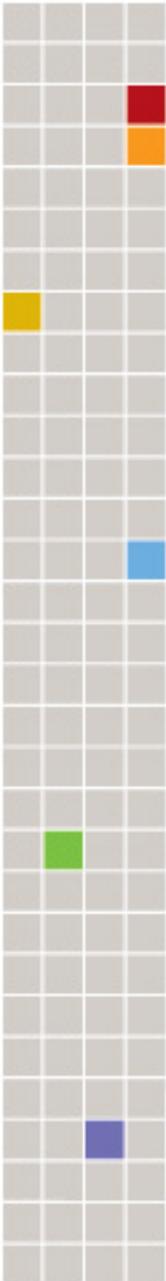


'Application of SEA in the context of comprehensive land use planning - examples from Sweden'

Holmfridur Bjarnadottir





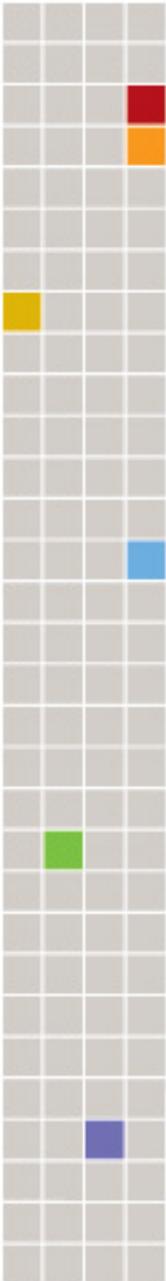
Legal requirements on SEA

■ Prior to the SEA directive

- Requirements on Impact Assessment of municipal comprehensive plans in the Planning and Building Act 1997.
- “The consequences of the plan shall be easily identifiable “
- No requirements regarding how the process shall be carried out or how the contents of the EIS

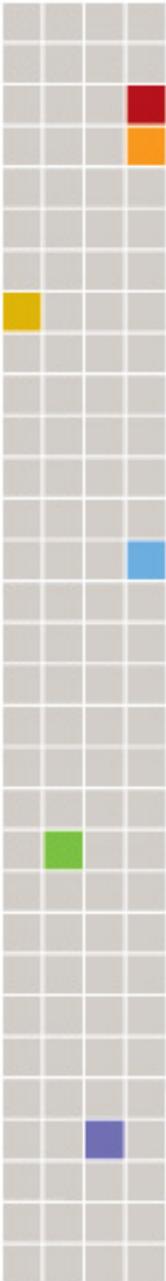
■ After the introduction of the SEA directive 2004

- Requirements in the Environmental Code. (SFS:603)
- Regulations on Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (SFS 2005:536)
- New requirements in the Planning and Building Act (refers to the Environmental Code and the Ordinance). (SFS 2004:603).
- Guidance by the National Board of Housing and Planning
- Guidance by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.



Pre-SEA directive experiences of SEA

- The directive is introduced to existing practice of SEA-like initiatives for municipal comprehensive plans, i.e. Impact Assessment
- Most experience from land-use planning, most notable comprehensive municipal plans.
- Some voluntary practices by sector authorities, i.e. the National road and Rail authorities
- Great difference in scope and contents of the assessments.
- The Impact Assessments vary from looking at only environmental impacts to sustainability assessments including also social and economic aspects.
- Criticism that the 'sustainability approach' moves the focus from environmental aspects to economic considerations.



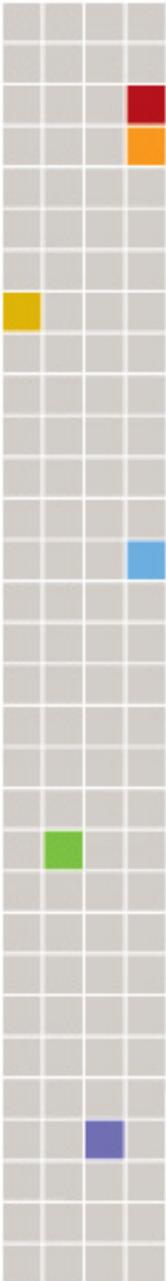
Application of SEA in Sweden - an overview

Current requirements on SEA

- Legal requirements
- Aims
- Requirements on the process

Experience from practice - main obstacles

- Timing
- Scope of the assessment
- Alternatives
- Fulfillment of the goals



Aims

- The objectives of the Environmental Code:

"The purpose of this Code is to promote sustainable development which will assure a healthy and sound environment for present and future generations. Such development will be based on recognition of the fact that nature is worthy of protection and that our right to modify and exploit nature carries with it a responsibility for wise management of natural resources."

- The objective of the Environmental Assessment (chapter 6)

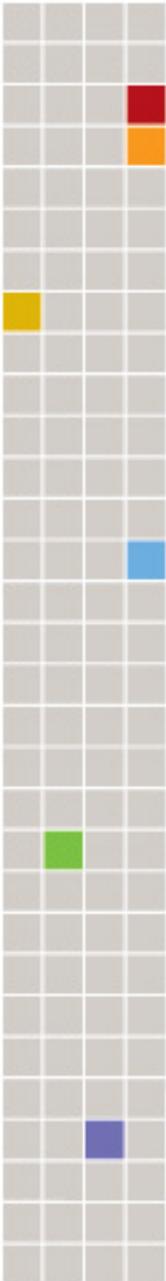
"The aim of the environmental assessment is to integrate environmental aspects in the plan or the program in order to promote sustainable development."

Main stages of the assessment process according to the Environmental Code 1(2)

- *Screening*: decision on the need to carry out an environmental assessment (Article 11)
- *Consultation* with regard to the need to carry out an environmental assessment (Article 6)
- *Transboundary consultation* with regard to the potential impacts of the plan's or the programme's implementation in another country (Article 15)
- *Scoping* of the environmental report (Articles 12 – 13)
- *Consultation* of the scoping of the environmental report. Decision on what the environmental assessment shall include and which areas and effects are regarded most important to focus upon (Article 13)
- *Environmental assessment*. Identify, describe and assess the expected considerable environmental impacts that the implementation of the plan or the programme, as well as the reasonable alternative will convey. This shall also be described and compared to the baseline situation (Article 11).

Main stages of the assessment process according to the Environmental Code 2(2)

- *Consultation* on the environmental assessment. Carry out consultation with regard to the proposal of environmental assessment as well as the draft version of the plan or the programme's proposal (Article 14 – 15).
- *Considerations* of the environmental assessment and comments and viewpoints of the consultations before the plan or the programme is adopted or forms the basis for regulations (Article 16)
- *Adoption* of the plan or the programme. Those who have participated in the consultation shall be informed (Article 16)
- *Reporting* of the environmental assessment in a *separate summary* (Article 16)
- *Follow-up* (Article 18). The considerable environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or the programme shall be followed-up with the aim of the authorities or the municipalities can take measures needed. According to the guidelines, existing monitoring programmes and planning cycles shall be used to the largest extent possible, and complemented as needed.



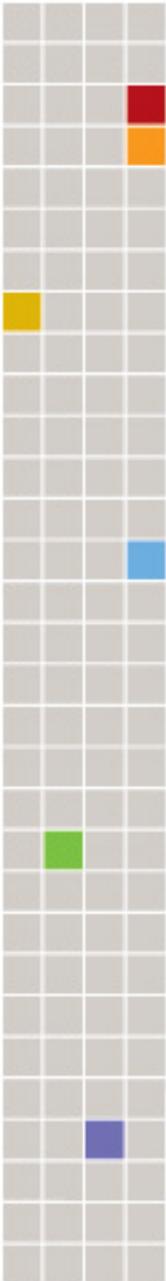
Experience from practice

Specific challenging aspects:

- Timing
- Scope of the assessment
- Alternatives
- Fulfillment of the goals

Experience from:

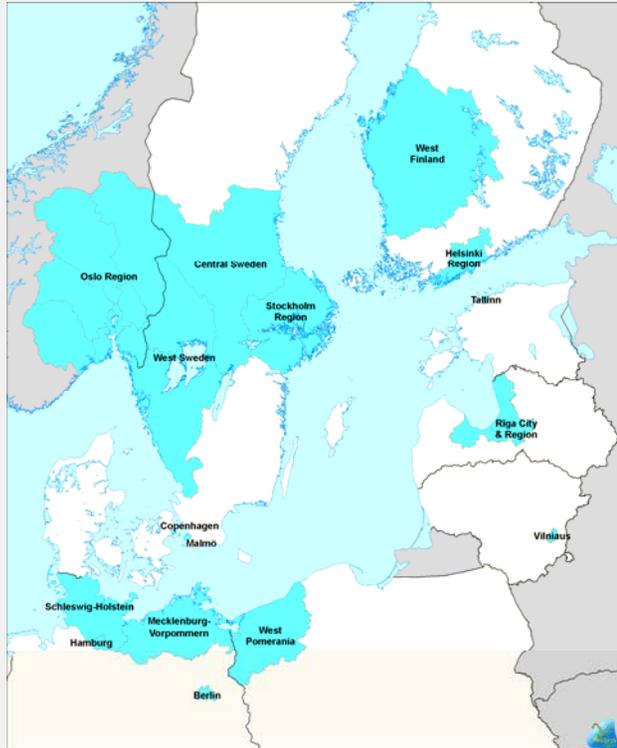
- Environmental Assessment of a Regional Plan for the Stockholms region (RUFS)
- On-going work from Sollentuna municipal comprehensive plan



General overview of SEA practice in municipal planning

- Limited experience of conducting SEA, mainly at the municipal level, some experience with municipal comprehensive plans. In those cases there exists already an existing planning process, which the environmental assessment process follows.
- 15 - 30 comprehensive municipal plans have been submitted or approved.
- A couple have been submitted or approved without an SEA.
- Guidance from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has been delayed.
- Great variety in interpretations of the requirements, from sustainability assessment, to a very specific part of the plan to a separate report, encompassing several aspects of the plan with regard to all environmental aspects.

Regional Plan for Stockholm 2030



Open Days 2007

Baltic Sea Group

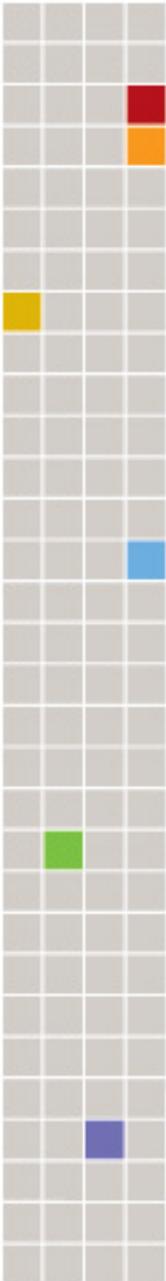
■ Schleswig-Holstein, Berlin, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Hamburg
■ Stockholm Region, West Sweden, Central Sweden, West Finland
■ Oslo Region, Helsinki Region, Tallinn, Vilnius, Riga, Malmö,
■ West Pomerania, Copenhagen



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Sollentuna municipal comprehensive plan





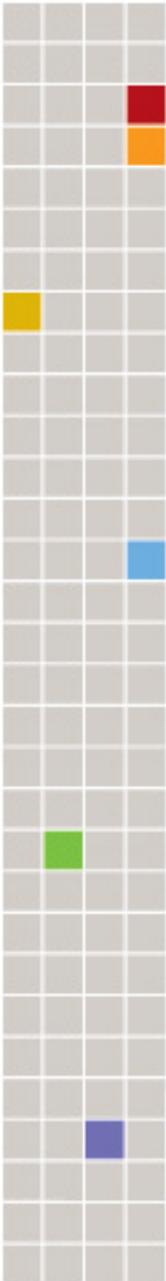
Timing

Questions

- When in the process?
- How integrated?
- Is there still a change to influence?
- Still a tendency to start the assessment too late in the process - becomes an environmental auditing process.
- Experiences from Stockholm regional plan and Sollentuna.

Experience from the Regional Plan

- The Assessment was ordered too late in the process, didn't expect to have to include an SEA.
- Most of the decisions were already made.
- Extreme time shortage for the SEA in order not to delay the whole planning process.
- Made the assessment difficult
- The results of the assessment were not integrated in the plan in a satisfactory way.



Scope of the assessment

Questions

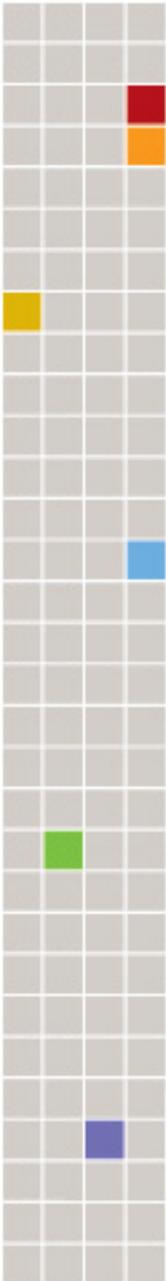
- Which parts of the plan are being assessed?
 - Strategies?
 - General strategies?
 - Land-use proposals?
- Which aspects of the environment?
 - All aspects mentioned in the Environmental Code?
 - Only those with 'considerable environmental impacts'?

Experience from Sollentuna

- The planners explicitly wanted to keep the assessment on a strategic level
- Focused on planning strategies
- Also needed to include other environmental impacts that are not decided within the plan, e.g. national roads and adjacent plans.
- Focused on the growth-strategy of the plan and the effects on the following environmental aspects:
 - Natural environment
 - Recreational areas
 - Health aspects, including noise and pollution
 - Cultural heritage

	THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANS MAIN AREAS OF INFLUENCE						EXTERNAL FACTORS OF INFLUENCE			
	Plans for land use and water		General interests				Regional factors		External/world factors	
Environmental aspects	<i>General strategies/proposals*</i>	<i>Area specific objectives</i>	<i>Den built environment</i>	<i>Functions</i>	<i>The natural environment</i>	<i>Areas of special inquiry</i>	<i>Regional development RUFs 2010</i>	<i>Adjacent municipal plans</i>	<i>Climate changes</i>	<i>Globalisation</i>
Natural environment										
Cultural heritage										
Recreation										
Health										
Climate										
Other plans and programmes										

* Good living environments and ecological sustainable development, communication, noise levels, sport and recreation, cultural heritage, safety and accessibility and business.



Alternatives

Uncertainties

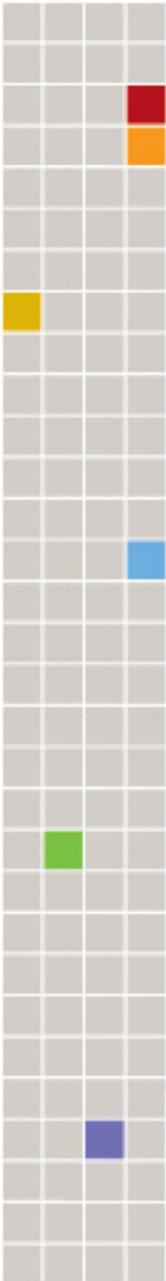
- How to deal with alternative at strategies levels?
- How 'open' are planners and decision makers to discuss alternatives?
- Are there other alternatives to be considered?
- Shall alternatives be developed for all levels of the plan?
 - General strategies?
 - Sector strategies
 - Specific land-use proposals?

Experience from the Regional Plan

- Several alternatives developed, two main alternatives were assessed
 - Spread out development *versus*
 - Condensed development of the region
- No alternatives to main goals of the plan; population figures or amount of development

Experience from Sollentuna municipal plan

- Two main alternatives
 - Current plans for development of Sollentuna - *from a suburb to a city*. Concentrated development in certain area, densification of the municipality
 - Less development in Sollentuna, continue with lower, more spread out plan
- 0-alternative.
 - No new plan – continuation of the old plan (leads to uncertainty)



How to fulfil the aims of the Environmental Code:

”to integrate environmental aspects in the plan or the program to promote sustainable development”

in development plans?