Strategic Environmental Assessment – 3 credits
(Compulsory course)

Spring semester, 2020-2021

Cooordinator	**Nguyen Thi Van Ha**
Credits	4.5 ETCS (Selective course), 33.75 in-class hours
Lecturers	Nguyen Thi Van Ha (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)
	Nguyen Lu Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)
	Thai Phuong Vu (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)
	Pham Thi Diem Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)
	Tran Thi Bich Phuong (HCMUNRE, Vietnam)
Level	MSc and PhD courses
Host institution	Faculty of Environment, HCMUNRE, Vietnam
Course duration	15 weeks (Fall 2021 -2022)

Summary

The aim of the course is to present and discuss key concepts of SEA, and promote an understanding of environmental integration in strategic planning and decision making across key actors. The course is concerned with the general issue of integrating environmental sustainability considerations in strategic planning and decision-making, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), with a particular focus on the role of institutions, and the role of norms, values and behavior for attaining sustainable development.

Concepts from decision- and policy-making theories are introduced to explain the general setting for decision-making of strategic actions. This includes analyzing decision-making in policies, and investment plans and programs. The course teaches skills that are useful and required for professional use. It investigates the role of institutions, and political-economy factors for large companies' and government agencies' planning, decision-making and effective environmental management. Further, it explores a wide range of examples from developed and developing countries. The students explore why environmental considerations are often poorly integrated in strategic planning and policymaking, and learn how SEA approaches can be adapted and designed to different contexts. The course also deals with legal aspects and frameworks of different countries applying SEA.

Target student audiences
Master or PhD students majoring in environmental engineering, environmental sciences, environmental management, etc.

Prerequisites

Required courses (or equivalents): Environmental Management, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Aims and objectives

The course is aimed to provide knowledge and practical application of concepts, history, methodologies and research tools appropriate for assessing potential environmental impacts and mitigation for a strategy, a master plan, or a program before giving the decision on approval of them or commissioning them in sustainability development orientation.

General learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, successful students will achieve the following course expected learning outcomes (CELO):

CELO	CELO Description
Knowledge and Understanding:	
CELO1	Understand SEA role and its contribution into planning process, decision making and sustainable development
CELO2	Understand SEA procedures, key components and methodologies and tools
CELO3	Analyze SEA legislation framework, institution analysis and stakeholder involvement
CELO4	Identify gaps between theory and practice of SEA, between government and donors or international investment
CELO5	Prepare ToR, conduct SEA for specific case study or sectors
Skills outcome	
CELO6	Work in group to prepare one SEA and present it to other group
CELO7	Prepare and Review SEA

Overview of sessions and teaching methods
The course will make most of interactive and self-reflective methods of teaching and learning and, where possible, avoid standing lectures and presentations.

Learning methods	- Video presentations - Interviews, surveys, fieldtrip, group work - Project Based Learning - Problem Based Learning - Play role - Stakeholder Analysis - Group based learning - Scenarios analysis - Case studies

Overview of learning sessions

Topic	Description	Credit hours	Lectures	Practice and Discussion
Topic 1	Course description Introduction to SEA; Env problems and Systems	1 2	1 2	0
Topic 2	SEA and other environmental assessment tools and planning cycle and project cycles	3	2	1
Topic 3	Key concepts of SEA- phases and procedural steps	6	5	1
Topic 4	National system for SEA, Legal framework	3	2	1
Topic 5	Conducting SEA -Building national SEA system – Institutional analysis	6	5	1
Topic 6	SEA tools for screening and scoping	3	2	1
Topic 7	Methodologies to do SEA	3	2	1
Topic 8	Conducting SEA- Participation, stakeholder representation	3	2	1
Topic 9	Conducting SEA- TOR and review	3	2	1
	How to do SEA (5) -Evaluation and follow up SEA effectiveness	3	2	1
Topic 10	SEA in Practice	8		8
	Quiz	1		1

		Total	45	27	18

Course workload

The table below summarizes course workload distribution:

Activities	Learning outcomes	Assessment	Estimated workload (hours)
In-class activities (33.75 hours)			
Lectures	Understanding theories, concepts, methodology and tools	Class participation	10
Moderated in-class discussions	Understanding various policy and management contexts, stakeholder analysis and common problems in preparation of Strategic Environment Assessment	Class participation and preparedness for discussions	10
In-class assignments, field assignment	Working in group for scenarios analysis assignment in class. Working in group for preparing an SEA for a selected case	Class participation and preparedness for assignments	10
Reading and discussion of assigned papers for seminars and preparation for lectures	Familiarity with and ability to critically and creatively discuss key concepts, tools and methods as presented in the literature	Class participation, creative and active contribution to discussion	2.5
Group presentation	Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating and defending the ideas presented in report	Quality of group assignments and individual presentations	5
Independent work (75 hours)			
Group work: - Contribution to the group case-study projects - Contribution to the preparation	Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating information to all participants	Quality of group assignments and individual presentations	20

and delivery of individual presentation - Contribution to the web-application	Select one SEA report, read and evaluate the quality of report; withdraw the lessons which could be transferred to Viet Nam and write an essay about this	Quality of developed essay; essay should not more than 2 page of A4	
Course group assignment	Ability to conceptualize and frame an environmental governance problem, find related literature and data, interpret data, use the concepts, tools and methods covered in the course, and draw policy/management relevant conclusions Select one case study and work in group to prepare the SEA TOR; and SEA framework	Quality of developed essay	40
Group presentation	Ability to interpret data, to analyze audience, and to use the concepts, tools, and methods for communicating and defending the ideas presented in report	Quality of group assignments and individual presentations	15
Total			*113.75*

Grading

The students' performance will be based on the following:

Assessment	• Progress assessment (30%): - Quiz/Midterm examination (10%): students have to complete the quiz or Mid-term report. - Homework (20%): Essay on SEA report analysis and then withdrawn the learnt lessons which could be transferred to Viet Nam or developing countries. • Final assessment (70%): - Group report (40%): The students will be divided into groups of 2-3 students and choose one case study to develop SEA TOR and SEA framework. - Final examination (30%)

Evaluation   A (8.5 – 10)
                  B (7.0 – 8.4)
                  C (5.5 – 6.9)
                  D (4.0 – 5.4)

Course schedule
The overall schedule is provided below:

Course schedule

Week	Lecture topic	Contents	Lecturer
1	Course introduction;	Course rationale, objectives. Presentation of students, teachers, etc. Formalities and practicalities Intro to assignments and literature seminars	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
	Introduction to SEA; Env problems and Systems	Why SEA? Rationale. Introduction to systems: technical, social, environmental, economic systems	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
	What is SEA?	SEA tools, Identifying alternatives, predicting, evaluating and mitigating env impacts, documentation, implementation, monitoring	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
2	SEA and other environmental assessment tools and planning cycle and project cycles	The link between SEA and EIA, ERA, EP, etc. The integration of SEA and planning cycle The integration of SEA and project cycle	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
3 -4	Key concepts of SEA- phases and procedural steps	Screening, scoping, baseline, identifying and problems, stakeholders, decision, monitoring etc.	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Pham Thi Diem Phuong
	How to do SEA - the SEA process (1)	Setting the context for SEA: screening, scoping, baselines, identifying environmental problems	
5	National system for SEA, Legal framework	National system and legislation framework on SEA	Nguyen Lu Phuong Tran Thi Bich Phuong
		Case study - Vietnamese legislation for SEA	Tran Thi Bich Phuong
6	Conducting SEA - Building national SEA system –	The role of institutions in SEA and implementation? How to undertake institutional analysis? Institutions for	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Tran Thi Bich Phuong

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

	Institutional analysis	national SEA systems? Functions of national SEA system Gap analysis Good governance Institutional analysis	
7		Institutional analysis for SEA, EIA and EPP – Case study	Tran Thi Bich Phuong
8	SEA tools for screening and scoping	SEA screening – identifying key environmental issues	Thai Phuong Vu
		SEA scoping – identifying strategic issues	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Pham Thi Diem Phuong
9	Methodologies to do SEA	Methodologies to do SEA	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
		SEA scoping - Case study exercise	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Pham Thi Diem Phuong
10	Conducting SEA-Participation, stakeholder representation	Approaches and challenges to stakeholders Involvement of the public, strengthening voice of the poor, constituencies, tools for participation and stakeholder involvement	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Pham Thi Diem Phuong
11	Conducting SEA-TOR and review	Drafting ToR SEA review process and criteria Permits and appeal	Nguyen Lu Phuong
12	How to do SEA (5) -Evaluation and follow up SEA effectiveness	Evaluation, SEA follow-up and monitoring of implementation; SEA effectiveness Monitoring SEA Role of Court, MONRE	Nguyen Thi Van Ha
13-15	SEA in Practice	Presentation of examples of "real" SEAs Students make short presentations of SEA applications from their respective countries	Nguyen Thi Van Ha Thai Phuong Vu

Course assignments

Course assignments will constitute a multi-part project:

- Assignment #1 (mostly in-class) – Screening and scoping of SEA case study.
- Assignment #2 (mostly in-class) – Institutional analysis for SEA case study.
- Assignment #3 (mostly in-class) – Scenarios analysis for SEA case study
- Assignment #4 (mostly in-class) – Play role as a review committee member for SEA case study

Literature

Ahmed, Kulsum and Sanchez-Triana, 2008. *Strategic Environmental Assessment for Policies – An Instrument for Good Governance*, World Bank, Washington DC. (219 pages).
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRANETENVIRONMENT/1705772-1210788188539/21819527/SEA_FOR_POLICIES.pdf

Sadler, Barry; Aschemann, Ralf; Dusik, Jiri; Fishcher, B. Thomas; Partidário, R. Maria and Rob Verheem, 2011. Handbook of Strategic Environmental Assessment. Taylor and Francis, USA, 589 pp.

OECD, 2006. Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment: Good practice guidance for development co-operation OECD DAC Guidelines and reference series, OECD, 160 pages; http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/21/37353858.pdf

Schmidt, Michael; Glasson, John; Emmelin, Lars and Hendrike Helbron, 2008. Standards and Thresholds for Impact Assessment. Environmental Protection in the European Union ISSN 1613-8694. 487pp.

Therivél, Riki, 2010. *Strategic Environmental Assessment in Action*. Second edition, Earthscan, UK. (335 pages)

Optional Books and Scientific Papers:
Engert, S., Rauter, R., and Baumgartner, R. J. (2016). Exploring the Integration of Corporate Sustainability into Strategic Management: A Literature Review. *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 112(Part 4), 2833-2850.
http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652615011208

Kørnøv, Lone and Wil Thissen (2000) Rationality in decision- and policy-making: implications for strategic environmental assessment. Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal 18 (3) pp. 191–200

Schmidt, Michael; João, Elsa and Eike Albrecht (2005), Eike Implementing strategic Environmental Assessment. ISSN 1613 -8694. Springer Berlin, Heidelberg. 733 pp.

Slunge, Daniel, and Thi Huyen Tran Trang; 2014. Challenges to institutionalizing strategic environmental assessment: The case of Vietnam, *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, Vol 48, pp 53-61.