

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) AND LAND USE PLANNING



Mission:

To integrate environmental, social & economic considerations into public policies, plans & programmes, through the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), to alleviate major problems facing national sustainable development.

CONTENTS

<i>What is Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?</i>	1
<i>What are the Legal Bases for SEA?</i>	1
<i>What are the Advantages of SEA Application?</i>	1
<i>Aim of the Project</i>	1
<i>Progress</i>	2
<i>Announcements</i>	2
<i>Resources & Publications</i>	2
<i>Queries & Discussion</i>	2

WHAT IS STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)?

SEA is a decision-support tool which promotes a systematic approach for mainstreaming environmental, social and economic considerations (the triple bottom lines of sustainable development) into public decisions and undertakings.

WHAT ARE THE LEGAL BASES FOR SEA?

- UN Millennium Declaration (Millennium Development Goal no. 7a)
- Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (articles 15a, 40b & 136)
- The Lebanese Framework Law for Environmental Protection no. 444 dated 08/08/02 (articles 21 and 22c).

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF SEA APPLICATION?

- Contributes to broader policy commitments & obligations, such as the Presidential Oath, the Government Policy Statement & international agreements

- Anticipate potential impacts, pressures & risks associated with public proposals at an early stage (Mitigation measures)
- Draws attention to potential liabilities for environmental remediation & other unforeseen social & economic concerns of public proposals
- Facilitates sector as well as cross-sector impact identification & analysis (Consistency of public decisions & undertakings)
- Promotes the implementation of sustainable development strategies by addressing synergies existing between regional socio-economic development & the environment
- Enhances accountability & transparency in decision-making.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The following general objectives have been set for the SEA project:

- To develop a framework for SEA suitable to the Lebanese context
- To build relevant institutional capacities at the Ministry of Environment, the Directorate General of Urban Planning as well as other

concerned government institutions & stakeholders (including the civil society)

- To apply the proposed SEA framework for the development of environmental directives for land use planning at the national level.

PROGRESS

Coverage of SEA

A framework note on priority sectors to be tackled by SEA in Lebanon was developed following a review of relevant studies, a compilation of the list of international environmental agreements ratified by the Lebanese Government & a series of consultations with the staff at the Ministry of Environment as well as concerned stakeholders (consultants, academia & NGOs). The priority environmental challenges are classified in order of importance as determined by the survey in the following general categories:

- Wastewater management
- Waste management
- Land Use Planning
- Air Pollution
- Coastal Zone & Cultural Heritage
- Quarries

This exercise assisted the project team in identifying the potential coverage of SEA at the national level.

Subsequently, the identified priorities were matched with the ministries & government institutions implicated in their management, namely:

- Ministry of Energy & Water
- Council for Development & Reconstruction
- The Ministry of Public Works & Transport
- Ministry of Interior & Municipalities
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Industry
- Ministry of Environment

These government institutions were further assessed in terms of their ability to manage & coordinate SEA implementation.

SWOT Analysis

The institutional framework & decision-making processes of the above-mentioned government institutions were reviewed in order to assess the appropriateness & practicality of different SEA

models to the Lebanese context. For this purpose, their main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats (SWOT Analysis) were outlined & the Services and/or Departments which will most likely coordinate & manage SEA implementation were suggested. Results are being validated with relevant institutions to confirm formal decision-making arrangements & compile relevant comments & feedback.

Lebanese SEA Model

A number of SEA models & application procedures worldwide were reviewed. Following further evaluation with respect to the Lebanese context, a shortlist of four SEA models was identified: integrated model, decision-centred, dual track & EIA-based. An adapted version of the decision-centred model is recommended for Lebanon. However, it is worth noting that the proposed model has yet to be discussed with stakeholders.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A number of training sessions are planned in the coming year (dates will be confirmed in due course):

RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS

The following list outlines resources & publications issued by the SEA project. Copies of the full document will be made available upon request.

- Framework Note on Environmental Priorities
- SWOT Analysis
- Advocacy brochure for decision-makers.

QUERIES & DISCUSSION

For more information, queries or comments, please contact us at:

Ministry of Environment

P.O.Box: 70-1091

Antelias – Lebanon

Tel: +961-4-522222 extn. 423

Fax: +961-4-418911

Email: sea@moe.gov.lb

This newsletter will be circulated every four months. It intends to inform interested parties about the progress achieved to-date on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Land Use Planning Project, and discuss the latest outputs.