

Supporting the Implementation of By-law on Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **What is Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?**

Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is internationally recognized as the key instrument for integrating environmental and health concerns into strategic planning and decision-making to prevent and mitigate possible adverse effects of the economic and regional development. It promotes sustainable development goals and principles and supports efforts towards the transition to a green economy. SEA should be applied during the preparation of strategic documents in order to ensure that the environmental and health implications of planned developments are analysed and considered early in decision-making processes, before the decisions are made. In addition, relevant authorities and the public should be properly consulted in the process. As a result, SEA increases the legitimacy of planning and decision-making processes and their outcomes.

### **Bylaw on Strategic Environmental Assessment**

Bylaw on SEA entered into force in 8 April 2017<sup>1</sup>, and which almost fully transposes requirements of the European Union's SEA Directive<sup>2</sup> except for the transboundary issues with European Union's SEA Directive. In accordance with the Bylaw on SEA, the SEA should be applied for the plans and programmes in selected sectors, which set framework for the projects and activities defined in Annex I and II of the By-Law on Environmental Impact Assessment. Bylaw on SEA provides gradual implementation of SEA

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<sup>1</sup> Official Gazette No. 30032

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, see <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-legalcontext.htm>

for different sectors as it is stated in the Provisional Article 2. The provisions of the Bylaw on SEA shall be implemented for the plans and programmes subject to SEA and prepared in:

- a) Coastal zone management, spatial planning, water management, agriculture and tourism sectors from the date of entering the Bylaw into force;
- b) Fishery and forestry sectors from the date of 1/1/2020,
- c) Waste management, energy, industry, telecommunication and transportation sectors from the date of 1/1/2023.

In accordance with Annex I to the Bylaw on SEA, following plans and programmes shall be a subject of SEA:

- Regional Development Administrations Action Plans
- Regional Plans
- Integrated Coastal Zones Plans
- Territorial Plans
- Energy Sector Planning Studies
- Basin Waste Management Plans
- Basin Wastewater Treatment Action Plans
- Basin Protection Action Plans
- Basin Drought Management Plans
- Basin Master Plans
- Basin Flood Management Plans
- Rural Development Programmes
- Plans within Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Zones, and Tourism Centers (1/100.000 and 1/50.000 scale)
- Spatial Strategy Plans

- River Basin Management Plans
- Operational Programmes
- Agriculture Master Plans
- Tourism Coastal Structures Master Plan
- Turkey Industry Strategy
- Turkey Tourism Strategy
- Transport and Communication Strategy
- Transportation Master Plans
- National Basin Management Strategy

The Bylaw on SEA defines following main stages of SEA:

- **Screening** to determine if SEA needs to be applied for a specific plan or programme (this applies only to revisions/amendments of the plans and programmes listed Annex-I, and the plans and programmes which are not included in the Annex-I but within the scope of the first paragraph of Article 2 of Bylaw).
- **Scoping** to define the scope of the SEA report. This stage involves preparation of the scoping report and consultations with relevant stakeholders;
- Preparation of **SEA report** to analyse likely environmental and health effects related to a given plan or programme;
- **Quality control** of SEA report to be carried out by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization (MoEU), which also focuses on finding out if and how recommendations provided by SEA have been properly integrated in the draft plan or programme;
- **Decision on the plan or programme;** when the authority competent to approve the plan or programme shall take into consideration the conclusions of the SEA report, opinions of the

environmental and health authorities and the public, and the notification of the MoEU regarding the quality of the SEA Report;

- **Information about the decision** has to be provided to the MoEU and the public by the authority competent to approve the plan and programme on (i) approved plan or programme, (ii) how SEA conclusions have been integrated, and (iii) monitoring programme;
- **Monitoring programme** to monitor environmental and health effects during implementation of the plan or programme.

Following adoption of the Bylaw on SEA, the implementation of SEA in Turkey has recently been initiated, and several screening applications were submitted to the MoEU in early 2019 (further information on SEA processes are available at <https://scd.csb.gov.tr/>).

#### **Aim of the project**

The project ‘Supporting the Implementation of By-law on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)’, financially supported by the European Union (EU), was launched in 18 April 2019. Planning process of choosing two pilot sectors with the Implementation of the SEA Project (until September 2020) shall be integrated with environmental factors and therefore contribute to the high level of protection of environment .It shall result in enhanced institutional capacity for SEA and will support efficient implementation of the Bylaw on SEA.

The SEA Project is implemented by the consortium EPTISA Mühendislik Ltd. and Integra Consulting Ltd. The project represents a follow-up activity to the previous project ‘Technical Assistance of By-Law on SEA’, which was conducted from 2014 till 2016.

The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization (MoEU) is the project’s End Beneficiary, however all other relevant stakeholders will be involved as

well – in particular governmental authorities responsible for preparation of the plans and programmes at the national, regional and municipal level, academia, non-governmental sector and the public.

### **Overview of the project activities**

In order to establish a basis for proper design of capacity building activities within the project, the analysis of current capacities for SEA as well as the training needs analysis will be carried out at the initial stage of the project.

Conducting two SEA pilots for the plans and programmes represents an important part of the project, as the SEA pilots shall provide a hand-on opportunity for relevant stakeholders to participate in practical application of SEA. Selection of the sectors (and specific plans and programmes) for SEA pilot will be essential for efficient implementation.

The training programme will be implemented through several training modules, specifically adjusted to the needs of the key target groups. Further dissemination of information about SEA will be done through organisation of the awareness raising workshops, as well as of the opening and closing meetings.

The study visit on SEA to a selected EU country shall also contribute to better understanding of the key principles of efficient SEA implementation.

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