Awareness Raising Workshop on the Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in the Republic of Moldova

Draft Agenda

23 April 2021
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Due to COVID-19, this workshop will be delivered as a virtual event, using the Zoom platform. All registered participants will receive connection details to access the platform.

Action implemented by:

Awareness Raising Workshop on the Application of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in the Republic of Moldova

23 April 2021
09:30 Chisinau time

Background

Within the framework of the European Union funded EU4Environment programme (2019-2022), UNECE is assisting the Eastern Partnership countries, including the Republic of Moldova, in comprehensive capacity-building and institutional building on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and transboundary EIA and in finalizing legal reforms in this area.

SEA is a well-established, practical, and efficient planning and environmental governance tool applied in order to ensure that a wide range of public plans, programmes and other strategic documents that can have serious impacts on the environment (e.g., draft government plans or programmes concerning land use, transport, energy, waste, agriculture, etc.) are developed while taking into account environmental, climate and health considerations. Following the principles and procedures laid down in the UNECE Protocol on SEA to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and in the European Union's Directive on SEA (2001/42/EC), the Republic of Moldova is implementing SEA to allow for identification of the most sustainable and cost-effective strategic development alternatives and attracting new investments, while safeguarding and improving the environment. When applied effectively, SEA also helps strengthen the country's environmental governance through fostering transparency and consultation with relevant stakeholders and the public prior to the approval of plans and programmes. SEA in a transboundary context can also greatly facilitate regional cooperation on environmental matters.

With the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, the need for systematic and effective environmental assessment of recovery initiatives is pressing. The EU SEA Directive and the Protocol on SEA provide a robust legal and institutional framework to help the Republic of Moldova "build back better" by making this recovery healthy and green.

The application of SEA in practice however remains very limited in the country as the overall institutional capacities for SEA require significantly more strengthening to be fully fit for purpose. The high turn-over of SEA-related staff in the environmental authorities and associated institutional memory remains a challenge. There is still a continued need to support environmental, health and sectoral planning authorities through awareness-raising and capacity-building activities addressing, inter alia, the benefits of SEA, relevant procedures, and challenges as well as respective roles of different authorities in the implementation of SEA procedures.

Since 2004, UNECE has been providing technical assistance and capacity-building support related to SEA and transboundary EIA including in Eastern Europe. This support was provided under the European Union funded EaP GREEN programme in 2013-2018 and is currently being provided under EU4Environment

The workshop is the second of two such events to be organized under the EU4Environment workplan for the Republic of Moldova to promote the more systematic and effective application of SEA in accordance with the EU SEA Directive, UNECE Protocol on SEA and the national

legislation on SEA. It will consider relevant developments in the area of SEA since November 2019 when the first event was held (https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/awareness-raising-workshop-sea-republic-moldova). The workshop will be facilitated by SEA consultants to UNECE.

Meeting objectives, expected outputs and outcomes

The main objectives of the workshop are to:

- Promote the application of SEA in Moldova in line with the requirements of the UNECE Protocol on SEA, EU SEA Directive and the national legislation on SEA.

- Support relevant national authorities by raising awareness about the benefits of SEA, including as a tool for making post-COVID-19 economic recovery initiatives green and sustainable.

- Facilitate the engagement of key stakeholders in the process of refining Moldova's national SEA system.

- Take stock of the already existing experience and capacity for SEA application in Moldova as well as of the needs in this area.

The workshop is expected to help further engage relevant stakeholders to participate in the efforts to implement SEA and to facilitate a national discussion on further steps to expand the scope of practical application of SEA in Moldova.

Participants

The meeting will gather participants from the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Environmental Agency, sectoral ministries, and agencies as well as environmental NGOs active in this area.

Practical Information

The meeting will be organized as a virtual event in Zoom. All registered participants will receive connection details to access the platform. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Romanian will be provided.

About EU4Environment

The "European Union for Environment" (EU4Environment) aims to help the six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine preserves their natural capital and increase people's environmental well-being, by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating, and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts.

The Action is funded by the European Union and implemented by five Partner organisations: OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank based on a budget of some EUR 20 million. The Action implementation period is 2019-2022.

For further information contact: EU4Environment@oecd.org

For further information specifically on SEA and transboundary EIA implemented by UNECE, please contact: leonid.kalashnyk@un.org

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DRAFT AGENDA
23 April 2021
Chisinau time: 9:30 – 12:35
CET: 08:30 – 11:35

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Time (Chisinau)	Item
9:00 – 09.30	Connection testing (30 min)
9:30 – 09.45	**Welcoming remarks** **Ms. Valentina Ţapeş**, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Republic of Moldova **Mr. Gintautas Baranauskas**, Deputy Head of Operations, EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova **Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk**, Environmental Affairs Officer, EU4Environment Project Manager at UNECE
9:45 – 10.00	**Meeting objectives and agenda, introduction of participants** *Facilitated by Mr. Michal Musil and Ms. Natalia Guranda, consultants to UNECE*
10:00 – 10.20	**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Purpose, process, and benefits** • Objective, principles, and benefits • Procedural steps • UNECE Protocol on SEA and EU SEA Directive *Presentation by Mr. Michal Musil, consultant to UNECE*
10.20 – 11.30	**SEA in Moldova: Legislation and practical experience** • Practical experience from the pilot SEA application in the Republic of Moldova *Presentation by Ms. Natalia Guranda, consultant to UNECE* • Current state and practical aspects of SEA in Moldova (national legal framework, experience with SEA application, typical issues etc.) *Presentation:* *Ms. Maria Nagornii, Head of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assessment Policy Division, MARDE* *Ms. Iordanca – Rodica Iordanov, Executive Director PA EcoContact* • Recent developments: amendment of the national legal framework for SEA *Presentation by Ms. Irina Punga, legal consultant to UNECE*
11.30 – 11.40	**Break**
11:40 – 12.20	**SEA implementation in the Republic of Moldova: What next?**

	• SEA legislation refining • Guidelines and Quality control • Capacity building • Other *Facilitated by consultants to UNECE and Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, UNECE*
12:20 – 12.35	**Closing: summary and further steps** *Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk, UNECE*