



commission for environmental impact assessment

Ministry of Public Works, Transport and
Telecommunications:
To the attention of the Deputy Minister
Dr. Ing. Stavri Ristani
Boulevard 'Dëshmorët e Kombit'
Tirana, Albania

your reference

your letter of

our reference

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061-ab

subject

Advisory review of the SEA Coastal
Development Study and Plan, Albania

direct dial

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Utrecht,

2 March 2006

Dear Mr. Ristani,

According to the Terms of Reference for the SEA capacity building activities in Albania, dated 5 September 2005, the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment was asked to advise on review and supervision of an SEA for the South Coast Development Study and Plan in Albania.

It is my pleasure to submit herewith the interim advisory report prepared by a working group of the Commission. I appreciate the timely acknowledgement for the need to undertake SEA for a region in a crucial phase of development and the work accomplished by the consultants in terms of collecting a large amount of good quality information. Furthermore, I would like to draw your attention to the following:

The Commission was asked to advise on the SEA process and perform a quality review of the SEA report. The first task we have tried to accomplish through the attached advisory report. The second part is still to be carried out as the final SEA report was not yet available. The Commission is willing to perform a final quality review once the SEA report (and Final Study and Plan) is ready. Possibly a representative of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water could be nominated to participate in this review by the Commission's working group.

Another issue which I would like to mention is related to capacity building, both at central governmental level and at local level.

The Commission has noticed that Government capacity to undertake SEA (lead Ministries or regional authorities) or to guide and control SEA (Environment Ministry) is very limited. The South Coast Development Study and Plan is a first SEA experience in Albania, for which it is important to involve Albanian stakeholders to the maximum possible extent.

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In view of the decentralisation of responsibilities to local authorities, I am concerned about the capacity of these authorities to perform the assigned tasks, both in terms of skilled manpower and in terms of financial resources. In relation to the planning process, the municipalities are responsible for the design and implementation of master plans. With the present lack of capacity at local level there is a risk that the South Coast Development Plan will not be well transferred into local plans. Available local expertise predominantly relates to urban planning (construction engineering), whereas capacity for sectoral and landscape planning is lacking.

A third issue I would like to raise is on the coordination of plans. The South Coast Development Plan will be further detailed in the municipal master plans. It is unclear how this is linked to the recent World Bank Coastal Village Conservation and Development Programme. For this initiative municipalities have to produce strategic plans which are in compliance with the South Coast Development Plan. It is unclear how these strategic plans relate to master plans and how the compliance with the South Coast Development Plan will be verified. I would recommend to harmonize the strategic plans, as far as possible, with the adjustment of master plans, using the South Coast Development Plan as a reference.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our willingness to assist in further steps of this SEA and I would appreciate to be kept informed about the use that is made of this advice.

Yours sincerely,

Klaas Jan Beek



Chairman of the Working Group on SEA South Coast
Development Study and Plan, Albania

cc.

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, Taulant Bino
Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, Deputy Minister, Suzana Turku
PAP/RAC, Mr. Ivica Trumbic
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