



Strategic Environmental Assessment as a Tool for Enhancing Implementation & Mainstreaming

**CBD Regional Workshop for the Arab
Countries on Capacity Development on
National Biodiversity Strategies and Action
Plans, Mainstreaming of Biodiversity
Cairo, Egypt 14 - 18 December 2008**



STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



SEA is a decision-support tool aiming at mainstreaming environmental considerations in public decisions and undertakings.

What is SEA?

A **systematic process** for **evaluating** the **environmental** consequences of **proposed** **Public** initiatives in order to ensure they are fully included and appropriately addressed at the **earliest possible stage of decision making** on par with **economic** and **social** considerations.



Adapted from Sadler and Verheem, 1996

What is SEA?

⇒ SEA targets policies, plans & programs





What are Strategic Public Initiatives & Decisions?

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy | Road-map with defined objectives, set priorities, rules and mechanisms to implement the objectives |
| Plan | Priorities, options and measures for resource allocation according to resource suitability and availability, following relevant sectoral and global policies |
| Program | Organized agenda with specification of activities and programmes investments, in the framework of relevant policies and plans |

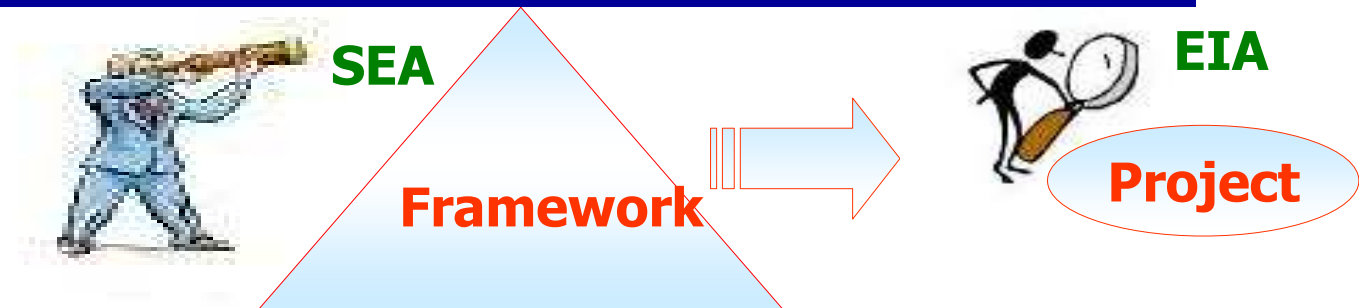


Interrelation between SEA & EIA



- SEA shares its roots and procedures with EIA.
- SEA complements project-based EIA as a mean for enhancing the integration of environmental concerns into higher level planning & decision making processes.
- SEA deals with general issues that EIA can incorporate or analyze more.

SEA vs. EIA



| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SCOPE | Public Sector | Public & private sectors |
| OBJECT | PPP setting <i>framework</i> for future projects & investments | The <i>end</i> is the implementation of a specific project |
| TARGET AUDIENCE | Wide = National, regional, sectoral, affected groups | Limited = site & technology specific |
| OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS | Macro | Micro |



SEA + EIA = proper environmental assessment



The implementation of properly integrated and complementary SEA and EIA processes allows for the application of environmental assessment to all levels of the decision making process, from policy to plan and program formulation and to project implementation.



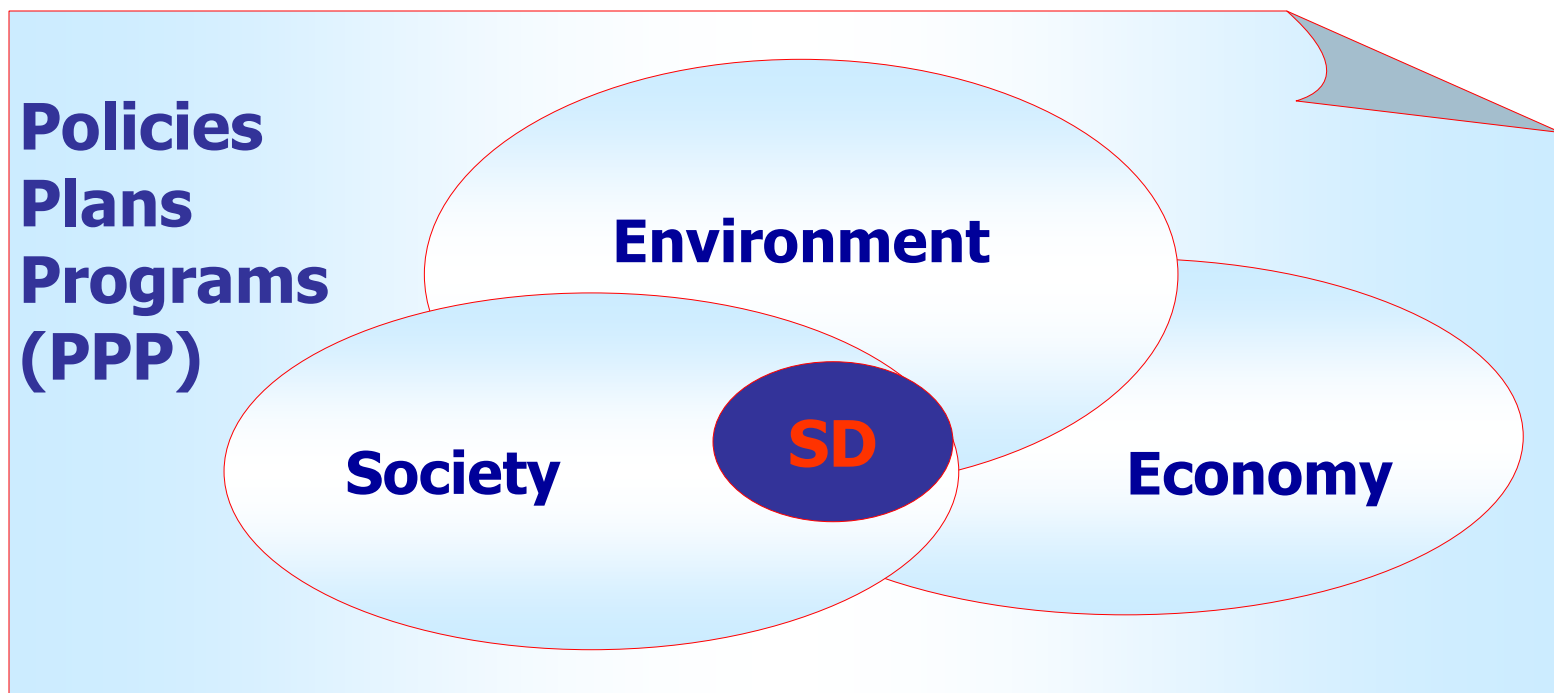
SEA: a step towards an integrated planning approach



- SEA as a planning & decision-aid tool aims to bridge the gap between strategic initiatives and project-level EIA without attempting to replace planning or policy-making mechanism.
- SEA intends to complement these mechanisms by providing a systemic analytical approach which can address issues of resource use, efficiency & sustainability.

SEA & Sustainable Development

Integrate the three pillars of
sustainable development into
public decisions & undertakings





SEA Approaches: 3 Scenarios



- SEA separated from planning
- SEA partially integrated into planning
- SEA fully integrated into planning procedures

Scenario 1

SEA separated from planning

- SEA is a separate process
- SEA based on EIA procedures which are not often compatible with policy-making

Scenario 2

SEA partially integrated into planning

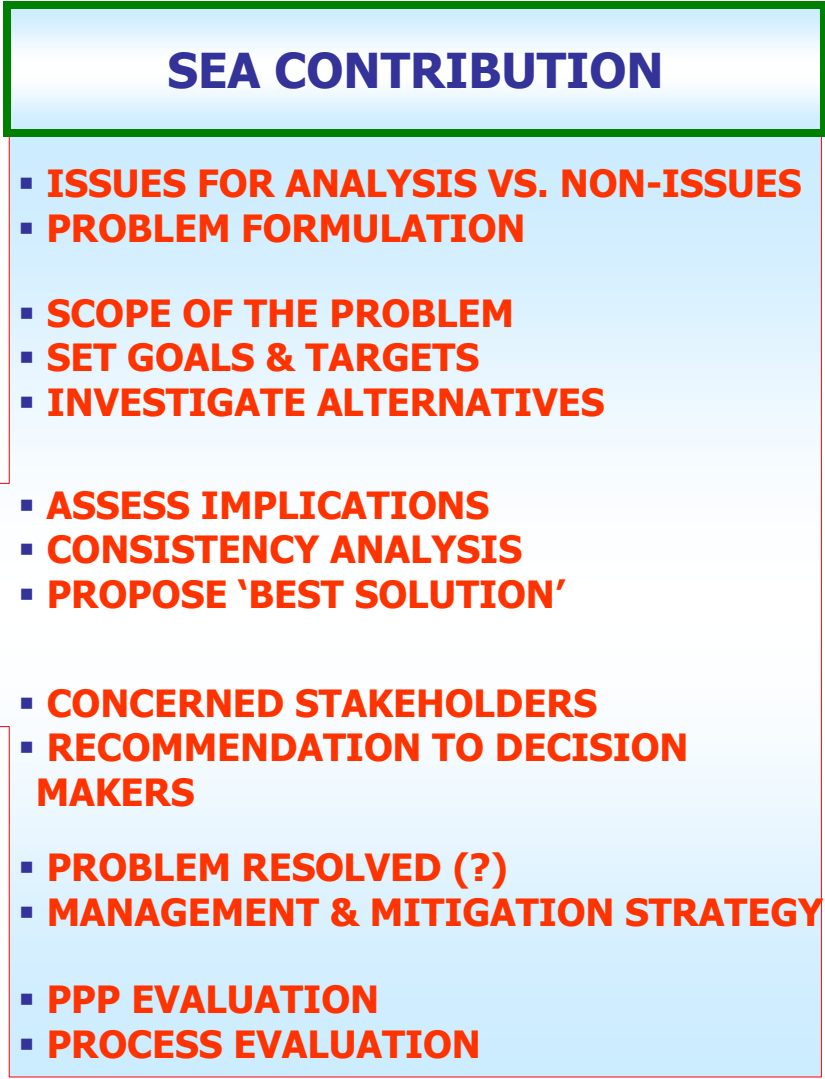
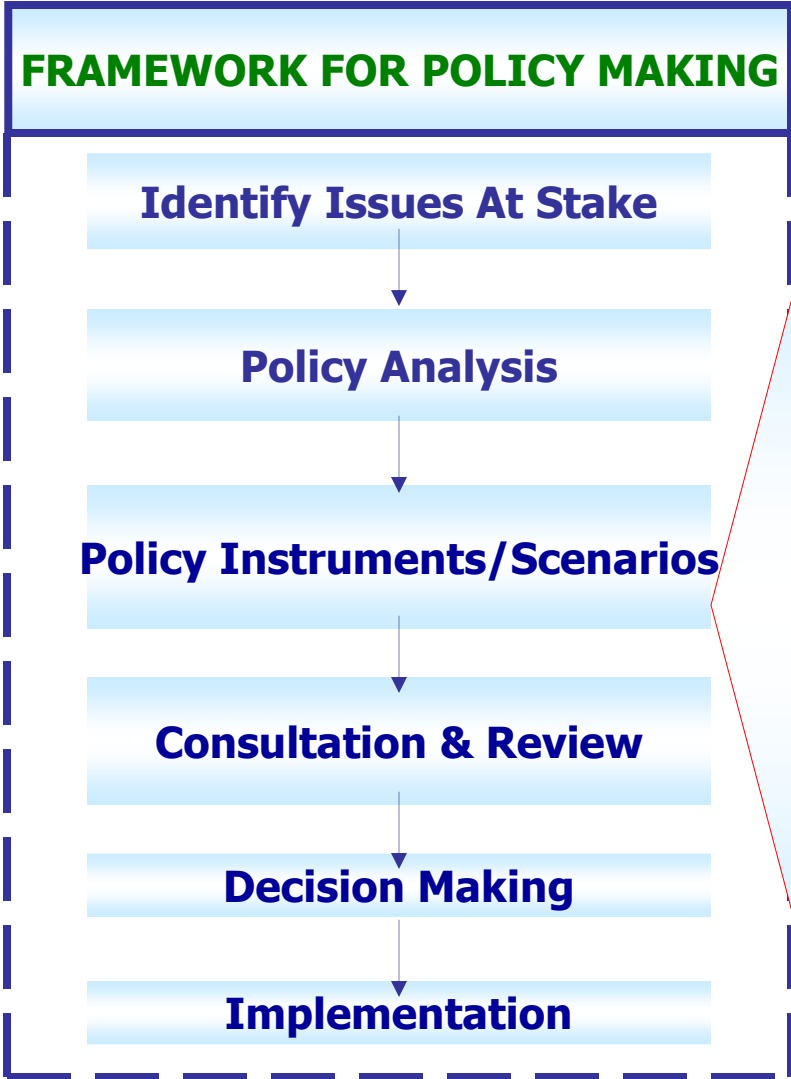
- SEA runs in parallel but independently from decision-making
- Integration in decision-making is crucial
- Successful where planning is well structured

Scenario 3

SEA fully integrated into planning procedures

- SEA is an evaluation tool for proposals
- No separation between SEA & outcomes planning
- No separate reporting procedures; hence effectiveness of SEA cannot be measured.

Conceptual Framework for Integration



Advantages of SEA Application

Incurring Benefits

Saves money & time

Improves efficiency

**More accountability,
transparency
& credibility**

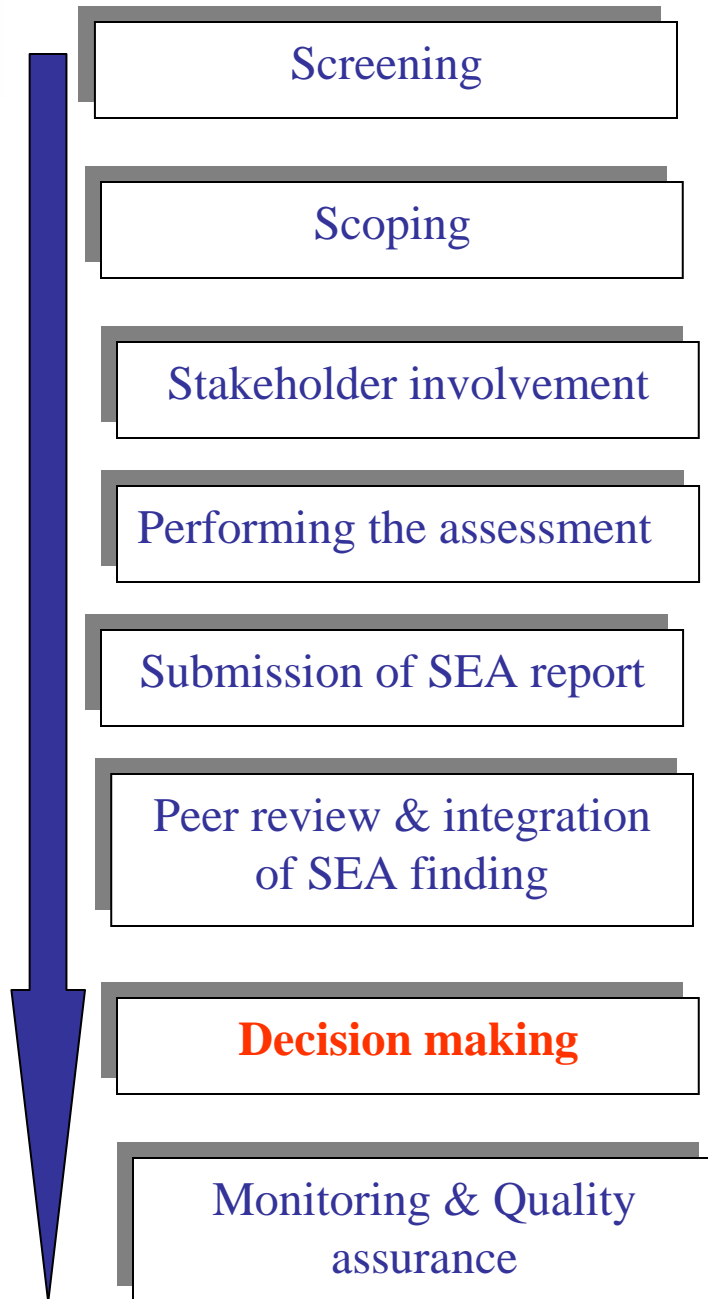
SEA Means

- **Impact anticipation**
- **Early account of concerns & potential liabilities**
- **Risk response preparedness**
- **Consistency of initiatives**
- **Streamlining project EIA**
- **Standard & clear decision making process**
- **Public access to information & participation in decision-making**



SEA Process

- Screening
- Scoping
- Stakeholder involvement
- Performing the assessment & submitting the SEA report
- Peer review & integration of SEA findings
- Decision making
- Monitoring & quality assurance



Does the proposed strategic action affect the environment?

What are the driving forces /issues/ components that should be addressed?

Were the opinion of affected groups taken into consideration?

Were the potential impacts identified & assessed?

What documents & data need to be included & presented in an objective manner?

Were the original set objectives fulfilled & were the stakeholders feedback accounted for?

To decide whether to adopt, amend or reject the proposed plan or program

Did SEA influence decision making process and result in greening public decisions?

International Context

- Adoption of the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC
- Adoption & signature of a new Protocol on SEA & opening its signature to non-UNECE (United Nation Economic Commission for Europe) countries

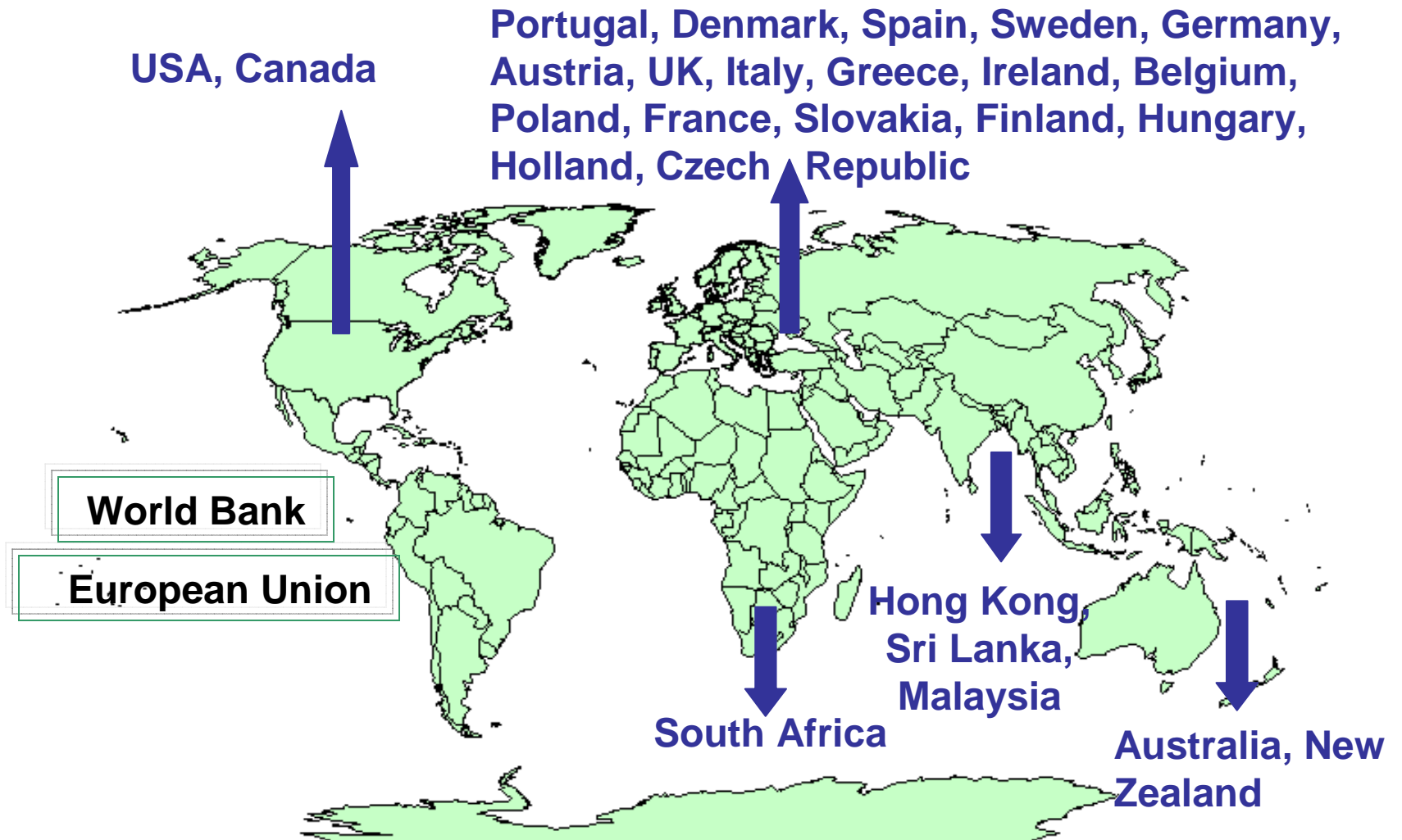


International Context (Suite)



Impact on future international aid & lending activities undertaken by bilateral & multilateral donors.

SEA in the world





SEA & Biodiversity



Integrating Biodiversity into SEA & EIA

A manual prepared by SPNL (Society for the Protection of Nature)

In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment – Lebanon

With funding from:

- IAIA (International Association for Impact Assessment) – CBBIA (Capacity Building in Biodiversity & Impact Assessment)
- European Commission LIFE Third Countries/ United Nations Development Programme

Biodiversity Impact Assessment – Background Document to Decision VIII/28 on the Convention on Biodiversity (*Voluntary Guideline on Biodiversity- Inclusive Impact Assessment*)



SEA & Biodiversity



Chapter 1: Biodiversity

Chapter 2: Biodiversity in Lebanon

Chapter 3: Impact Assessment

Chapter 4: Biodiversity & Impact Assessment

4.1 Multilateral Env. Agreements & Their Relevance to Biodiversity Assessment

4.2 National Legislation & Its Relevance to Biodiversity Assessment

4.3 Integrating Biodiversity into EIA & SEA

4.4 Biodiversity Baseline Studies

4.5 Stakeholders in Biodiversity Assessment in EIA & SEA

4.6 Public Hearing & Public Consultation: Difference & Applications

4.7 Who Carry Out Biodiversity Assessment in EIA & SEA?

4.8 Guidelines for Practitioners & Policy-Makers

4.9 Constraints & Recommendations when Assessing Biodiversity

SEA Ecosystem Issues

- Legal Obligation
 - Protected Areas and Protected Species
 - International Treaties (*such as Ramsar Convention, UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program, Regional Sea Arrangements, etc.,*)
- Impact on Stakeholders and Safeguarding Livelihood, that are part of an Integrated ecosystem
- Cumulative Impacts



Food For Thought

“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us.

When we see land as a commodity to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Aldo Leopold (1887–1948)

American philosopher, teacher, writer & Environmental Campaigner



Acknowledgments

Strategic Environmental Assessment & Land Use

Planning Project (2002-2006)

Funding: EC – LIFE Third Countries

Management: UNDP

Execution: Ministry of Environment, LEBANON