



COSIPLAN
Presidencia Pro Tempore
Chile 2013 - 2014

Meeting of the Executive Technical Group on the Strategic Environmental and Social Evaluation (EASE) Methodology

September 24, 2013
Santiago de Chile

NOTES OF THE MEETING

On September 24, 2013, the city of Santiago de Chile hosted the Meeting of the Executive Technical Group on the Strategic Environmental and Social Evaluation (EASE) Methodology. The meeting was attended by delegates of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela as well as representatives of UNASUR General Secretariat and IIRSA Technical Coordination Committee. The meeting agenda and the list of participants are attached as Annexes 1 and 2, respectively.

The objectives of this GTE meeting were as follows: (i) present the results of the application of the EASE Methodology to the Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System project (Uruguay - Brazil); (ii) present the results of the application of the EASE Methodology to the Pehuenche Border Crossing (Argentina); and (iii) reach consensus on the next EASE-related actions and their potential complementarity with other COSIPLAN-IIRSA territorial evaluation tools.

The meeting was opened by the Presidency Pro Tempore (PPT) held by Chile represented in the person of Mr. Rigoberto García, the International Coordinator of the Chilean Ministry of Public Works. Afterwards, the Technical Coordination Committee presented the objectives and the expected results of the meeting, and described its dynamics.

At first there was a brief presentation of the objectives and premises underpinning the methodology as well as the results expected from its application to the Project Groups or to a project within the Priority Project Agenda in order to standardize the public's knowledge about this COSIPLAN-IIRSA planning tool.

Subsequently, the application of the methodology to the API project known as "Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System" was presented. The consulting team in charge of the study described the methodology application process and the results initially identified.¹ The lessons learned and a brief analysis of the implementation of the recommendations from the study were then presented by the authorities of the institutions involved in the development of its application in Brazil and Uruguay. The presentations are attached as Annexes 3, 4, 5 and 6.

¹ The study is at its final stage.

The delegations present stressed the importance of applying this tool to an API project. The methodology proved useful for the implementation of this infrastructure project, and particularly favored the development of a participatory process through which it was possible to gain insight into the local governments' opinions about the projects to be implemented. They valued the study undertaken as it analyzes the problems and proposes strategies and courses of action to respond to each of them. It is an important and valuable tool to give support to general plans and specific projects.

Afterwards, the National Coordination of Argentina presented the application of this methodology to the Pehuenche program, stressing the results and lessons learned from the use of this tool in a national project. This presentation is attached as Annex 7.

The delegations underscored the relevance of applying a tool to a national program in a regional context. The Chilean delegation expressed its interest in making headway into a study of similar characteristics on the Chilean side and in the need to have a territorial plan for this area.

The participating delegates valued the fact that the methodology had been adapted to a project of a national scope.

Further on, the participants of the meeting engaged in a debate about the EASE methodology, its contributions to the integration infrastructure planning, the information on the territories studied, and the participation of the civil society. Within this framework, the following comments were made:

1. The EASE methodology is a valuable tool to incorporate environmental and social issues into physical integration projects. The applications of this methodology should be framed within a broader planning process in order to make sense out of its results and recommendations.
2. This methodology should be made more dynamic to be applied in some contexts, but it is fundamental to comply with all its components and phases. Particularly, a simplified application should contribute to the development of Integration Territorial Programs (PTIs).
3. It was again emphasized that the scale of analysis of the EASE methodology is strategic; consequently, special attention should be given to this focus during its application.
4. This tool draws on secondary information and a participation plan that incorporates key stakeholders at the local level into the identification of needs and validation of results.
5. The orderly mechanism of participation proposed by the methodology is a suitable way to organize the participation of the civil society. Furthermore, it enables disseminating the COSIPLAN-IIRSA actions related to the planning of integration infrastructure and, particularly, the actions related with environmental and social issues.
6. There is no consistent knowledge on the use of this planning tool. Not all the countries have participated in its application; therefore, it would be important that those that have not should engage in this process.
7. The application of this methodology requires the commitment and involvement of political and technical teams at the national level. This will result in the institutional strengthening of the planning areas at the central and local levels and the incorporation of the results achieved. Likewise, this will contribute to the domestic dissemination of the results and to feed decision making.

Finally, in relation to the work areas, the following actions were identified:

1. Apply the methodology to other Project Groups or API Projects in order to produce more knowledge and involve more countries. The following proposals were made: the Argentine delegation proposed the API project known as "Argentina-Bolivia West Connection"; while the Peruvian delegation proposed Road Hub No. 1 between Ecuador and Peru. As for API Project known as "Paranaguá-Antofagasta Bioceanic Rail Corridor," which had been proposed, it was agreed not to make headway with it for the time being, as its area of influence is very large and includes countries that have already participated in previous applications.
2. Conduct an evaluation to refine the methodology after achieving a critical mass of applications including most countries.
3. Coordinate this methodology with other planning tools included in PAE. In this regard, a proposal was made to incorporate this instrument into Integration Territorial Programs with a more strategic perspective. The Argentine and Chilean delegations renewed their interest in undertaking a PTI for the API project known as "Agua Negra Binational Tunnel."
4. Define a strategy to disseminate the benefits of applying this methodology and the results attained so far. This methodology is the best expression of the way the COSIPLAN addresses infrastructure impact on territories.

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

Anexo 2: List of Participating Delegations

Anexo 3: Presentation on the application of the EASE methodology to the binational project known Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System.

Anexo 4: Presentation made by Brazil on the results and lessons learned from the application to the Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System project.

Anexo 5: Presentation made by Brazil concerning the technical, economic and environmental feasibility study on the Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System project.

Anexo 6: Presentation made by Uruguay concerning the technical, economic and environmental feasibility study on the Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín and Lagoa dos Patos System project.

Anexo 7: Presentation made by Argentina on the application of the EASE methodology to the Pehuenche Program.