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SOFIA+3 Project:

Criteria for Evaluating Progress in NEAP Development

The criteria below are a revised version of those presented in the document "Framework for Developing NEAPs". They were revised after the Sofia Conference, in consultation with NEAP Co-ordinators and approved by the EAP Task Force in April 1996.

1. NEAP Development

- **Ranking actions in order of importance (setting priorities)**

- Developing and using criteria;
- Analysis of environmental, economic and health data;
- Problem identification and analysis;
- Ranking problems;
- Cost benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness of solutions

- **Extent of consultation process**

- Within the ministry of environment;
- With other ministries;
- With local government;
- With NGOs, industry, and the public;
- Where relevant, co-ordination with other plans or initiatives (national environmental planning, NEHAPs, etc.)

- **The level of political support for the NEAP (environmental authorities; cabinet or parliamentary approval)**

- **The NEAP process**

- how institutionalised is its degree of external involvement

2. The Implementation Plan

- Identification of targets for environmental improvement;
- Clear and measurable objectives;
- Budgetary envelope:
- Investment plan;
- Specification of policy/institutional changes;
- Timetable for implementation;
- Provisions for monitoring and review

3. Implementation

- Actions taken: incentives framework, institutions, investments;
- Financing: Identified; committed; and disbursed;
- Support from and actions by sectoral ministries, industry, other groups;
- Strategies and choices for resolving implementation difficulties;
- Monitoring and Review;

4. Results -- in terms of environmental improvements

Additional Questions to support Evaluation of NEAPs in CEECs/NIS

The EAP and NEAP Co-ordinators have stressed that there is no "blueprint" for developing NEAPs; rather the methods for developing NEAPs, and the goals established, are best determined by each country in their specific context. Guidance and recommendations have been developed, but these must be adapted to national circumstances. An Evaluation of NEAP progress should begin with an understanding of national goals and measures taken to achieve them. At the same time, work with the NEAP Co-ordinators suggests that NEAP processes are likely to share a number of common elements. In view of this, the questions outlined below are divided into two parts:

A. National Perspective: In the first section, the emphasis is on understanding the specific objectives which CEE/NIS established for themselves, and their progress in achieving these objectives;

B. Comparing NEAP Processes: In the second section, a series of questions is presented which elaborate on the criteria presented in Annex I; they are intended to help the Secretariat to collect comparable information about the NEAP process in CEE/NIS.

A. NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Independently of the specific objectives defined in the NEAP, what were the strategic objectives which you hoped to achieve when a decision was made to develop a NEAP (e.g. start a planning process, define environmental priority problems, generate consensus within the government, mobilise resources etc.)? Did the strategic objectives change over time? If so, how?

What criteria, do you think, are most relevant in evaluating the success of the NEAP (e.g. environmental improvements, better policies, more effective institutions, etc.)?

Using these criteria, how would you evaluate progress?

Overall, what are the major:

- achievements;
- obstacles;
- challenges for the future.

B. COMPARING NEAP PROCESSES

1. NEAP Development

Ranking Actions in Order of Importance (Setting Priorities)

This section is concerned primarily with the analytical support for the NEAP - the criteria, data, and methods used to set priorities and which organisational unit(s) was/were responsible for these tasks?

Developing and using criteria

- What criteria have been applied for priority setting (list a few examples)?
- What was the process of reaching consensus on criteria for setting priorities?
- What were the main obstacles in defining common criteria for priority setting?

Analysis of Data

- Which types of data (environmental, economic, health) were analysed?
- Was the data adequate for developing the NEAP? If not, what are the main gaps/problems?
- Who was involved in conducting such analysis?

Problem Identification and Analysis

- What were the most urgent environmental problems identified (provide top three)?
- Were the main causes of the priority problems identified?
- What analytical tools (risk analysis, economic analysis, health problem analysis, priority-setting techniques) were employed for problem identification and analysis? If not employed - why?
- Who conducted the analysis?

Ranking Problems

- Were problems or priority actions ranked? What were the criteria or mechanisms used?

Cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness of solutions

- Was there any analysis of costs/cost-benefit/cost-effectiveness of the proposed policy goals or proposed actions (please provide details)?
- Did the analysis/information influence the selection of priorities or actions? If so, how?

Extent of Consultation Process

This section deals with the consultations which supported NEAP development. The general issues concern:

- Which stakeholders participated in the elaboration of the NEAP (non-Environment ministries, regional/local governments, NGO's, industry, etc.)?
- In what ways did the consultation processes facilitate defining priority environmental problems/ environmental policy goals? What problems occurred?
- What degree of consensus was achieved among the various groups?

More specifically:

Within the Environment Ministry

- Did the NEAP succeed in establishing priorities among or within the different media (air, water, waste, biodiversity, etc)?
- What were the mechanisms for reaching consensus? What problems occurred?

With other Ministries

- How and when were other ministries involved in NEAP development?
- Did the consultation process influence the choice of priority problems/environmental policy goals? If so, how?

With local governments

- How and when were regional/local governments involved in NEAP development?
- Did the consultation process influence the choice of priority problems/environmental policy goals? If so, how?

With NGOs, industry and the public

- How and when were NGOs, industry and the public involved in NEAP development?
- Did the consultation process influence the choice of priority problems/environmental policy goals? If so, how?

Where relevant, co-ordination with other plans and initiatives

- How did NEAP integrate with macroeconomic and sectoral programmes? Were the environmental issues actively or jointly addressed with strong participation of environmental authorities in, e.g., agriculture, transport, privatisation, energy policies?
- What was the relationship of the NEAP to other programming initiatives, in particular NEHAPs, sustainable development programmes, and regional/global environmental initiatives?

The level of political support for the NEAP

- What was the role of the Environment Minister in pursuing NEAP development?
- Were there other political drivers of the process?
- What role did Members of the Parliament play in the development of the NEAP?
- Was NEAP approved by the Cabinet/Parliament/President?
- Did other factors in the political environmental efforts affect NEAP development (e.g. changes of government, the level of public interest, etc.)?

The NEAP Process

- Is there a specific organisational unit, with adequate resources, to support NEAP development (provide details)? If yes, what were the mechanisms for co-ordinating NEAP activities with other parts of the Environment Ministry?
- What was the role of external support? Who was supporting NEAP development from abroad and in what form? What will be the impact on NEAP development when external support ends?

2. Implementation Plan

Identification of targets for environmental improvement

- Have targets been set quantitatively or qualitatively?

Clear and measurable objectives

- Have specific, measurable, realistic objectives and targets been developed under each policy goal (provide examples)?

Budgetary envelope

- Was there any analysis of available funding/alternative sources/fund generation mechanisms at this stage?
- Which are the key sources for financing the priority problems (provide main sources)?

Investment Plan

- Was there an investment plan prepared?
- Was it developed at the national level? How have regional/local stakeholders been mobilised to undertake actions?
- Was there any analysis of environmental effectiveness and economic feasibility of the proposed actions?
- Was it compared with available financial resources?
- Were there alternative actions considered?

Specification of policy/institutional changes

- Does the NEAP identify policy/institutional reforms which would be necessary to address the causes of priority problems (provide examples in one policy area)?
- What specific steps were proposed to achieve these goals?
- Which policy instruments were considered as the most important for achieving NEAP objectives (regulatory, economic instruments, information, investments)?

Timetable

- Was there a timetable prepared for suggested actions?
- Was a phased approach considered (provide examples, if available)?

3. NEAP Implementation

Actions taken

- Provide a few examples of actions which have been implemented following the NEAP provisions: in the area of legislation, policy instruments (regulation, economic instruments), information, new or improved institutions, investments;

Financing: identified, committed, and disbursed

- What resources and from which sources have been earmarked/committed/disbursed to achieve NEAP objectives?
- Were there any problems with securing the availability of identified financing, committing resources and disbursement (provide examples)?

Support from and actions by sectoral ministries, industry, other groups

- What actions have been taken by sectoral ministries, industry, local governments and other groups to achieve NEAP objectives (provide examples)?

Strategies and choices for resolving implementation difficulties

- What mechanisms exist for resolving difficulties during implementation of agreed actions?

Monitoring and Review

- What provisions have been made for monitoring implementation of the NEAP?
- Which institutions are involved?
- What is the interface/impact of environmental information activities on correcting NEAP goals?
- What is the role of stakeholders in monitoring progress and providing the feedback on the effectiveness of the NEAP (provide examples)?
- Has the NEAP been updated in light of monitoring/review? If so, how?

4. Results - in terms of environmental improvements

- Can you provide a few examples of improvements in environmental conditions as a result of policy actions and/or investments?
- In light of the experience with implementation and the observed environmental changes, have NEAP priorities been changed?
- Have objectives changed?
- Have institutional arrangements changed?
- Are there new relevant stakeholders?