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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context
Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment
(Second meeting, Geneva, 29-31 May 2000)
(Agenda item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda)

DRAFT DECISION II/...

ADOPTION OF THE WORK-PLAN

Note prepared by the Bureau

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 third meeting, as included in annex I to this decision;

2. Suggests that lead countries which carry out the relevant activities should consult each other in order to avoid overlap;

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

4. Invites every relevant body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, to participate actively in the activities included in the work-plan.

Annex

WORK-PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION FOR THE PERIOD 2001 TO 2003

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 third meeting of the Parties. In the interest of uniformity, national presentations of information on strategies and policies should follow the reporting mechanism referred to in document MP.EIA/WG.1/2000/9 on non-compliance.

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 third meeting of the Parties.

Time schedule: The draft 2001-2003 biennial review will be prepared in 2003 and incorporate the information received by the end of 2002 for consideration at the third meeting of the Parties.

2. STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONVENTIONS

Objective: To share information and experience between the EIA Convention and other ECE Conventions with the aim of further strengthening their implementation and application.

Method of work: On the basis of document MP.EIA/WG.1/2000/10, to propose to each of the Bureaux of the Conventions on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, and on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to establish small bilateral expert groups with each of these Conventions.

Organizational aspects: [...] will act as lead countries, with the assistance of the secretariat in order to strengthen any specific elements of these Conventions that are related to environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

3. GUIDELINES ON EIA METHODOLOGY

Objective: To prepare guidelines on EIA methodology, in particular in a transboundary context. Special attention will be paid to further defining the issue of significance of an adverse transboundary impact.

Method of work: On the basis of earlier work (the outcome of the subregional pilot workshop (MP.EIA/WG.1/1999/11) and part three of Environmental Series No. 6 (ECE/CEP/9)), draft guidelines will be prepared for finalization at a workshop.

Organizational aspects: [...] will act as lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat. A report containing the guidelines will be presented to the Working Group.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

4. COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICE

Objective: On the basis of document MP.EIA/WG.1/2000/7, to collect and analyse information on the practical application of the Convention with a view to preparing a compendium of examples of good practice.

Method of work: The lead country will prepare a questionnaire to be sent to countries and analyse the replies. The analysis, together with the draft compendium, will be discussed at a workshop. Particular attention will be paid to public participation and post-project analysis.

Organizational aspects: [...] will act as lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat. A report with the compendium will be presented to the Working Group.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

5. SUBREGIONAL COOPERATION

Objective: To support the application of environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context through the provisions of the Conventions, in particular, in countries in transition.

Method of work: Workshops will be organized for countries of a specific subregion in order to identify practical measures to strengthen the ratification and implementation.

Organizational aspects: [...] will act as lead countries, with the assistance of the secretariat. It is expected that two or three experts per country will participate actively in a workshop. For each of the agenda items of these workshops, documentation will be prepared in advance.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

6. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT 1/

Objective: To prepare a protocol on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) to the Convention.

Method of work: On the basis of relevant national and international experience, a draft protocol on SEA will be prepared so that it can be further developed by the Working Group.

Organizational aspects: The secretariat, with the assistance of experts, will prepare a first draft protocol on this issue for consideration and finalization by the Working Group and thereafter for adoption at the fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Kiev, Ukraine, September 2002). The Working Group will establish an open-ended drafting group as a new subsidiary body with the mandate to prepare a draft protocol and invite the Meeting of the Signatories to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to participate in this undertaking.

7. REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE

Objective: The Implementation Committee will assist Parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention.

Method of work: The implementation Committee established by the Meeting of the Parties, in accordance with decision II/..., will implement its mandate.

Organizational aspects: The Committee will meet once a year [serviced by the secretariat]. Its reports will be presented to the Working Group.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

8. PROMOTION OF THE CONVENTION OUTSIDE THE ECE REGION

Objective: To promote the application of the Convention outside the ECE regions.

Method of work: Based on positive experiences gained with the Convention within the region, one workshop will be held within each other United Nations region to promote the ratification and application of the Convention.

Organizational aspects: The Party holding the presidency of the Meeting of the Parties will act as the lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat. Each workshop will be organized jointly with the respective United Nations region.

Time schedule: The workshops will be held between the second and the third meetings of the Parties. A report on the workshops will be presented

to the Working Group for consideration and thereafter to the Parties for possible adoption at their third meeting.

9. BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Objective: To share information and experience on the drafting and the application of bilateral and multilateral agreements, review information and consultation procedures and prepare recommendations.

Method of work: Based on previous work (see document MP.EIA/WG.1/2000/6), a workshop will be held to further promote the provision of structured information and consultation among Parties (and non-Parties) and to adjust/revise the guidelines in accordance with ongoing experiences.

Organizational aspects: [...] will act as a lead country, with the assistance of the secretariat. The lead country will draw up a report containing the revised compendium and guidelines.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

10. 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.

Time schedule: (to be specified).

Note

1/ A decision on this issue should be taken in cooperation with the Meeting of the Signatories to the Aarhus Convention and the Committee on Environmental Policy.