

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) A Tool for mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management

The course was introduced by Dr. Kerstin Imbusch, Advisor from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and Ms. Veerle Vandeweerd, Director of the Environment and Energy Group of UNDP. The instructors of the course were: Mr. Alfred Eberhardt of GTZ and Mr. Carlos Piñeda, a former Minister of Environment in Honduras. The course, tailored to CSD-16 Learning Centre audience, was a condensed version of longer, standard training courses GTZ offered on several occasions to some twenty, mostly developing countries. These training courses were based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Guidance: Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment. Good Practice Guidance for Development Cooperation, Paris, 2006.

The course addressed SEA as a practical decision-making tool with holistic, systematic and flexible approach to optimizing policies, plans and programme (PPP). It has helped to identify interlinkages among social, economic and environmental considerations. The instructors reiterated that SEA featured its analytical and participatory processes.

The course also focused on how SEA could be used as a tool for a range of sustainable development issues, particularly in relation to land management. To illustrate benefits of and costs associated with SEA, the experience of SEA implementation in Honduras was shared. In addition, participants were presented with a SLM case in a fictitious country and were encouraged to take part in small group discussions. They addressed a number of developmental proposals, put them in the overall context of this country, analyzed the baseline trends, and assessed proposed developmental objectives and their possible consequences on sustainable land management. The groups worked out specific set of recommendations for the case study matrix as the illustration of the SEA implementation process.