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**Economic Commission for Europe**

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
serving as the Meeting of the Parties
to the Protocol on Strategic
Environmental Assessment

**Working Group** **on Environmental Impact Assessment
and Strategic Environmental Assessment**

**Eleventh meeting**

Geneva, 19-21 December 2022

Item 4 of the provisional agenda
**Compliance and implementation**

 Additional information on Parties’ practical application of the Protocol

 Informal note prepared by the secretariat

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| *Summary* |
|  This document presents additional information on Parties’ practical application of the Protocol, supplementing the Draft fourth review of the implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2022/4, paragraph 77). The document is based on Parties’ responses to question II.10. (b) of the questionnaire on the implementation of the Protocol in the period 2019–2021 in conjunction with annex III of the questionnaire, as well as to question II.11, inviting Parties to provide examples of their experience with transboundary procedures and to describe any lessons learned.These questions were not considered to be a reporting obligation according to the Protocol, but Parties were encouraged to provide examples of good practice, with a view to sharing solutions and innovative approaches to improving the application of the Protocol. Further to the goals of the long-term strategy, (VIII/3–IV/3, annex, item A.9), the objectives of workplan for 2019–2021 were to improve the information obtained through the questionnaire regarding progress achieved and remaining challenges; and to contribute to making the reviews of implementation more informative, turning them into tools for collecting and disseminating good practice.The Working Group may wish to welcome the willingness of several Parties to share practical examples, to comment the examples provided, to identify the most relevant of them, and to propose ways to present and to further substantiate them with a view to maximizing the usefulness of the information for Parties and future Parties to the Protocol.  |
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 Good practice examples and lessons learned in the period 2019–2021 as provided by Parties

1. 10 Parties to the Protocol (Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, and Spain) provided examples of their experience with transboundary procedures by using the template in annex III to the questionnaire. The Parties were also asked to describe “the procedural step(s) considered to represent good practice and then explain why” (questionnaire, annex III, sect. III). However, the information provided in the majority of examples contained insufficient evidence of good practice.

2. Two Parties (Finland and Lithuania) provided further good practice examples in response to question II.10 (b), which reads “*To contribute to the sharing of knowledge and experience on themes outlined in the workplan for 2021–2023, please provide at least one example of your country’s application of strategic environmental assessment in one or several of the following areas: biodiversity; circular economy; energy transition; development cooperation; smart and sustainable cities; sustainable infrastructure; and maritime spatial planning”.*

3. Two Parties (Estonia and Romania) provided further good practice examples in response to question II.11, which reads: *“Please indicate whether your country has been carrying out monitoring according to article 12.”*

4. The table below compiles the information provided. Some of the text has gone through light (informal) English editing. The last column of the table provides a link to the questionnaires as filled in by the Parties.

Table
**Parties providing good practice examples and lessons learned**

| *Respondent* | *Project type* | *Domestic or transboundary procedure* | *Stages covered in good practice example* | *Lessons learned* | *Link to the questionnaire response* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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| Albania | Detailed plan of the area of national importance (Spille) | Domestic | Entire procedure | - | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/Albania\_SEA%20.pdf |
| Armenia | Document of territorial-spatial planning Dilizan community of Tavushskoy oblast | Domestic | Entire procedure | - | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/Armenia\_SEA\_EN.pdf |
| Croatia | Development Plan of *xy* County for the 2021 - 2027 Period | Domestic | Entire procedure |  | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Croatia\_SEA.pdf |
| Denmark | Danish Maritime Spatial Plan | Domestic and transboundary | Public participation | - | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Denmark\_SEA.pdf |
| Estonia | Estonian Maritime Spatial Plan  | Domestic and transboundary | Trans-boundary consultations | “Comprehensive planning of the whole procedure by the Party of origin (i.e. between the relevant national authorities, also in terms of transboundary consultations) is the key to overcome potential challenges (e.g. related to time frames, translations, etc). At the same time also some flexibility is necessary.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Estonia\_SEA.pdf |
| Estonia (Question II.11) | National Radiation Safety Development Plan (NRSDP) | Domestic | Monitoring | *Good practice example*.“[T]he National Radiation Safety Development Plan (NRSDP), adopted in 2020, illustrates how also the existing environmental monitoring system can be used upon carrying out monitoring. The purpose of the NRSDP is to ensure radiation safety. As part of SEA, carried out in 2017–2019, experts proposed prevention and mitigation measures concerning potential adverse environmental effects. One of the main components for ensuring national radiation safety is the national radiation monitoring programme (for instance, regular national monitoring is conducted in atmosphere, drinking water, soil, areas close to radiation practice sites, etc).The SEA concluded that to prevent or mitigate any negative effect on the environment, it is essential that a national monitoring programme is maintained and continued. Every year, an annual report of themonitoring results is published on the website of the respective national authority. […]” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Estonia\_SEA.pdf |
| Finland(Question II.10 (b)) | Northern Ostrobothnia Climate Roadmap – Towards a carbon neutral Northern Ostrobothnia (regional plan) | Domestic | Entire procedure | *Good practice example.* Application of strategic environmental assessment in the following areas: circular economy, energy transition, and sustainable infrastructure.“The roadmap provides guidelines for the development of the operating environment so that the sector’s developer organisations can allocate their resources correctly. Companies make their own strategic decisions on the development and renewal of their business operations, taking into account the opportunities provided by the operating environment and the high level of RDI support available. Businesses are key players and guided by consumers. The achievement of climate objectives requires a strong link between business, new industries and business opportunities as well as climate action. By developing the operating environment, taking into account the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts, climate change mitigation is both possible and an opportunity.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Finland\_SEA.pdf |
| Lithuania(Question II.10 (b)) | The Lithuanian Republic Comprehensive Plan(LRCP) | Transboundary | Transboundary consultations | *Good practice example.* Application of strategic environmental assessment in the following areas: Maritime spatial planning.“The transboundary consultation process for the LRCP was launched in the beginning of 2019 by notifying all the Baltic Sea region member states about the development of the national territorial (including the sea region) planning document. LRCP is a state level comprehensive planning document which is developed every 20 years to direct the country’s development with a clear strategic vision. […] The transboundary consultations were initiated primarily because with the LRCP also covered the Baltic Sea territory. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Poland, and Sweden were informed about the plan, and invited to attend a live consultation event about the LRCP. In September 2019, Lithuania sent invitations to this event and shared information about the LRCP concept and the SEA assessment for comments. On 3 October 2019 the live consultation about the LRCP was conducted in Vilnius, hosted by the Ministry of Environment. Participants from Estonia, Latvia and Sweden attended the event. We found that the consultation was effective, and the points were discussed mainly about the Baltic Sea planning.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Lithuania\_SEA.pdf |
| Malta | Long Term Waste Management Plan 2021-2030 | Domestic | Entire procedure | - | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Malta\_SEA.pdf |
| Montenegro | Detailed Spatial Plan for the area of the multipurpose reservoir on the river Komarnica  | Domestic and transboundary | Entire procedure | “Experience has shown that it is always better to notify another country/ies. Transboundary procedure took some time, but in the end, time and recourses were saved. The decision-making process was enhanced by this and helped adopt a decision that contributes to the attainment of sustainable development in the long term.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Montenegro\_SEA.pdf |
| Poland | Programme of non-technical and retention actions as part of flood risk management in the Little Vistula and Upper Vistula regions (catchment above Krakow), taking into account the protection against flood of the city of Krakow | Domestic | Screening; Scoping; Public participation; Consultation with environmental and health authorities; Decision | “The schedule should be properly planned so that it takes into account the time for unforeseen circumstances. For example, high public interest made it necessary to extend the consultation period. It should be taken into account that the scope of intervention planned in the document may be opposed by the public or relevant authorities and will have to be modified.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Poland\_SEA.pdf |
| Romania | Plan for the Development of the National GasTransmission System 2021-2030 | Transboundary | Entire procedure | “The transboundary SEA procedure/transboundary consultations have led to an improvement in the quality of the documents (environmental report and Plan) and implicitly to environmental protection through the conditions imposed by the affected Parties as well as measures taken to reduce environmental impacts.” *Good practice example:*  “[T]he Development Plan for the National Gas Transmission System for 2021-2030, for which an environmental approval was issued in 2021, includes a monitoringprogramme of the significant effects of the Plan’s implementation. The monitoring aspects were decided during the transboundary SEA procedure.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Romania\_SEA.pdf |
| Romania (Question II.11) | Interreg IPA cross-border cooperation programme Romania Serbia, Interreg V-ARomania-Hungary Programme, Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme | Transboundary | Monitoring |  “[F]or Interreg IPA cross-border cooperation programme Romania Serbia, Interreg V-ARomania-Hungary Programme, Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme have beenperformed monitoring reports for the period 1st January – 31th December 2020.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Romania\_SEA.pdf |
| Spain | Hydrological plans (3rd cycle) and flood risk managementplans (2nd cycle) in the hydrographic demarcations of Guadiana, Tajo, Duero and Miño-Silrivers. | Transboundary | Scoping; Public participation; Consultation with environmental and health authorities; Transboundary consultations | “It is important to have regular meetings at technical level with other parties. This willimprove governance, and will facilitate the identification of new opportunities, as well as thetransboundary cooperation.” | https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Spain\_SEA.pdf |