Belgrade Initiative on Strategic Environmental Assessment

3rd working meeting
Minsk, 15-16 December 2008

REPORT OF MEETING

1. Delegations from the following UNECE member States attended the meeting: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The meeting was organized by UNDP and jointly chaired by representatives of UNDP and UNECE, which together with the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe provide the Joint Secretariat for the Initiative. The participants are identified in Annex 1 to this report.

2. The meeting was opened by Mr. Aleksandr Andreev, Head of specialised inspection on ecological expertise of projects, Ministry for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus.

3. Delegations presented the latest developments in strategic environmental assessment (SEA), and in implementation of the UNECE Protocol on SEA, in their countries.

4. The core of the meeting was a series of presentations by experienced practitioners on SEA legal and regulatory systems and on the practical application of SEA in selected countries of the European Union (EU): the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Sweden. The meeting thus satisfied the requirements of two activities foreseen in the work programme:

A.2 Organization of a subregional seminar to present the legislation of other countries (including from the European Union) for comparison and to use good practice examples in making the national legislation of participating countries compatible with EU standards.

B.1 Organization of seminars presenting recent international experience in applying SEA. May be combined with activity A.2.

5. It was agreed that the presentations would be made available on the Initiative's web page (http://www.unece.org/env/sea/belgrade_initiative.htm), and elsewhere. The presentations led to detailed discussions, particularly focusing on how SEA can be integrated into the state environmental expertise system inherited from the Soviet Union by the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Annex 2 presents an initial model for this integration.

6. Participants made a number of recommendations regarding:

(a) Institutional arrangements for SEA
  (i) Process: Develop a clear understanding of how SEA fits into planning and decision-making processes, particularly with state expertise
  (ii) Legislation: Develop an outline law or regulations, glossary or set of definitions, to assist in the step-by-step transposition of the Protocol into

national legislation (would require external expertise and might be done by e-mail)

(iii) Finance: Provide financial rationale for SEA and determine budget implications of implementation, as for SEA most costs fall on state agencies (in work programme as activity A.3)

(iv) Roles: Need to clarify roles of Ministry of Environment (and Ministry of Health) in screening, scoping and (with expertise) decision-making

(b) SEA methodology

(i) Screening: Initially, keep a narrow and clear definition of plans and programmes subject to SEA

(ii) Monitoring and follow-up: Develop understanding of how to ensure that there is follow-up on the plan or programme and on subsequent projects

(c) Implementation of the Initiative

(i) Pilot projects (activity C.2 in work programme): As well as involvement of proponent (often a sectoral ministry), get commitment from Ministry of Environment to address SEA outcomes in environmental expertise, to make sure that pilot projects also influence decision-making/planning

(ii) Participation: Invite sectoral ministries (especially ministries of health) to participate in future workshops

7. Participants asked for a Russian translation of the EU Directive on SEA, and of the laws, regulations and guidelines developed by participating countries, in order to share their knowledge and experience among themselves.

8. **The participants also finalized the work programme** with Armenia taking the lead of pillar A activities in the work programme and the Republic of Moldova leading pillar B. Belarus had indicated its willingness to lead pillar C at the previous meeting.

9. The Joint Secretariat reminded participants of the need to receive, from each country that wishes to participate in the Initiative, a letter:

(a) Confirming their wish to participate in the Initiative;

(b) Identifying a national focal point for the Initiative.

10. To date, the Joint Secretariat had received such information from Armenia and the Republic of Moldova. **No further funding would be available for participation in activities under the Initiative to countries that had not made a written commitment.**

11. Besides providing a very positive workshop evaluation, participants stressed that each country participating in the Initiative should ensure the active participation and contribution of their representatives at the organized events. It has been also suggested that future workshops include shorter presentations and devote more time to discussion.

Annex 1

List of participants

Name	Country	Organization and post	Contact
1. Mrs. Elyanora GRIGORYAN	Armenia	Adviser to the Minister, National focal point to Espoo Convention and SEA Protocol	interdpt@mnp.am
2. Mrs. Julietta CHLICHYAN	Armenia	Head of Normative-Methodological Department, Coordinator of CEA Initiative	interdpt@mnp.am
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7. Mr Volodymyr BUCHKO,	Ukraine	Secretary of Inter-governmental Coordination Council on the implementation of Espoo Convention in Ukraine (Espoo Focal Point for Ukraine), Deputy Director of Legal Department, Ministry of Environment Protection	vbuchko@menr.gov.ua
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Name	Country	Organization and post	Contact
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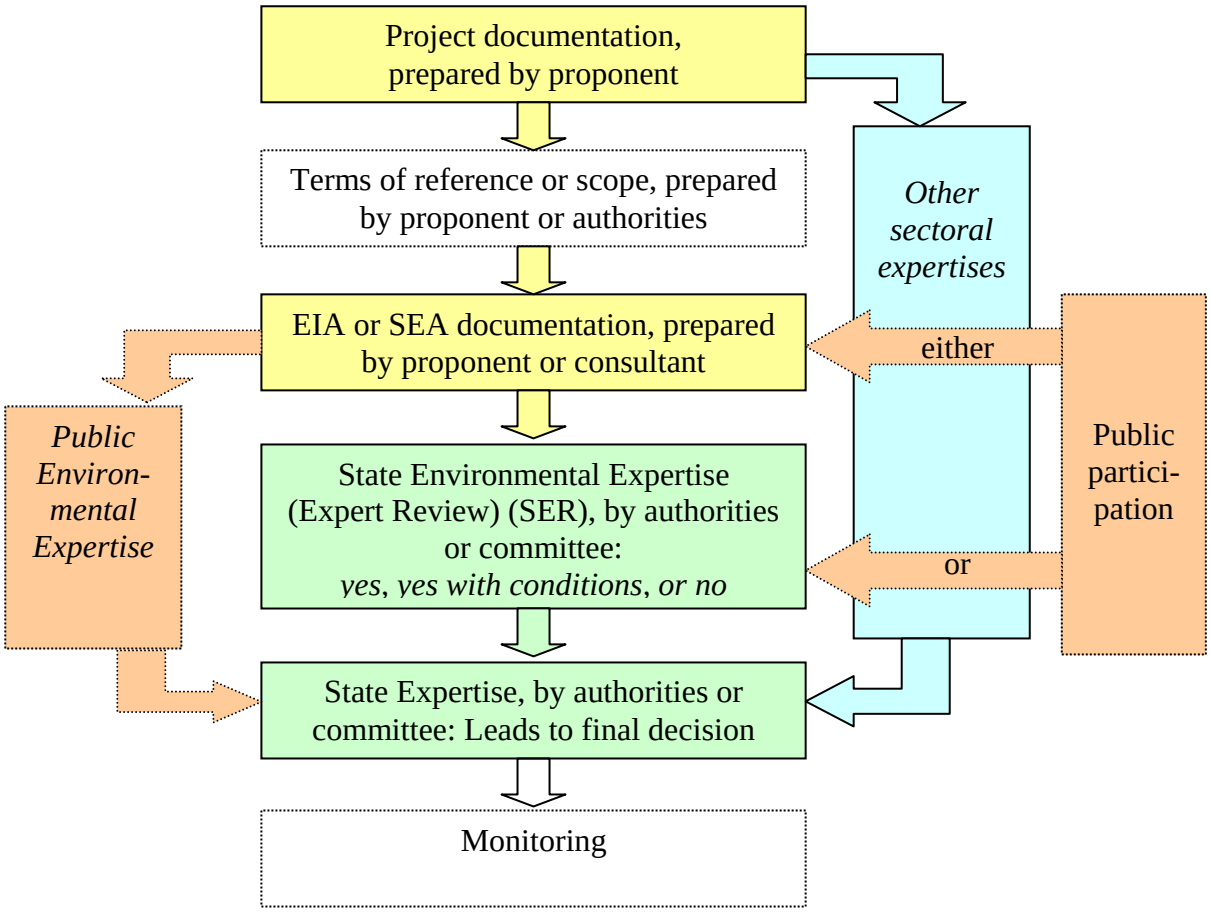
18. Mr. Igar TCHOULBA	Belarus	UNDP, Belarus	Igar.tchoulba@undp.org
19. Ms. Irina KOMOSKO	Belarus	Head, Department of ecological policy, organization and economy of environmental management	
20. Ms. Lubov RYZHIKOVA	Belarus	Consultant, Department of ecological policy, organization and economy of environmental management	
21. Ms. Marina PETROVA	Belarus	Consultant, Administration for regional development and environment	
22. Ms. Tatiana MAZURKEVICH	Belarus	Leading specialist, Administration for effectiveness of energy production and innovations, Ministry of energy	
23. Mr. Andrey TUKHTO	Belarus	Deputy head, Department for supervision of security of works in industry, Ministry for the emergency situations	
24. Mr. Vadim LOZHECHKO	Belarus	Senior specialist, Foreign relations department Ministry for the emergency situations	
25. Ms. Svetlana SAKHAROVA	Belarus	Head of department “BelNIPgradostroitelstvo”	
26. Ms. Irina MILANOVICH	Belarus	Deputy head, Communal hygiene department National hygiene, epidemiology and public health centre	
27. Mr. Valentina AISINA	Belarus	Leading specialist “BelNIPgradostroitelstvo”	
28. Ms. Irina ZASTENSKAYA	Belarus	Deputy director for scientific work National hygiene, epidemiology and public health centre	
29. Ms. Irina SAFONOVA	Belarus	Consultant, Public services and energy department Ministry of public services	
30. Ms. Irina KUCHINSKAYA	Belarus	Chief economist, Radiology and environmental protection sector Ministry of food and agriculture	
31. Mr. Artem AVKHIMOVICH	Belarus	Senior researcher “BelNIPgradostroitelstvo”	
32. Ms. Elena BOGODIAJ	Belarus	Senior researcher RUP “TSNIIKIVR”	
33. Mr. Igor ZALOMAY	Belarus	Counsellor, Department of humanitarian cooperation Ministry of Foreign affaires	
34. Ms. Lubov MAKSIMOVA	Belarus	Head, Section of planning and organization of tourist activity Department of tourism Ministry of sport and tourism	
35. Ms. Oksana RYZHKOVSKAYA	Belarus	Leading engineer UP “Promstandart”	
36. Mr. Aleksandr JEBRUN	Belarus	Ingeneer UP “Promstandart”	

Annex 2

Possible mapping of EIA and SEA on to State Environmental Expertise (or Review) (simplified)