



commission for environmental impact assessment

Embassy of the Netherlands
Section Development Co-operation
attn. Mr. Andre Vermeer
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PO Box 3248
Accra, Ghana

your reference
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your letter of
14 June 2002

our reference
049-099/ ab/Sh/lw

subject
Advisory Guidelines for a Strategic
Environmental Assessment for the
Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy

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Utrecht,
July 2002

Dear Mr. Vermeer,

By letter dated 14 June 2002, on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the Ministry of Environment and Science in Ghana, you invited the Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment (the Commission) to advise on a framework and guidelines for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy. It is my pleasure to submit herewith the advice prepared by a working group of the Commission. I would like to draw your attention to the following points:

During its stay in Ghana, the Commission learnt that the GPRS is an 'open' document. This is positive in the sense that environment, which is now considered in the GPRS as an 'add-on' still can be given enough weight to make proposed interventions more sustainable.

In fact, if the SEA is well managed by the Ministry of Environment, this can also have a positive spin-off for the image of this Ministry. At the moment, EPA is looked at as a controlling agency, whereas the SEA offers the possibility of showing that environment is an important means for developing cross-sectoral opportunities and so-called 'win-win-options'. If EPA manages to identify these opportunities in which both environment and poverty reduction gain, this will contribute positively to its reputation and strengthen the position of the Ministry. The SEA is also a means for the Ministry to build bridges of understanding and co-operation with other Ministries (horizontally) as well with the district administration (vertically).

An important pre-condition for the success of the SEA is the commitment of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to become the 'owner' of the results of the SEA to be able to influence the allocation of funds in agreement with not only social and economic, but also environmental criteria.

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During our interview with the Minister of Planning (chairman of the NDPC), he gave highest priority to the relation between poverty reduction and a healthy environment and he agreed that the ownership of the results of the SEA should be with his Ministry. The NDPC should therefore also indicate when the results of the SEA are to be expected in order to take these into account in crucial decisions.

Finally, I would like to recommend to start the selection of the SEA consultant within due course in order to keep momentum and address expectations raised.

The Commission appreciates to be informed about the use that is made of this advice.

K.J. Beek

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.J. Beek', written in a cursive style.

chairman working group
SEA for GPRS, Ghana