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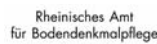
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www.planarch.org

Guiding Principles for Cultural Heritage in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Planarch

The Interreg Planarch project aims to further the protection and management of the cultural heritage, particularly the archaeological heritage, through its greater integration in spatial planning. The Planarch 2 partners (from Belgium, England, France, Germany and The Netherlands) have carried out a review of the cultural heritage component in EIA, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of present practice, in the light of which the guiding principles in this document have been formulated.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Development and related activities can have significant impacts on the environment. Assessing such impacts to minimise significant damage, including effects on the cultural heritage, is fundamental to the spatial planning process. The European Union, through the EIA Directive and more recently the SEA Directive has set out frameworks within which member states should develop their own measures. The guiding principles in this document aim to improve best practice for EIAs in respect of the cultural heritage.

What is Cultural Heritage?

Cultural heritage embraces all those remains and remembrances which link us to our past, whether in the landscape around us or in the arts, languages or traditions. It helps us to understand long term social and environmental change. In the context of EIA it includes physical remains of the past – historic buildings and structures, archaeological sites

and monuments, artefacts, palaeo-environmental deposits, historic landscapes and townscapes, and marine heritage.

Why Cultural Heritage matters

Cultural heritage is an essential part of sustainability. It is non-renewable: once the evidence of the past has been destroyed, it can never be replaced. It is a valuable resource with the potential to increase knowledge and is an excellent vehicle for wider educational objectives. It contributes strongly to people's sense of place and identity. It has important social and economic roles for community development, regeneration, access, leisure and tourism.

Cultural Heritage in EIA

In assessing cultural heritage within EIA procedures the purpose should be to

- minimise loss of and avoid adverse impacts on an important aspect of the environment in which we live.
- ensure that cultural heritage is incorporated in spatial planning, social, economic, education and access strategies affecting the study area.
- improve understanding of cultural heritage and the contribution it can make to broader agenda.
- ensure that, where the cultural heritage cannot be preserved, appropriate investigation, recording and communication is undertaken.

The results of the EIA process are an integral part of the decision-making process.



Guiding Principles

These operational principles are intended to provide a rigorous, robust and reasonable framework for ensuring that cultural heritage is appropriately treated in the EIA process

- 1.** All aspects of cultural heritage shall be covered.
- 2.** Cultural heritage expertise shall be integrated into all stages of EIA, from screening through to implementation.
- 3.** The description of the project requiring assessment shall be sufficiently clear and detailed to allow identification of all impacts that could affect the cultural heritage.
- 4.** The study area shall be large enough to allow a clear understanding of the cultural heritage and the extent of potential impacts upon it.
- 5.** All cultural heritage surveys and investigations shall be of a high standard sufficient to allow informed decisions to be taken.
- 6.** All beneficial and adverse impacts on cultural heritage shall be assessed. These shall include direct, indirect, temporary, permanent and cumulative effects.
- 7.** The assessment of the significance of any impacts on the cultural heritage resource shall take account both of its intrinsic value and how much it will be changed. This shall be explained in relation to relevant international, national and local legislation and policy. The basis for any statements concerning value or importance shall be explicit.
- 8.** The likely effects on cultural heritage assets of alternative scenarios, including doing nothing, shall be considered.
- 9.** A variety of approaches to mitigation shall be considered, including design modification, appropriate investigation and recording measures. Provision shall be made for unforeseen effects. All proposed mitigation shall be realistically achievable and agreed actions, including responsibility for their implementation, shall be fully monitored and documented.
- 10.** All communication relating to cultural heritage in EIAs shall be clear, focused and accessible to the non-specialist. All documentation shall be archived and indexed in a clearly traceable manner.