Introduction to the Manual

Resource Manual to Support Application of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

Protocol on SEA

draft 12-Apr-07

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- Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
  - Negotiated under auspices of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
  - Adopted in Kiev in May 2003
  - Signed by 36 States & the European Community
  - Signature is only first stage – 16 UNECE member States need to ratify the Protocol for it to enter into force
  - For current status see http://www.unece.org/env/sea/
  - Once in force, any UN Member State may accede upon approval to the Protocol

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- This Manual was developed as decided by the Meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol in June 2004

- The Manual does not constitute formal legal or other professional advice, but instead provides guidance to those applying the Protocol or supporting others in doing so

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- Manual:
  - Highlights main requirements of Protocol
  - Outlines key issues for applying Protocol in practice
  - Provides materials for training & capacity-development programmes supporting Protocol application

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- Manual expected to be used by those wanting:
  - to learn about Protocol & theory of its application, including government & other officials working on Protocol application, practitioners carrying out SEAs & stakeholders wishing to participate in SEA process
  - to advise & train others on Protocol's requirements & application of SEA
- Dual audience is reflected in structure of Manual

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- European Union (EU)
  - UNECE includes EU Member States
  - EU Directive 2001/42/EC *on the assessment of the effects of certain plans & programmes on the environment* (SEA Directive)
  - Mandatory provisions of Protocol broadly equivalent to those of Directive
  - European Commission produced *Implementation of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans & programmes on the environment* (EC Guide)
  - Elements of Manual focusing on application of SEA in practice may also be of use to those applying Directive
  - But this Manual does not serve as formal interpretative guidance for the Protocol or for the Directive
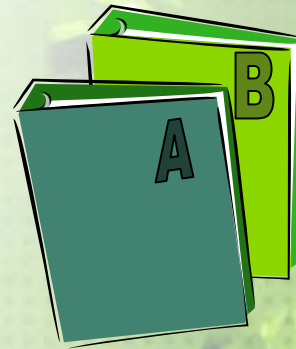
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- Reference also made to *Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters* (Aarhus Convention)

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- Manual is divided in two, reflecting dual nature of target audience:

    – Part A for those applying the Protocol
    – Part B for trainers & others developing capacity to apply the Protocol

- Each part comprises series of chapters, autonomous but interlinked, referencing other resources, accompanied by set of slides

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- Part A: Application of the Protocol

  - Chapter A1 : SEA aims, concepts, roles & evolution

  - Chapter A2 : links between SEA and plan & programme making

  - Chapter A3 : how to determine whether SEA required

  - Chapter A4 : SEA of plans & programmes

  - Chapter A5 : overview of basic applicable tools for SEA

  - Chapter A6 : how Protocol may be applied to policies & legislation

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- Part B: Trainer's Guide
  - Chapter B1 : broad concept of capacity development for Protocol
  - Chapter B2 : example structure of practical exercise for training on Protocol

- Annexes provide additional materials
- [Annex] [Chapter] [XX] addresses health issues
- [In addition, companion volume on consideration of health in SEA prepared under lead of World Health Organization]

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0.3 (cont'd) Structure

- Manual includes SEA Protocol (*Annex A0.1*) & refers to:
  - International instruments & guidance
    - Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention)
    - Aarhus Convention
    - SEA Directive & EC Guide
    - Health Impact Assessment as part of SEA, WHO
  - Examples of SEA practices
    - Resource will grow as countries supply examples

- These resources, recommended reading & further useful resources to be provided on websites, e.g. http://www.unece.org/env/sea/

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- Protocol refers throughout to 'the environment, including health'

- To avoid repetition, Manual refers only to 'the environment', but this should always be understood to include health

- [Annex] [Chapter] [XX] addresses health issues

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