Auditing the Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

(2)

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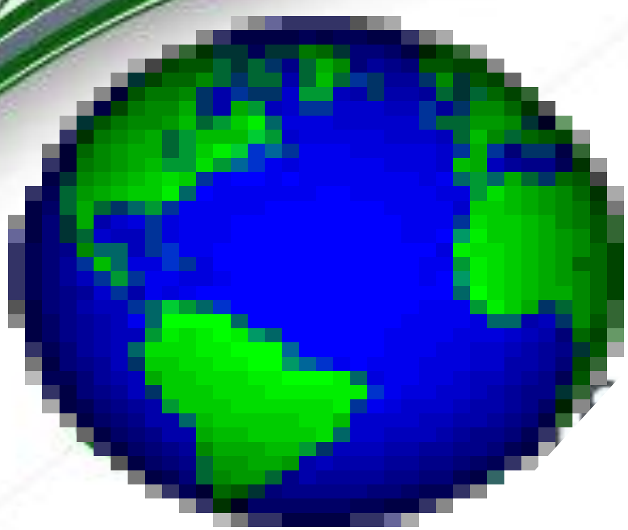
Selecting an MEA to audit



Selecting an MEA to audit

- If SAIs have the mandate to audit MEAs, it still is impossible for SAIs to audit all MEAs respective governments have ratified. There are simply too many for an in-depth examination by SAIs of every one of them.

Selecting an MEA to audit

- Choosing the subject of audits carefully and systematically is a **<u>precondition for "effectiveness" of audits</u>**.
- When cross-border co-operation between SAIs is to succeed, clear starting points and **<u>criteria for choosing a subject</u>** are necessary.

Selecting an MEA to audit

Seven c mber
of SAIs

I. Avail
II. Signs
III. Envir
IV. Oblig
V. Perio
VI. Strict
VII. Important coming events

Seven criteria for choosing an MEA to audit

national implementation of agreements

- Available information on an MEA
- Signs of non-compliance with an MEA

characteristics of MEAs

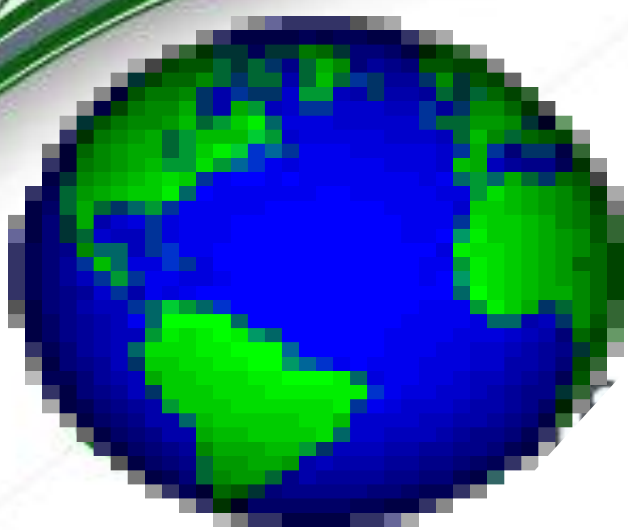
- Environmental risks underlying an MEA
- Obligation to comply with an MEA
- Period of implementation of an MEA
- Strictness of an MEA

topicality and timeliness of an audit report

- Important coming events

- Beside criteria that mentioned to determine which MEA to audit and how to audit them, SAIs may find it more important to audit an environmental issue of current importance to its country and then look at relevant MEAs that have been signed and/or ratified rather than first choosing to audit a particular MEA.

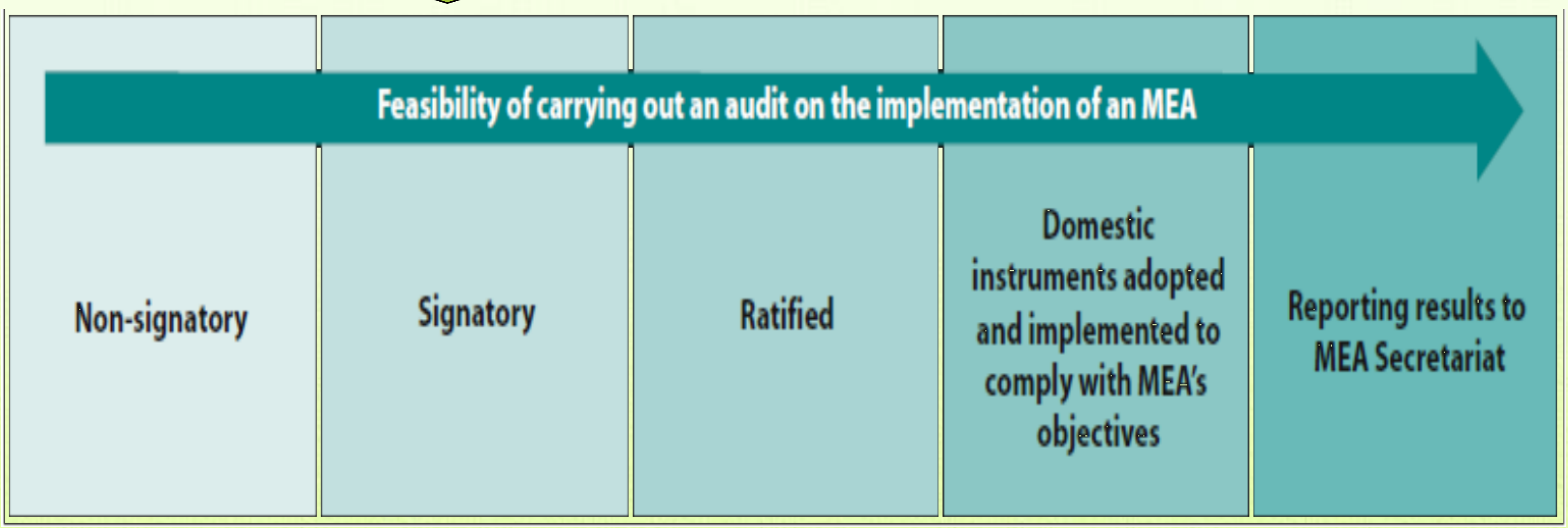
Domestic (national) MEAs audit



Domestic (national) MEAs audit

- The extent to which SAIs can audit MEAs will depend on:
  - the SAI’s mandate and on a country’s government structure
  - the extent to which a state has translated its obligation to an MEA into domestic tools

In terms of feasibility of formulating robust audit criteria relating to an MEA, there exists this spectrum according to whether a state has: not signed; signed; ratified; adopted domestic instruments to implement an MEA's objectives; and whether it is reporting its results to an MEA Secretariat.



Domestic (national) MEAs audit

- **It is significantly easier** to audit a state's implementation of an MEA when it has ratified it and is reporting on its results to an MEA Secretariat rather than to audit an MEA to which a state is still not formally a Party, although there are examples of countries auditing MEAs as Non-Parties.

⇨ **Anyway in each case there are ways to audit**

Ways to audit MEAs

- If a country is not a Party to an MEA ➲
    - Agreements can be referred as a best practice or a benchmark for better environmental governance.
    - Also, the reasons not to be the "signatory" for the MEA can be exercised and brought to public attention.

Ways to audit MEAs

- If a country is a Party to an MEA ➲

  Whether the government has developed sufficient and appropriate domestic policy and procedures

Ways to audit MEAs

- <u>When the domestic policy and procedures are in place</u> ➲

    Whether the policy is implemented in the most efficient, economic, and effective manner

Ways to audit MEAs

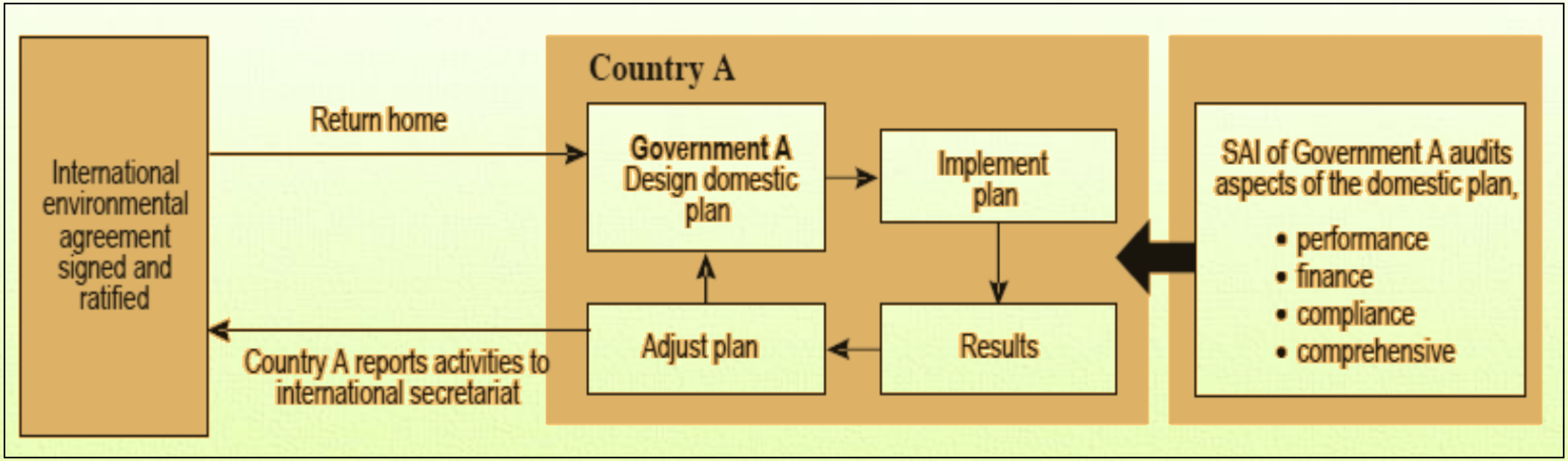
- <u>If periodic reporting required under an MEA</u> ➲

  Is reporting being done in a <u>timely</u> fashion, or if the information provided is <u>meeting the spirit and intent of the requirements</u> (validating the reporting by an independent audit)

Exercise 1

Regarding the criteria for selecting an MEA to audit, select one or two MEAs to audit in your SAI. For each criterion write your evaluation.

However, auditing MEAs like other environmental auditing is not significantly different in audit methodology and approach and the full range of auditing tools in all three types of audits — financial, compliance and performance — can be applied to it. The figure illustrates the general process of a domestic auditing of an international agreement.



This is the end of second session

Thank You