

Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Text with EEA relevance)

Article 1

Directive 2011/92/EU is amended as follows:

- (1) Article 1 is amended as follows:
 - (a) in paragraph 2, the following definition is added:
 - (g) “environmental impact assessment” means a process consisting of:
 - (i) the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report by the developer, as referred to in Article 5(1) and (2);
 - (ii) the carrying out of consultations as referred to in Article 6 and, where relevant, Article 7;
 - (iii) the examination by the competent authority of the information presented in the environmental impact assessment report and any supplementary information provided, where necessary, by the developer in accordance with Article 5(3), and any relevant information received through the consultations under Articles 6 and 7;
 - (iv) the reasoned conclusion by the competent authority on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account the results of the examination referred to in point (iii) and, where appropriate, its own supplementary examination; and
 - (v) the integration of the competent authority's reasoned conclusion into any of the decisions referred to in Article 8a.;
 - (b) paragraph 3 is replaced by the following:
 3. Member States may decide, on a case-by-case basis and if so provided under national law, not to apply this Directive to projects, or parts of projects, having defence as their sole purpose, or to projects having the response to civil emergencies as their sole purpose, if they deem that such application would have an adverse effect on those purposes.;
 - (c) paragraph 4 is deleted;
- (2) Article 2 is amended as follows:
 - (a) paragraphs 1 to 3 are replaced by the following:
 1. Member States shall adopt all measures necessary to ensure that, before development consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an

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assessment with regard to their effects on the environment. Those projects are defined in Article 4.

2 The environmental impact assessment may be integrated into the existing procedures for development consent to projects in the Member States, or, failing this, into other procedures or into procedures to be established to comply with the aims of this Directive.

3 In the case of projects for which the obligation to carry out assessments of the effects on the environment arises simultaneously from this Directive and from Council Directive 92/43/EEC⁽¹⁾ and/or Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and the Council⁽²⁾, Member States shall, where appropriate, ensure that coordinated and/or joint procedures fulfilling the requirements of that Union legislation are provided for.

In the case of projects for which the obligation to carry out assessments of the effects on the environment arises simultaneously from this Directive and Union legislation other than the Directives listed in the first subparagraph, Member States may provide for coordinated and/or joint procedures.

Under the coordinated procedure referred to in the first and second subparagraphs, Member States shall endeavour to coordinate the various individual assessments of the environmental impact of a particular project, required by the relevant Union legislation, by designating an authority for this purpose, without prejudice to any provisions to the contrary contained in other relevant Union legislation.

Under the joint procedure referred to in the first and second subparagraphs, Member States shall endeavour to provide for a single assessment of the environmental impact of a particular project required by the relevant Union legislation, without prejudice to any provisions to the contrary contained in other relevant Union legislation.

The Commission shall provide guidance regarding the setting up of any coordinated or joint procedures for projects that are simultaneously subject to assessments under this Directive and Directives 92/43/EEC, 2000/60/EC, 2009/147/EC or 2010/75/EU.;

(b) in paragraph 4, the first subparagraph is replaced by the following:

4. Without prejudice to Article 7, Member States may, in exceptional cases, exempt a specific project from the provisions laid down in this Directive, where the application of those provisions would result in adversely affecting the purpose of the project, provided the objectives of this Directive are met.;

(c) the following paragraph is added:

5. Without prejudice to Article 7, in cases where a project is adopted by a specific act of national legislation, Member States may exempt that project from the provisions relating to public consultation laid down in this Directive, provided the objectives of this Directive are met.

Member States shall inform the Commission of any application of the exemption referred to in the first subparagraph every two years from 16 May 2017.;

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(3) Article 3 is replaced by the following:

Article 3

1 The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case, the direct and indirect significant effects of a project on the following factors:

- a population and human health;
- b biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;
- c land, soil, water, air and climate;
- d material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape;
- e the interaction between the factors referred to in points (a) to (d).

2 The effects referred to in paragraph 1 on the factors set out therein shall include the expected effects deriving from the vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and/or disasters that are relevant to the project concerned.;

(4) Article 4 is amended as follows:

(a) paragraphs 3 and 4 are replaced by the following:

3. Where a case-by-case examination is carried out or thresholds or criteria are set for the purpose of paragraph 2, the relevant selection criteria set out in Annex III shall be taken into account. Member States may set thresholds or criteria to determine when projects need not undergo either the determination under paragraphs 4 and 5 or an environmental impact assessment, and/or thresholds or criteria to determine when projects shall in any case be made subject to an environmental impact assessment without undergoing a determination set out under paragraphs 4 and 5.

4 Where Member States decide to require a determination for projects listed in Annex II, the developer shall provide information on the characteristics of the project and its likely significant effects on the environment. The detailed list of information to be provided is specified in Annex IIA. The developer shall take into account, where relevant, the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The developer may also provide a description of any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.;

(b) the following paragraphs are added:

5. The competent authority shall make its determination, on the basis of the information provided by the developer in accordance with paragraph 4 taking into account, where relevant, the results of preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than this Directive. The determination shall be made available to the public and:

- a where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is required, state the main reasons for requiring such assessment with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III; or
- b where it is decided that an environmental impact assessment is not required, state the main reasons for not requiring such assessment

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with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III, and, where proposed by the developer, state any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

6 Member States shall ensure that the competent authority makes its determination as soon as possible and within a period of time not exceeding 90 days from the date on which the developer has submitted all the information required pursuant to paragraph 4. In exceptional cases, for instance relating to the nature, complexity, location or size of the project, the competent authority may extend that deadline to make its determination; in that event, the competent authority shall inform the developer in writing of the reasons justifying the extension and of the date when its determination is expected.;

(5) in Article 5, paragraphs 1 to 3 are replaced by the following:

1. Where an environmental impact assessment is required, the developer shall prepare and submit an environmental impact assessment report. The information to be provided by the developer shall include at least:
 - a a description of the project comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the project;
 - b a description of the likely significant effects of the project on the environment;
 - c a description of the features of the project and/or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;
 - d a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the project on the environment;
 - e a non-technical summary of the information referred to in points (a) to (d); and
 - f any additional information specified in Annex IV relevant to the specific characteristics of a particular project or type of project and to the environmental features likely to be affected.

Where an opinion is issued pursuant to paragraph 2, the environmental impact assessment report shall be based on that opinion, and include the information that may reasonably be required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment. The developer shall, with a view to avoiding duplication of assessments, take into account the available results of other relevant assessments under Union or national legislation, in preparing the environmental impact assessment report.

2. Where requested by the developer, the competent authority, taking into account the information provided by the developer in particular on the specific characteristics of the project, including its location and technical capacity, and its likely impact on the environment, shall issue an opinion on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included by the developer in the environmental impact assessment report in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article. The competent authority shall consult the authorities referred to in Article 6(1) before it gives its opinion.

Member States may also require the competent authorities to give an opinion as referred to in the first subparagraph, irrespective of whether the developer so requests.

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- 3 In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental impact assessment report:
- a the developer shall ensure that the environmental impact assessment report is prepared by competent experts;
 - b the competent authority shall ensure that it has, or has access as necessary to, sufficient expertise to examine the environmental impact assessment report; and
 - c where necessary, the competent authority shall seek from the developer supplementary information, in accordance with Annex IV, which is directly relevant to reaching the reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the project on the environment.;
- (6) Article 6 is amended as follows:
- (a) paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:
 1. Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that the authorities likely to be concerned by the project by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities or local and regional competences are given an opportunity to express their opinion on the information supplied by the developer and on the request for development consent, taking into account, where appropriate, the cases referred to in Article 8a(3). To that end, Member States shall designate the authorities to be consulted, either in general terms or on a case-by-case basis. The information gathered pursuant to Article 5 shall be forwarded to those authorities. Detailed arrangements for consultation shall be laid down by the Member States.;
 - (b) in paragraph 2, the introductory part is replaced by the following:
 2. In order to ensure the effective participation of the public concerned in the decision-making procedures, the public shall be informed electronically and by public notices or by other appropriate means, of the following matters early in the environmental decision-making procedures referred to in Article 2(2) and, at the latest, as soon as information can reasonably be provided.;
 - (c) paragraph 5 is replaced by the following:
 5. The detailed arrangements for informing the public, for example by bill posting within a certain radius or publication in local newspapers, and for consulting the public concerned, for example by written submissions or by way of a public inquiry, shall be determined by the Member States. Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the relevant information is electronically accessible to the public, through at least a central portal or easily accessible points of access, at the appropriate administrative level.;
 - (d) paragraph 6 is replaced by the following:
 6. Reasonable time-frames for the different phases shall be provided for, allowing sufficient time for:
 - a informing the authorities referred to in paragraph 1 and the public; and

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- b the authorities referred to in paragraph 1 and the public concerned to prepare and participate effectively in the environmental decision-making, subject to the provisions of this Article.;
 - (e) the following paragraph is added:
 - 7. The time-frames for consulting the public concerned on the environmental impact assessment report referred to in Article 5(1) shall not be shorter than 30 days.;
- (7) Article 7 is amended as follows:
 - (a) paragraph 4 is replaced by the following:
 - 4. The Member States concerned shall enter into consultations regarding, inter alia, the potential transboundary effects of the project and the measures envisaged to reduce or eliminate such effects and shall agree on a reasonable time- frame for the duration of the consultation period.
 - Such consultations may be conducted through an appropriate joint body.;
 - (b) paragraph 5 is replaced by the following:
 - 5. The detailed arrangements for implementing paragraphs 1 to 4 of this Article, including the establishment of time-frames for consultations, shall be determined by the Member States concerned, on the basis of the arrangements and time-frames referred to in Article 6(5) to (7), and shall be such as to enable the public concerned in the territory of the affected Member State to participate effectively in the environmental decision-making procedures referred to in Article 2(2) for the project.;
- (8) Article 8 is replaced by the following:

Article 8

The results of consultations and the information gathered pursuant to Articles 5 to 7 shall be duly taken into account in the development consent procedure.;
- (9) the following Article is inserted:

Article 8a

 - 1 The decision to grant development consent shall incorporate at least the following information:
 - a the reasoned conclusion referred to in Article 1(2)(g)(iv);
 - b any environmental conditions attached to the decision, a description of any features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset significant adverse effects on the environment as well as, where appropriate, monitoring measures.
 - 2 The decision to refuse development consent shall state the main reasons for the refusal.
 - 3 In the event Member States make use of the procedures referred to in Article 2(2) other than the procedures for development consent, the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, as appropriate, shall be deemed to be fulfilled when any decision issued in the context of those procedures contains the information referred to in those paragraphs and there are mechanisms in place which enable the fulfilment of the requirements of paragraph 6 of this Article.

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4 In accordance with the requirements referred to in paragraph 1(b), Member States shall ensure that the features of the project and/or measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset significant adverse effects on the environment are implemented by the developer, and shall determine the procedures regarding the monitoring of significant adverse effects on the environment.

The type of parameters to be monitored and the duration of the monitoring shall be proportionate to the nature, location and size of the project and the significance of its effects on the environment.

Existing monitoring arrangements resulting from Union legislation other than this Directive and from national legislation may be used if appropriate, with a view to avoiding duplication of monitoring.

5 Member States shall ensure that the competent authority takes any of the decisions referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3 within a reasonable period of time.

6 The competent authority shall be satisfied that the reasoned conclusion referred to in Article 1(2)(g)(iv), or any of the decisions referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, is still up to date when taking a decision to grant development consent. To that effect, Member States may set time-frames for the validity of the reasoned conclusion referred to in Article 1(2)(g)(iv) or any of the decisions referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article.;

(10) in Article 9, paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:

1. When a decision to grant or refuse development consent has been taken, the competent authority or authorities shall promptly inform the public and the authorities referred to in Article 6(1) thereof, in accordance with the national procedures, and shall ensure that the following information is available to the public and to the authorities referred to in Article 6(1), taking into account, where appropriate, the cases referred to in Article 8a(3):

- a the content of the decision and any conditions attached thereto as referred to in Article 8a(1) and (2);
- b the main reasons and considerations on which the decision is based, including information about the public participation process. This also includes the summary of the results of the consultations and the information gathered pursuant to Articles 5 to 7 and how those results have been incorporated or otherwise addressed, in particular the comments received from the affected Member State referred to in Article 7.;

(11) the following Article is inserted:

Article 9a

Member States shall ensure that the competent authority or authorities perform the duties arising from this Directive in an objective manner and do not find themselves in a situation giving rise to a conflict of interest.

Where the competent authority is also the developer, Member States shall at least implement, within their organisation of administrative competences, an appropriate separation between conflicting functions when performing the duties arising from this Directive.;

(12) in Article 10, the first paragraph is replaced by the following:

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Without prejudice to Directive 2003/4/EC, the provisions of this Directive shall not affect the obligation on the competent authorities to respect the limitations imposed by national laws, regulations and administrative provisions, and accepted legal practices with regard to commercial and industrial confidentiality, including intellectual property, and the safeguarding of the public interest.;

- (13) the following Article is inserted:

Article 10a

Member States shall lay down rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the national provisions adopted pursuant to this Directive. The penalties thus provided for shall be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.;

- (14) in Article 12, paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

2. In particular, every six years from 16 May 2017 Member States shall inform the Commission, where such data are available, of:
- a the number of projects referred to in Annexes I and II made subject to an environmental impact assessment in accordance with Articles 5 to 10;
 - b the breakdown of environmental impact assessments according to the project categories set out in Annexes I and II;
 - c the number of projects referred to in Annex II made subject to a determination in accordance with Article 4(2);
 - d the average duration of the environmental impact assessment process;
 - e general estimates on the average direct costs of environmental impact assessments, including the impact from the application of this Directive to SMEs.;

- (15) the Annexes to Directive 2011/92/EU are amended as set out in the Annex to this Directive.

Article 2

1 Without prejudice to Article 3, Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive by 16 May 2017.

When Member States adopt those provisions, they shall contain a reference to this Directive or be accompanied by such a reference on the occasion of their official publication. Member States shall determine how such reference is to be made.

2 Member States shall communicate to the Commission the text of the main provisions of national law which they adopt in the field covered by this Directive.

Article 3

1 Projects in respect of which the determination referred to in Article 4(2) of Directive 2011/92/EU was initiated before 16 May 2017 shall be subject to the obligations referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2011/92/EU prior to its amendment by this Directive.

- 2 Projects shall be subject to the obligations referred to in Article 3 and Articles 5 to 11 of Directive 2011/92/EU prior to its amendment by this Directive where, before 16 May 2017:
- a the procedure regarding the opinion referred to in Article 5(2) of Directive 2011/92/EU was initiated; or
 - b the information referred to in Article 5(1) of Directive 2011/92/EU was provided.

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Article 4

This Directive shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Article 5

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Strasbourg, 16 April 2014.

For the European Parliament

The President

M. SCHULZ

For the Council

The President

D. KOURKOULAS

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- (1) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ([OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7](#)).
- (2) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds ([OJ L 20, 26.1.2010, p. 7](#)).';