

Workshops on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in East Asia Pacific Region

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“SEA in Malaysia”

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Policy Commitment to SEA

- **Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) – stipulates the use of environmental planning tools such as SEA in evaluating and mitigating environmental impacts of development activities.**
- **National Environment Policy (Article 3.4) implicitly refers to SEA when formulating policies, plans and programmes.**

Regulatory Framework

- **Presently, no legal requirement for conducting SEA**
- **Existing pilot SEAs indicate a move in the direction of integrating SEA into PPP preparation.**

Key Pilot Projects

National level project:

- Policy - and Plan-level pilot SEA on National Water Resources Plan
- Programme - level pilot SEA – case study on water resources management at state level

State and local level:

- Sabah State Economic Planning Unit completed study on SEA
- TCPD has conducted SEAs on local plans at various local authorities

Main Lessons Learnt

- **SEA useful as a planning support tool**
- **Necessary to use several analytical approaches**
- **Evaluation of alternatives using MCA was useful**
- **Access to environmental data is a challenge**

Main Lessons Learnt

- **Use of hierarchy of alternatives was useful (WHY?, HOW?, WHERE?)**
- **SEA identified institutional (inter- agency) issues but did not address them in detail**

Observations of SEA pilot studies

The use of Policy-level and Plan-level SEA processes, with SEA objectives, alternatives, and stakeholders could have transformed the supply driven, dam-focused NWRP to a plan focused on:

Managing Malaysia's water resources efficiently, (i.e., moving towards adequate, safe and affordable water services for all users, at a fair price, by using a range of water resources)

and effectively (addressing health, cultural, and equity issues),

while incorporating conservation and other sustainable use objectives, (e.g., protection of biodiversity and water quality and demand management),

in conformity with the 2020 vision.

What is Next?

- **Based on experiences of the pilot studies, a policy paper is planned addressing the following issues:**
 - 1. Institutionalising SEA into development planning**
 - i- regulatory framework**
 - ii- inter-agency coordination/consultation**
 - 2. Identification of various constrains and options to address them**
 - i- changing the perception about SEA - cost and time consuming**
 - ii- capacity to undertake SEA**
 - iii- access to environmental data and data sharing**