

## EU environmental policy planning documents and impacts on national planning

Bertília Valadas  
Portuguese Environment Agency

ECRAN Regional training on the role of planning documents  
in approximation and management of the negotiation process  
for Chapter 27

European Commission TAIEX

Podgorica, March 18, 2014

"In 2050, we live well, within the planet's ecological limits. Our prosperity and healthy environment stem from an innovative, circular economy where nothing is wasted and where natural resources are managed sustainably, and biodiversity is protected, valued and restored in ways that enhance our society's resilience. Our low-carbon growth has long been decoupled from resource use, setting the pace for a safe and sustainable global society."



Living well, within  
the limits of our planet

7th Environment Action Programme

## Environmental Policy In the EU Treaty

### Article 11

Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union's policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## Environmental Policy In the EU Treaty

### Article 191

1. Union policy on the environment shall contribute to pursuit of the following objectives:

- preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment
- protecting human health
- prudent and rational utilization of natural resources
- promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, and in particular combating climate change.

2. Union policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Union. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay.

...

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## Europe 2020

Europe 2020 is the EU ten-year strategy to overcome the crisis and create conditions for a different type of growth that is **smarter**, more **sustainable** and more **inclusive**.

### 5 targets:

- Employment
- Education
- Research and innovation
- Social inclusion and poverty reduction
- Climate/energy

### 7 flagship initiatives:

#### Smart growth

- Digital economy
- Innovation
- Youth

#### Sustainable growth

- Resource efficiency
- Industrial policy

#### Inclusive growth

- Employment
- Poverty

(ec.europa.eu/europe2020)

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

*Over the past 40 years a broad range of environment legislation has been put in place in EU, amounting to the most comprehensive modern standards in the world. However, many environmental trends continue to be cause of concern.*

The 7<sup>th</sup> EAP lists **nine priority objectives** and what the EU needs to do to achieve them by 2020.

### Three key objectives:

1. to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital
2. to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy
3. to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing.

(ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg)

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

### Four “enabler” objectives:

4. better implementation of legislation
5. better information by improving the knowledge base
6. more and wiser investment for environment and climate policy
7. full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies.

### Two additional horizontal objectives:

8. to make the Union's cities more sustainable
9. to help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

### Key objective 1: “Natural capital”

#### *EU legally-binding commitments:*

- Water Framework Directive
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Urban Wastewater Directive
- Nitrates Directive
- Floods Directive
- Priority Substances Directive
- Air Quality Directive
- Habitats and Birds Directive

#### *EAP commitments to speed up the delivery of the objectives of:*

- 2020 Biodiversity Strategy
- Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

### Key objective 2: A resource-efficient, low-carbon economy

*The transformation of EU economy requires:*

- Full delivery of the climate and energy package to achieve the 20-20-20 targets and agreement on the next steps for climate policy beyond 2020
- Significant improvements to the environmental performance of products over their life cycle
- Reductions in the environmental impact of consumption, including issues such as cutting food waste and using biomass in a sustainable way

There is a **special focus on turning waste into a resource**, as called in the Roadmap to a Resource-efficient Europe.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

### Key objective 3: Human health and well-being

*According to the WHO environmental factors could be responsible for up 20% of all deaths in Europe.*

*Main concerns:*

- Air pollution
- Water pollution
- Noise pollution
- Toxic chemicals

The EAP sets out commitments to improve implementation of existing legislation and to secure further reductions in pollution.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Program

### Objective 7: **Integration**

*Although integrating environmental protection concerns into other Union policy areas (such as regional policy, agriculture, fisheries, energy, transports) is a Treaty requirement the overall state of Europe's environment indicates that progresses made to date has not been sufficient to reverse all negative trends.*

7<sup>th</sup> EAP recognizes that systematically assessing the environmental, social and economic impacts of policy initiatives and full implementation of Environmental Assessment legislation will ensure better decision-making and coherent policy approaches.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- Directive 2001/42 for plans and programmes
- UNECE Protocol on SEA (Kiev Protocol) for plans, programmes, policies and legislative proposals.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment is a decision support instrument that can contribute to strengthen society commitments to sustainable development, efficient management of resources and green economy. According to EU legal requirements SEA aims to integrate environmental issues in the development of plans and programmes.

*1<sup>st</sup> Report on the application and effectiveness of SEA Directive (European Commission, 2009):*

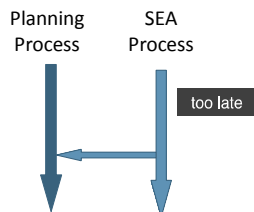
- SEA Directive contributes to systematic and structured consideration of environmental concerns in planning processes and better integration of environmental considerations upstream.
- The overall picture of the application of the effectiveness of the SEA Directive across all Member States is a varied one in terms of the institutional and legal arrangements.

([ec.europa.eu/environment/eia](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia))

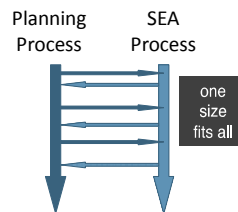
EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## SEA and decision process

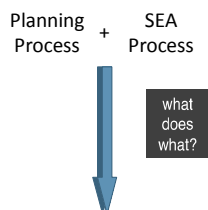
### 1. One opportunity model



### 2. Parallel model



### 3. Integrated model



### 4. Decision-centred model



Partidário, 2007

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Better Practice Guide – methodological guidance for strategic thinking in SEA (Portuguese Environment Agency, 2012)



([ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea/support](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea/support))

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

### SEA acts strategically by:

- Positioning it self flexibly in relation to the decision-making process, ensuring strong interaction and frequent iteration from earliest decision moments, and following decision cycles.
- Integrating relevant biophysical, social, institutional and economic issues, keeping a strategic focus in very few but critical themes.
- Assessing environmental and sustainability opportunities and risks of strategic options to help drive development into sustainability pathways.
- Ensuring active stakeholders engagement through dialogues and collaborative processes toward conflict reduction and win-win achievements.

Partidário, 2012

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

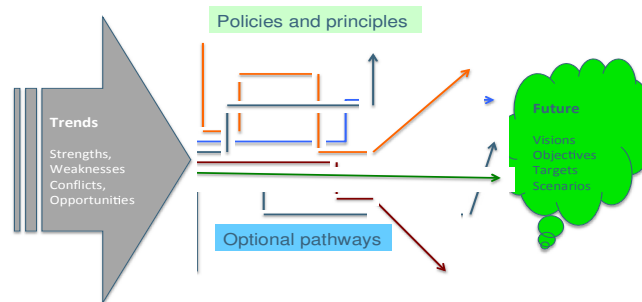
### How EU planning documents influence national position/perspective?

- EU policy planning documents provide a strategic macro policy framework:
  - It gathers under its umbrella multiple relevant sustainability and environmental objectives established in an international and European context, providing policy orientations and targets.
  - There are legally-binding commitments and common agreed orientations to respect.
- National planning instruments must be aligned with EU policies taking into account the subsidiarity principle.

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

### How EU planning documents influence national position/perspective?

- Different strategic options are possible and shall be assessed in a sustainability perspective.



Partidário, 2012

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

*We can not solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.*

Albert Einstein

*A vision without action is just a dream; an action without vision just passes time; a vision with an action changes the world.*

Nelson Mandela

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014

**Thank you.**

EU environmental policy planning | Bertília Valadas | March 18, 2014