



Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment

Mapping national EIA systems in West Africa – Project Note

Memorandum by the NCEA

April 2011



Advice of the Secretariat

To	West African Association for Environmental Assessment (WAAEA)
Attn	
From	Secretariat of the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA), G.J. van Boven
Date	April 2011
Subject	Mapping national EIA systems in West Africa – Project Note Project period: April – July 2011 Advice 2011–01

Background

Since 2008, NCEA provides technical support to a capacity development programme for EIA in the Central Africa region through the regional node of national associations in that region, SEEAC. This regional programme has been built on the basis of a thorough EIA systems analysis at the national level of each participating country, using a diagnostic tool that has been developed by the NCEA called EIA Mapping.

The regional node of EIA Associations in West Africa, WAAEA, is looking into possibilities for follow-up on a support programme by the Swedish EIA Centre (SEIAC), which will end in April 2011. Interest has been expressed in a similar kind of approach as in the Central African region as currently supported by NCEA. For WAAEA and its members to develop such an initiative, a similarly thorough systems analysis would be required for benchmarking and priority setting.

In this light, the applicability of EIA Mapping has been discussed during a joint monitoring/ preparatory visit of SEIAC and NCEA respectively to WAAEA in December 2010. This project note discusses EIA Mapping in six West African countries.

EIA Mapping

The EIA Mapping is a diagnostic tool that allows for an in-depth analysis of a country's current EIA system. EIA mapping assesses the quality of the regulatory framework for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a country, and the level of compliance with this framework in practice. The tool has been developed by the NCEA to assist its work in supporting the strengthening of EIA systems in its partner countries and has been tested and used in ten countries so far. The EIA Mapping is facilitated through a two-day interactive workshop in which all relevant actors of the country's EIA system are represented. The National EIA Association would be the convenor of the workshop, while the NCEA acts as facilitator.

The EIA Mapping has multiple advantages:

- Awareness raising among participants of strengths and weaknesses of current system
- Results useful for policy makers and association alike in setting priorities for improvement of system
- Results would be a baseline that could be used at a regional level by WAAEA and members to develop a capacity development programme in West Africa that could be submitted to donors for funding.
- Results would facilitate measuring results of such a programme (benchmarking)
- Results would contribute to find out bridges for the harmonisation of EIA systems across the region
- Results may serve as baseline inputs for the running of the Barometer developed by CLEAA
- The exercise strengthens analysis skills and visibility of national association

Scope of the project

The West African region has 15 countries, of which 12 national EIA associations have adhered to the regional node WAAEA, which has its offices in Cotonou, Benin. The project will be able to finance EIA mapping workshops in a maximum of six countries.

The selection of countries has been proposed by NCEA and WAAEA on the basis of functional criteria and policy priorities, most importantly:

- interest & commitment (both EIA agency and EIA association) to work on strengthening of the EIA system; and
- presence of a functional & active national EIA Association.
- A contributing factor: NCEA partner country, current or future.

Workshops will be organised back to back in pairs of two for logistical and budgetary convenience. Countries and pairing are proposed as follows:

- Niger & Togo
- Mauritania & Guinea
- Mali & Burkina Faso

Preliminary Programme

March – April 2011: Planning & preparations of the EIA mapping workshops

May– July 2011: EIA mapping workshops

July 2011: Reporting & planning for next steps

Partners & Roles

The project recognises different roles that will be shared by the project partners as follows:

Regional Coordination

The WAAEA, will act as regional coordinator for this project. WAAEA will be communicating with its members, will assist the National EIA Associations in organising the workshop, and will act as main contact point for NCEA for the overall project.

National Workshop Organisation

The respective National EIA Associations will be coordinating the logistical organisation of the workshop in their countries. This includes inviting relevant actors, organising a venue and acting as host of the workshop. As participation of a good mix of representatives of the EIA sector in the country is crucial to the quality of the workshop results, inviting the relevant actors is an important aspect of their work. WAAEA and NCEA will be available to provide guidance in this and other aspects of workshop preparations.

Workshop Facilitation and Reporting

An EIA Mapping workshop requires two facilitators, skilled in facilitation techniques and knowledgeable in EIA content matter, for facilitation and reporting. NCEA will make available two experienced staff for this purpose. The EIA Mapping software allows for immediate visualisation of results, while process observations and discussion notes will be added by the facilitators for the final report.

In addition, NCEA will invite on a voluntary basis the assistance of national or regional facilitators with whom NCEA has worked in the past, in order to build capacity in the region for the application of the EIA Mapping tool.

Financial Resources

The NCEA and SEIAC are both contributing financially to the project.

The NCEA is enabling the EIA Mapping workshops in 4 countries by making available a limited organisational budget of EUR 1000 per workshop, as well as by shouldering all additional costs related to the deployment of the two NCEA facilitators.

The Swedish EIA Centre SEIAC contributes by financing 2 additional workshops, wishing to creating good conditions for WAAEA to continue their work even after SEIACs financial support ends. The EIA mapping exercise could create a positive momentum to continue building on, and also give a better sense of direction to their future activities. The SEIAC will fund the organisation of the workshop as well as the deployment of the two NCEA facilitators. The SEIAC has attached no further requirements on financing workshops in specific countries (un-earmarked funding) other than a time limitation in the use of their funds until the end of May 2011. The first two workshops will therefore be attributed to the budget made available by SEIAC. Reporting can be done within general project reporting, only financial expenditure of funds needs to be justified separately.

EIA Maps – and then?

After the EIA Mapping workshop, each country will have its own EIA Map available – which visualises the regulatory framework of its current EIA system, and its functioning in practice. With that information, each country should be able to draw its conclusions in terms of needs and priorities to strengthen the current system. As such, the EIA Map will be extremely helpful to guide national policy makers in their agenda setting. It would similarly allow EIA Associations to (re)direct their intervention strategy.

The joint mapping effort could also form the basis for priority setting for system improvement or capacity development at regional level: which aspects would require support of neighbouring countries, what type of technical advice would be needed, and what kind of financial or political support? WAAEA, or one or several of its members, would then be well-positioned to guide the development of a regional EIA strengthening programme.

NCEA would be available to provide technical support to the development of such a programme, provided the initiative stems from the region.