, when?
Greece is in the stage of collecting the necessary signatures to ratify the first amendment to the Espoo Convention. No binding timeframe can be foreseen for this process.

23. **If your country has not yet ratified the second amendment to the Convention, does it have plans to ratify this amendment? If so, when?**

Greece is also in the stage of collecting the necessary signatures to ratify the second amendment to the Espoo Convention. No binding timeframe can be foreseen for this process.

24. **If your country has not yet ratified the Protocol on SEA, does it have plans to ratify the Protocol? If so, when?**

Greece is intending to ratify the Protocol on SEA in the near future, but there is no foreseeable timeframe for this process.

**PART TWO – PRACTICAL APPLICATION DURING THE PERIOD 2010–2012**

Please report on your country’s practical experiences in applying the Convention (not your country’s procedures described in part one), whether as Party of origin or affected Party. The focus here is on identifying good practices as well as difficulties Parties have encountered in applying the Convention in practice; and the goal is to enable Parties to share solutions. Parties should therefore provide appropriate examples highlighting application of the Convention and innovative approaches to improve its application.

**CASES DURING THE PERIOD 2010–2012**

25. **If your country’s national administration has a list of transboundary EIA procedures that were under way during the reporting period, in which your country was Party of origin or affected Party, please list it.**

During the reporting period (2010-2012) Greece has either sent or received notification for the following projects, according to the Espoo Convention:

As Party of origin:
- Project: “Road axis “Koromilia-Ieropigi-Kristallopi” of vertical axis “Siatista-Ieropigi-Kristallopi” of Egnatia Odos”
- Project: “Upgrading-widening of road section 50.3 “Florina-Niki” on vertical axis 50 “Kozani-Florina-Niki” of Egnatia Odos”

As both Party of origin and affected Party:
- Project: “Construction of a neutral gas pipeline interconnector GREECE-BULGARIA”
- Project: “BURGAS ALEXANDROUPOLIS crude oil pipeline and associated facilities-Preliminary Impact Assessment Study of the Greek section”

As affected Party:
• Project: “Upgrading procedure of REK-BITOLA thermo-electric power plant in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”
• Project: “Suspension of the construction of 3 new reactors in Switzerland”
• Project: “Construction of a natural gas pipeline interconnector Greece-Italy (Italian section)”
• Activity: “Investment proposal for mining and processing of auriferous ores from the Krumovgrad License, Krumovgrad Municipality, by Balkan Mineral and Mining (BMM) EAD”

26. Does your country object to the inclusion of the above list of transboundary EIA procedures in a compilation of such procedures to be made available on the website of the Convention? (Indicate “yes” if you object.)

There is no objection.

27. Provide information and explanations on the average duration of transboundary EIA procedures, both of the individual steps and of the procedures as a whole.

As the transboundary EIA procedures for the aforementioned projects have not progressed beyond the notification stage, only time durations for notification are available. When Greece was the Party of origin the time given for notification purposes varied between 30 to 60 days.

EXPERIENCE IN THE TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE DURING THE PERIOD 2010–2012

28. If your country has had practical experience in the transboundary EIA procedure during the reporting period, has the implementation of the Convention supported the prevention, reduction or control of possible significant transboundary environmental impacts? Provide practical examples if available.

Even though Greece has had practical experience in the transboundary EIA procedure during the reporting period, no case has reached the materialization or operational phase as yet, in order to access in practice the effectiveness of the Convention’s application. Nevertheless, it is believed that it does contribute towards the preventing, reducing or controlling of likely significant transboundary environmental impacts through co-operation and the exchange of information between concerned Parties.

29. Please share with other Parties your country’s experience of using the Convention in practice. In response to each of the questions below, either provide one or two practical examples or describe your country’s general experience. You might also include examples of lessons learned in order to help others:

a. Indicate whether a separate chapter is provided on transboundary issues in the EIA documentation. How does your country determine how much information to include in the EIA documentation?

For activities originating in Greece, there have been cases where a separate chapter on transboundary issues was integrated in the EIA documentation for a proposed
project or activity likely to cause significant transboundary impacts, which was quite useful. In other cases, these issues were addressed in the general chapter describing and evaluating the project’s likely impacts on the environment. The extent of information to be included is either determined through the optional scoping stage or following the review of the EIA documentation by the competent environmental authority if it is judged insufficient.

b. Translation is not addressed in the Convention. How has your country addressed the question of translation? What does your country usually translate? What difficulties has your country experienced relating to translation and interpretation, and what solutions has your country applied?

The language used in the above mentioned list of projects and activities, for which the provisions of the Espoo Convention have been implemented has been English following informal agreements between the concerned Parties. For the future, article 8 of JMD 1649/45/2014 determines the official language for translating transboundary EIA documents to be English. In Greece, usually the non-technical summary of the project or activity, including graphs and maps, the corresponding tables according to the Espoo Convention’s guidance and, when deemed necessary further into the process, the whole EIA documentation are translated.

c. How has your country organized transboundary public participation in practice? As Party of origin, has your country organized public participation in affected Parties and, if so, how? Has your country experienced difficulties with the participation of its public or the public of another Party (e.g., have there been complaints from the public about the procedure)?

In the period 2010-2012 there were no cases of public participation carried out. However, in the past as an affected Party Greece has organized its public participation procedure according to the requirements foreseen in its national legislation.

d. Describe any difficulties that your country has encountered during consultations, for example over timing, language and the need for additional information. As an affected Party, have you consultations under article 5 supported the prevention, reduction or control of possible significant transboundary environmental impacts?

Greece has not encountered any difficulties during consultations for any of the above mentioned projects or activities, neither as Party of origin, nor as affected Party. Consultations under article 5 of the Espoo Convention have been a very useful tool in the process of identifying and preventing or minimising possible significant adverse transboundary environmental impacts.

e. Describe examples of the form, content and language of the final decision, when it is issued and how it is communicated to the affected Party and its public;

None of the above mentioned cases in question 25 has reached the level of issuing a final decision for a transboundary project or activity.

f. Has your country carried out post-project analyses and, if so, on what kinds of project?

Since none of the above mentioned in question 25 transboundary projects or activities has reached the stage of issuing a final decision, there has not been a post-project analysis for any of them.
g. Does your country have successful examples of organizing transboundary EIA procedures for joint cross-border projects? Please provide information on your country’s experiences describing, for example, means of cooperation (e.g., contact points, joint bodies, bilateral agreements), institutional arrangements, and how practical matters are dealt with (e.g., translation, interpretation, transmission of documents, etc.);

Constructive meetings between the competent environmental authorities of the Parties concerned were carried out in the case of “BURGAS ALEXANDROUPOLIS crude oil pipeline and associated facilities”.

h. Name examples of good practice cases, whether complete cases or good practice elements (e.g., notification, consultation or public participation) within cases. Would your country like to introduce a case in the form of a Convention’s “case study fact sheet”?

N/A

i. Identify the most common means of applying the Convention (e.g., through focal points, joint bodies, multilateral agreements).

The most common means of applying the Espoo Convention are the ones mentioned in the body of the Convention’s text and it’s guidance, i.e. official Points of Contact, ad hoc joint bodies between concerned Parties.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN PARTIES IN 2010–2012

30. Does your country have any successful examples of how it has overcome difficulties arising from different legal systems in neighbouring countries? If so please specify.

There have not been any difficulties encountered from the implementation of different legal systems in neighbouring countries in this reporting period.

EXPERIENCE IN USING THE GUIDANCE IN 2010–2012

31. Has your country used in practice the following guidance, adopted by the Meeting of the Parties and available online? Describe your country’s experience with using these guidance documents and how they might be improved or supplemented.

a. Guidance on public participation in EIA in a transboundary context (ECE/MP.EIA/7);

N/A

b. Guidance on subregional cooperation (ECE/MP.EIA/6, annex V, appendix);

N/A

c. Guidelines on good practice and on bilateral and multilateral agreements (ECE/MP.EIA/6, annex IV, appendix).

N/A
Clarity of the Convention

32. Has your country had difficulties implementing the procedure defined in the Convention, either as Party of origin or as affected Party? Are there provisions in the Convention that are unclear?

Greece has not encountered any difficulties in the implementation of the procedure foreseen in the Convention, neither as Party of origin, nor as affected Party.

Awareness of the Convention

33. Has your country undertaken activities to promote awareness of the Convention among stakeholders (e.g., the public, local authorities, consultants and experts, academics, investors)? If so, describe them.

There have not been any formal initiatives to promote awareness of the Espoo Convention among different stakeholders as yet.

34. Does your country see a need to improve the application of the Convention in your country and, if so, how does it intend to do so?

Greece acknowledged the need for improving the application of the Espoo Convention and to this end, has recently updated its legal requirements concerning the transboundary EIA procedure. The ratification of both amendments to the Espoo Convention will also form a significant contribution.

Suggested Improvements to the Report

35. Please provide suggestions for how this report may be improved.

It would be helpful to form a clearer and more precise questionnaire in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions of the information provided. Thank you.

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