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

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention
on Environmental Impact Assessment in
a Transboundary Context serving as the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Twelfth meeting

Geneva, 13–15 June 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twelfth meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Tuesday, 13 June 2023*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification.
3. Financial arrangements.
4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties:
 - (a) Practical arrangements;

* In accordance with the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to register online no later than three weeks prior to the meeting, that is, by 11 May 2023, through the following link: <https://indico.un.org/event/1002170/>. The meeting will be held in-person. On the day of the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge to access the Palais des Nations (see map and other practical information available from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website: www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html). Please collect your badge well in advance. For further guidance on registration, please see the meeting web page (<https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/working-group-eia-and-sea-espoo-convention-12th-meeting>) and/or contact the secretariat by email (maricar.delacruz@un.org; eia.conv@un.org) for assistance. In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 91726 82.



- (b) Provisional agenda;
 - (c) Draft workplan for 2024–2026;
 - (d) Draft declaration;
 - (e) Chairs of the sessions;
 - (f) Officers for the next intersessional period;
 - (g) Provisional schedule of meetings 2024–2026.
5. Compliance and implementation:
 - (a) Review of compliance and related draft decisions;
 - (b) Reporting and review of implementation;
 - (c) Legislative assistance.
 6. Promoting practical application of the Convention and the Protocol:
 - (a) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment;
 - (b) Subregional cooperation and capacity-building;
 - (c) Exchange of good practices;
 - (d) Capacity-building activities.
 7. Management, coordination and visibility of intersessional activities.
 8. Related events.
 9. Other business.
 10. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 10–10.15 a.m.

1. The Chair of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment will invite the Working Group to adopt the agenda for its twelfth meeting, as set out in the present document. The provisional agenda was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Bureau of the Meetings of the Parties to the two treaties.¹

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the twelfth meeting (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/1)

Informal document

Informal notes on the agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.1)

¹ All meeting documentation will be made available on a dedicated web page for the meeting on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) website: <https://unece.org/info/events/event/364361>. Please note that documents with symbols ending in “INF.” and a number are informal documents and can be located in the documents table by clicking on the “Informal Documents” tab.

2. Status of ratification

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 10.15–10.45 a.m.

2. The secretariat will report on the status of the Convention and its two amendments. The delegations of the following countries will be invited to report on the steps they have taken to complete the pending ratifications of the two amendments to the Convention and the Protocol by the end of the current sessions:

(a) Armenia, Belgium, North Macedonia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the 2001 amendment to the Convention, to allow for the global opening of the Convention;

(b) Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the 2004 amendment to the Convention, to ensure unified application of the Convention by all its Parties;

(c) Belgium, France, Georgia, Greece, Ireland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the Protocol, as States signatories thereto.

3. Other delegations will also be invited to report on their preparations for ratifications or accessions. In particular, the Chair will invite countries beneficiaries of technical assistance and capacity-building in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to report on steps taken to accede to the Convention and/or the Protocol, as relevant.

4. Romania, as the depository of the Multilateral agreement among the countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Bucharest Agreement), will be expected to report on the status thereof. The States signatories Croatia and Greece will be invited to report on their plans to ratify the Bucharest Agreement, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on its plans to accede thereto.

5. The Working Group is expected to consider the information and, as needed, invite the concerned Parties to complete their pending ratifications, as a matter of priority, for the first amendment, by the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol (Geneva, 12–15 December 2023), or failing that, to announce their firm commitment, with clear timelines, to completing their ratifications as soon as possible in the next intersessional period.

Documentation

Informal document

Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.2)

3. Financial arrangements

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 10.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

6. The secretariat will report on the status of the Convention's and Protocol's trust fund. Subsequently, the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, will prepare the financial report covering the period from after the eighth session of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Meetings of the Parties to the Protocol (Vilnius (online), 8–11 December 2020) until December 2023.

7. The secretariat will also present information on the contributions that Parties have pledged to the budget for the Convention and the Protocol in the period 2024–2026. The Working Group will be informed about the additional funding that Parties mobilized and committed as a response to the call to remedy the lack of secretariat resources for servicing the intergovernmental work under the Convention and the Protocol. Any delegation yet to inform the secretariat of its pledge is invited to do so by 15 May 2023. That information is

required in order to ensure that the workplan for 2024–2026 to be agreed under item 4 (c) below will match the financial and staffing resources to be made available for its implementation.

8. The Working Group is invited to consider and agree on draft decision IX/1–V/1 on financial arrangements for 2024–2026, to be forwarded to the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties. The draft decision was prepared by the Bureau, with support from the secretariat, taking into account the comments from the Working Group at its last meeting (Geneva, 19–21 December 2022). The Working Group is expected to ensure that the draft decision addresses the general considerable shortage of contributions to the trust fund under the treaties and provides for a more sustainable, predictable and equitable funding during the next budget cycle and beyond.

Documentation

Draft joint decisions by the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/3)

Informal document

Status of the trust fund (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.3)

4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties

(a) Practical arrangements

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 12.30–1 p.m.

9. The secretariat will provide an update on the practical preparations for the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Geneva, 12–15 December 2023).

Documentation

Informal document

Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.4)

(b) Provisional agenda

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 3–4 p.m.

10. The Working Group is expected to consider and agree on the provisional annotated agenda for the two sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, prepared by the Bureau, with support from the secretariat.

11. The Working Group will be invited to discuss and provide guidance on the organization of a thematic event focusing on energy transition, circular economy, and addressing also green financing, to be held during the sessions' high-level segment, with funding from Italy, and with contributions proposed to date by Italy, Spain, the European Investment Bank, the International Association for Impact Assessment, the World Health Organization and Nuclear Transparency Watch. It will be invited to consider any recommendations from the Bureau and information from the secretariat regarding the organizational aspects of the event and the background material, to be prepared with support from consultants funded by Italy. Delegations are expected to consider key questions to be addressed, including with a view to attracting high-level participation. They are also invited to suggest panellists for the event, as well as high-level representatives to deliver brief statements from the floor, with a recommended time limit of 3 minutes. Related proposals should be submitted to the secretariat by 15 May 2023.

Documentation

Informal documents

Provisional agenda for the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.5)

Preparations for the high-level event on energy transition, circular economy and green financing (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.6)

(c) **Draft workplan for 2024–2026**

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 13 June, 4–6 p.m.

12. The Working Group will be invited to consider draft decision IX/2–V/2 on the adoption of the workplan for 2024–2026, as well as the proposed elements of the draft workplan and the corresponding resource requirements (contained in, respectively, annexes I and II to said draft decision). The draft decision and its annexes were prepared by the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, taking into account the conclusions of the Working Group at its last meeting.

13. Delegations will be invited to propose that they lead or sponsor activities and host events, and to submit their proposals to the secretariat by 15 May 2023. The Working Group is invited to verify that, for each activity in the workplan, information is provided on the entities responsible for implementation, the expected outcome and financial and staffing or in-kind resource requirements. It is expected to ensure that the workplan matches the resources available for its implementation, referring to its earlier discussions on the budget (see item 3 above) and the information on the Parties' pledged contributions to the budget in 2024–2026. It is invited to agree on activities to be suspended or cut should the required additional resources not be secured.

14. As relevant, the Working Group is expected to decide whether some activities should be placed on a waiting list pending identification of possible future funding and included in annex III to the above-mentioned draft decision.

15. The Working Group is expected to reach an agreement on the text of the draft decision and its annexes to be forwarded to the Meetings of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft joint decisions by the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/3)

(d) **Draft declaration**

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 10–11 a.m.

16. The Working Group will be invited to review and agree on the text of the draft Geneva declaration to be forwarded to the Meetings of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft Geneva declaration (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/4)

(e) **Chairs of the sessions**

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 11–11.30 a.m.

17. The Working Group may wish to welcome the proposed nomination of the Minister for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge of Spain, as a candidate for chairing the high-level segment of the Meetings of the Parties' sessions, and of the Bureau Chair, Mr. George Kremlis (Greece), as a candidate for chairing the general segment of the sessions. It may also wish to welcome the availability of the Alternate Chair of the Bureau

for Protocol matters, Ms. Vesna Kolar-Planinšič (Slovenia), to serve as a general segment co-Chair, should Greece not have ratified the Protocol in advance of the sessions.

(f) Officers for the next intersessional period

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 11.30–11.45 a.m.

18. The Chair will ask delegations that have not yet done so to submit or to confirm to the secretariat, by 15 May 2023, nominations for officers to be elected for the next intersessional period, that is to say, one or more Vice-Chairs of the Working Group and one or more members of the Bureau and four (permanent and alternate) members of the Implementation Committee. Additional new members of the Implementation Committee may need to be nominated depending on whether Committee members are Parties to the Protocol. Parties that have never or not recently been represented in the treaty bodies will be encouraged to consider taking on that role.

Documentation

Informal document

A list of vacancies in the treaty bodies for 2024–2026 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.7)

(g) Provisional schedule of meetings 2024–2026

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 11.45 a.m.–noon

19. The Working Group is invited to consider a provisional schedule of meetings of the treaty bodies in the next intersessional period, which is expected to extend from January 2024 to December 2026.

Documentation

Informal document

Provisional schedule of meetings 2024–2026 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.8)

5. Compliance and implementation

(a) Review of compliance and related draft decisions

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, noon–1 p.m. and 3–4 p.m.

20. The Chair of the Implementation Committee is expected to present the main outcomes of the Committee's fifty-sixth session (Geneva, 2–5 May 2023) and the main objectives of its fifty-seventh session (Geneva, 29 August–1 September 2023). Specifically, he, and, where relevant, the Vice-Chair of the Committee, will present initial draft decisions on compliance with the Convention and the Protocol, including amendment proposals to the Committee's structure and functions and operating rules.² Delegations may wish to comment on the drafts both orally, during the session, and in writing, before, during and shortly after the meeting of the Working Group. The Committee will then finalize the draft decisions at its fifty-seventh session, considering, as relevant, the comments and any other information received, prior to forwarding the draft decisions to the Meetings of the Parties at their next sessions.

² Available at <https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Implementation%20Committee%20structure%20functions%20procedures%20rules.e%202020.pdf>

Documentation*Informal document*

Initial draft decisions on the review of compliance of the Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.10)

(b) Reporting and review of implementation

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 4–5 p.m.

21. The Working Group will be invited to consider and agree on draft decisions IX/5 and V/5 on reporting and the review of implementation of, respectively, the Convention and the Protocol, to be submitted to the Meetings of the Parties.

22. The Working Group will also be invited to consider additional amendment proposals by the European Union and its member States to section II on methodology of the draft seventh review of the implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2022/3) and section I on methodology of the draft fourth review of the implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2022/4), as agreed by the Working Group at its eleventh session (Geneva, 19–21 December 2022).

23. Additionally, delegations may wish to consider the templates that the Implementation Committee finalized in consultation with the European Commission, to facilitate reporting of the European Union under the Convention and the Protocol.

Documentation

Draft decision on reporting and review of implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/5)

Draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/6)

Templates for the reports of the European Union on the implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/7)

(c) Legislative assistance

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 5–5.30 p.m.

24. Representatives of the concerned countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and the secretariat will be invited to report on progress since the last meeting of the Working Group in establishing compliant legislation to implement the Convention and the Protocol further to technical advice received.

Documentation*Informal document*

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.9)

6. Promoting practical application of the Convention and the Protocol**(a) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment**

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 14 June, 5.30–6 p.m., and Thursday, 15 June, 10–11 a.m.

25. The Working Group is expected to finalize one outstanding activity from the workplan for the period 2017–2020, namely, the draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment, as requested by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its

last session.³ It is expected to consider a draft, as last revised by the European Union and its member States, and subsequently agreed by the Bureau, and to agree on the text of the draft guidance to be submitted to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its next session.

26. The Working Group is also invited to review and agree on draft decision V/6 on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment and to forward both draft documents to the Meetings of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/8)

Draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/6)

(b) Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 11–11.30 a.m.

27. The Working Group will be invited to review progress in and provide guidance for the implementation of the activities funded by Italy in marine regions, including:

(a) A draft report identifying synergies and possible future cooperation activities in marine regions, prepared in consultation with representatives of: the Espoo Convention and its Protocol; the Arctic Council and its Working Group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment; the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention); the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention) and the Black Sea Commission; the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention); the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention); and the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention);

(b) A third joint technical meeting, preliminarily scheduled to be held on 16 May 2023;

(c) The case studies illustrating good practice and lessons learned by Parties to the Convention and the Protocol in their application of strategic environmental assessment and transboundary environmental impact assessment to plans, programmes and projects in marine regions.

28. In particular, the Working Group will be expected to review and comment on the draft report prior to forwarding it to the Meetings of the Parties at their next sessions. Delegations are invited to volunteer to contribute to the implementation of the proposed cooperation activities and/or to propose other activities, as well as to present relevant good practice, notifying the secretariat by 15 May 2023.

29. The Working Group is invited to review and agree on draft decision IX/3–V/3 on cooperation in marine regions.

Documentation

Draft report on synergies and possible cooperation activities in marine regions (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/9)

Draft joint decisions by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/3)

³ ECE/MP.EIA/30–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13, para. 33; and ECE/MP.EIA/30/Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13/Add.1, annex III, decision VIII/3–IV/3, annex, Vilnius Declaration, para. 13.

(c) Exchange of good practices

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 11.30 a.m.–noon.

30. Delegations are invited to put forward proposals for the preparation of fact sheets on the practical application of the Convention and the Protocol, to be presented during the meetings of the Working Group and posted on the ECE website.

31. Delegations may wish to propose funding for an online database of Parties' good practice or for the collection and compilation of good practice, which is foreseen in the workplan,⁴ subject to identification of additional resources and funding for consultants.

(d) Capacity-building activities

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, noon–12.30 p.m.

32. The secretariat and delegations from the countries or organizations concerned will be invited to provide any updates on capacity-building activities undertaken or planned for since the last meeting of the Working Group to promote ratification and application of the Convention and the Protocol, including:

(a) Activities funded through the European Union EU4Environment Programme, undertaken, in progress or planned since its last meeting in accordance with the workplan for 2024–2026 to promote the practical application of the Convention and the Protocol in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus;

(b) Capacity-building activities in Central Asia building on the outcomes of the joint ECE/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe project;

(c) Preparation of the draft informal pamphlets, or “FasTips”, by the International Association for Impact Assessment.

33. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information and, as relevant, provide advice for the implementation or follow-up of the activities.

Documentation

Informal document

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.9)

7. Management, coordination and visibility of intersessional activities

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 12.30–1 p.m.

34. The Working Group may wish to consider and comment on the revision proposals from the European Union and its member States regarding the informal note on procedural matters of relevance to meetings with remote participation due to extraordinary circumstances, which the Bureau had prepared in 2020, with the secretariat's support, in consultation with the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs,⁵ as well as any related recommendations from the Bureau. At the request of the Bureau, the document is presented in a track changes mode. As recommended by the Bureau, the Working Group is invited to agree on a revised version of the note and recommend to the Meetings of the Parties that said version be applied, and, as needed, further adapted, should the extraordinary circumstances arise again.

⁴ ECE/MP.EIA/30/Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/13/Add.1, decision VIII/2–IV/2, annex I, item III.B.3.

⁵ See the note of 10 November 2020, as revised on 27 November 2020, available under “Informal documents” tab at <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/meeting-parties-espoo-convention-8th-session-and-meeting-parties>.

Documentation

Informal document

Procedural matters of relevance to meetings with remote participation due to extraordinary circumstances (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2023/INF.11)

8. Related events

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 3–3.30 p.m.

35. The secretariat or delegations will report on related events, including:

(a) The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Region (Geneva 29–30 March 2023);

(b) The Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Budapest, 5–7 July 2023).

36. The Working Group will be invited to note and comment on the information provided.

9. Other business

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 3.30–4 p.m.

37. Delegations wishing to raise other business should contact the Chair and the secretariat as soon as possible ahead of the meeting.

10. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting

Tentative timing: Thursday, 15 June, 4–6 p.m.

38. The Working Group is expected to agree on the main decisions taken at its twelfth meeting and to authorize the secretariat to complete the report after the meeting under the guidance of the Chair.

Annex**Organization of work**

<i>Date and tentative time schedule</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
Tuesday, 13 June 2023	
10–10.15 a.m.	1. Adoption of the agenda
10.15–10.45 a.m.	2. Status of ratification
10.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	3. Financial arrangements
	4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties
12.30–1 p.m.	(a) Practical arrangements
3–4 p.m.	(b) Provisional agenda
4–6 p.m.	(c) Draft workplan for 2024–2026
Wednesday, 14 June 2023	
	4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (continued)
10–11 a.m.	(d) Draft declaration
11–11.30 a.m.	(e) Chairs of the sessions
11.30–11.45 a.m.	(f) Officers for the next intersessional period
11.45 a.m.–noon	(g) Provisional schedule of meetings 2024–2026
	5. Compliance and implementation
Noon–1 p.m. and 3–4 p.m.	(a) Review of compliance and related draft decisions
4–5 p.m.	(b) Reporting and review of implementation
5–5.30 p.m.	(c) Legislative assistance
	6. Promoting practical application of the Convention and the Protocol
5.30–6 p.m.	(a) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment
Thursday, 15 June 2023	
	6. Promoting practical application of the Convention and the Protocol (continued)
10–11 a.m.	(a) Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (continued)
11–11.30 a.m.	(b) Subregional cooperation and capacity-building
11.30 a.m.–noon.	(c) Exchange of good practices
Noon–12.30 p.m.	(d) Capacity-building activities
12.30–1 p.m.	7. Management, coordination and visibility of intersessional activities

<i>Date and tentative time schedule</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
3–3.30 p.m.	8. Related events
3.30–4 p.m.	9. Other business
4–6 p.m.	10. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting
