

# Environmental Impact Assessment & Stakeholder Consultation

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## *Definition of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)*

Environmental Impact Assessment can be defined as:

*The process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made.*

## *Objectives of EIA*

- To ensure that environmental considerations are explicitly addressed and incorporated into the development decision making process;
- To anticipate and avoid, minimize or offset the adverse significant biophysical, social and other relevant effects of development proposals;
- To protect the productivity and capacity of natural systems and the ecological processes which maintain their functions; and
- To promote development that is sustainable and optimizes resource use and management opportunities.

## *EIA Basic Principles*

Environmental Impact Assessment should be:

***Purposive*** - the process should inform decision making and result in appropriate levels of environmental protection and community well-being.

***Rigorous*** - the process should apply “best practicable” science, employing methodologies and techniques appropriate to address the problems being investigated.

***Practical*** - the process should result in information and outputs which assist with problem solving and are acceptable to and able to be implemented by proponents.

***Relevant*** - the process should provide sufficient, reliable and usable information for development planning and decision making.

**Cost-Effective** - the process should achieve the objectives of EIA within the limits of available information, time, resources and methodology.

**Efficient** - the process should impose the minimum cost burdens in terms of time and finance on proponents and participants consistent with meeting accepted requirements and objectives of EIA.

**Focussed** - the process should concentrate on significant environmental effects and key issues; i.e., the matters that need to be taken into account in making decisions.

**Adaptive** - the process should be adjusted to the realities, issues and circumstances of the proposals under review without compromising the integrity of the process, and be iterative, incorporating lessons learned throughout the proposal's life cycle.

**Participative** - the process should provide appropriate opportunities to inform and involve the interested and affected publics, and their inputs and concerns should be addressed explicitly in the documentation and decision making.

**Inter-disciplinary** - the process should ensure that the appropriate techniques and experts in the relevant bio-physical and socio-economic disciplines are employed, including use of traditional knowledge as relevant.

**Credible** - the process should be carried out with professionalism, rigor, fairness, objectivity, impartiality and balance, and be subject to independent checks and verification.

**Integrated** - the process should address the interrelationships of social, economic and biophysical aspects.

**Transparent** - the process should have clear, easily understood requirements for EIA content; ensure public access to information; identify the factors that are to be taken into account in decision making; and acknowledge limitations and difficulties.

**Systematic** - the process should result in full consideration of all relevant information on the affected environment, of proposed alternatives and their impacts, and of the measures necessary to monitor and investigate residual effects.

## **EIA Operating Principles**

The EIA process should be applied:

- As early as possible in decision making and throughout the life cycle of the proposed activity;
- To all development proposals that may cause potentially significant effects;
- To biophysical impacts and relevant socio-economic factors, including health, culture, gender, lifestyle, age, and cumulative effects consistent with the concept and principles of sustainable development;
- To provide for the involvement and input of communities and industries affected by a proposal, as well as the interested public;

- In accordance with internationally agreed measures and activities.

Specifically the EIA process should provide for:

**Screening** - to determine whether or not a proposal should be subject to EIA and, if so, at what level of detail.

**Scoping** - to identify the issues and impacts that are likely to be important and to establish terms of reference for EIA.

**Examination of Alternatives** - to establish the preferred or most environmentally sound and benign option for achieving proposal objectives.

**Impact Analysis** - to identify and predict the likely environmental, social and other related effects of the proposal.

**Mitigation and Impact Management** - to establish the measures that are necessary to avoid, minimize or offset predicted adverse impacts and, where appropriate, to incorporate these into an environmental management plan or system.

**Evaluation of Significance** - to determine the relative importance and acceptability of residual impacts (i.e., impacts that cannot be mitigated).

**Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Report** - to document clearly and impartially impacts of the proposal, the proposed measures for mitigation, the significance of effects, and the concerns of the interested public and the communities affected by the proposal.

**Review of the EIS** - to determine whether the report meets its terms of reference, provides a satisfactory assessment of the proposal(s) and contains the information required for decision making.

**Decision Making** - to approve or reject the proposal and to establish the terms and conditions for its implementation.

**Follow up** - to ensure that the terms and condition of approval are met; to monitor the impacts of development and the effectiveness of mitigation measures; to strengthen future EIA applications and mitigation measures; and, where required, to undertake environmental audit and process evaluation to optimize environmental management.

## **CDM PDD & EIA**

The Section D of the PDD relates to information on Environmental impacts of the proposed CDM project. This includes:

- Documentation on the analysis of the environmental impacts, including trans-boundary impacts

- If environmental impacts are considered significant by the project participants or the host Party, need to provide conclusions and all references to support documentation of an environmental impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the procedures as required by the host Party

If an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required by law and/or if an EIA has been carried out, details of the EIA should either be provided in a separate document as an attachment to the PDD if the language is English, or be available for the DOE to validate upon request if the documents are in the local language.

The environmental impact section of PDDs of some of the registered project activities contain information on:

- Name and description of relevant national laws and regulations on the environmental impact (Environmental Impact Assessment / standards) required by the national or local authority
- Description of environmental impacts study on environment and local community
- Analysis of environmental impacts (positive or negative) of before and after project implementation
- Results of impacts in each category such as air and water quality, noise level, natural resources, human settlement etc.,
- Result of monitoring of EIA required on CDM activity
- Conclusion of whether the project activity leads to any significant negative impact or not
- Summary of the EIA (including the scopes of EIA, the magnitude and frequency of impacts, the result of EIA and actions to mitigate impacts).

## *CDM PDD & Stakeholder Consultation*

Stakeholder consultations are an essential part of the Clean Development Mechanism process, both during the design phase and in the validation phase of the project. Although The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Guidelines on CDM Modalities and Procedures (M&P) clearly describe how stakeholder's consultation should take place in the validation phase, limited guidance is provided on the process during the design phase of the project.

### *Purpose of Stakeholder Consultation*

The project stakeholders are the individuals, groups and communities likely to be affected by a project, for instance, local residents, town councils, NGO's, competitors, possible suppliers and employees. They originate from a variety of groups and potentially include parties not in favour of the proposed project.

Stakeholder consultation is the whole process of informing relevant stakeholders about the project and its impacts and addressing their concerns. A stakeholder consultation

process should provide a forum where relevant information is disseminated to, and asked from, the stakeholder. It is a forum where social, environmental and other issues that affect stakeholders can be addressed.

## *Process of Stakeholder Consultation*

A consultation process can be approached in various ways. A project developer may use public consultation as a way of improving the quality of its operations, by involving stakeholders in the decision-making process. As a minimum, project developers should make sure that the host country's requirements for stakeholder consultations are met.

Stakeholder consultations are most widely used in relation to the assessment of environmental impacts of larger projects. Broadly, there are three different types of public involvement:

- **Informing:** a one-way flow from the project developer to the public
- **Consulting:** a two-way flow of information, with opportunities for the public to express its views
- **Participating:** the project proponent and the public share analysis and agenda setting, and the public are involved in decision-making

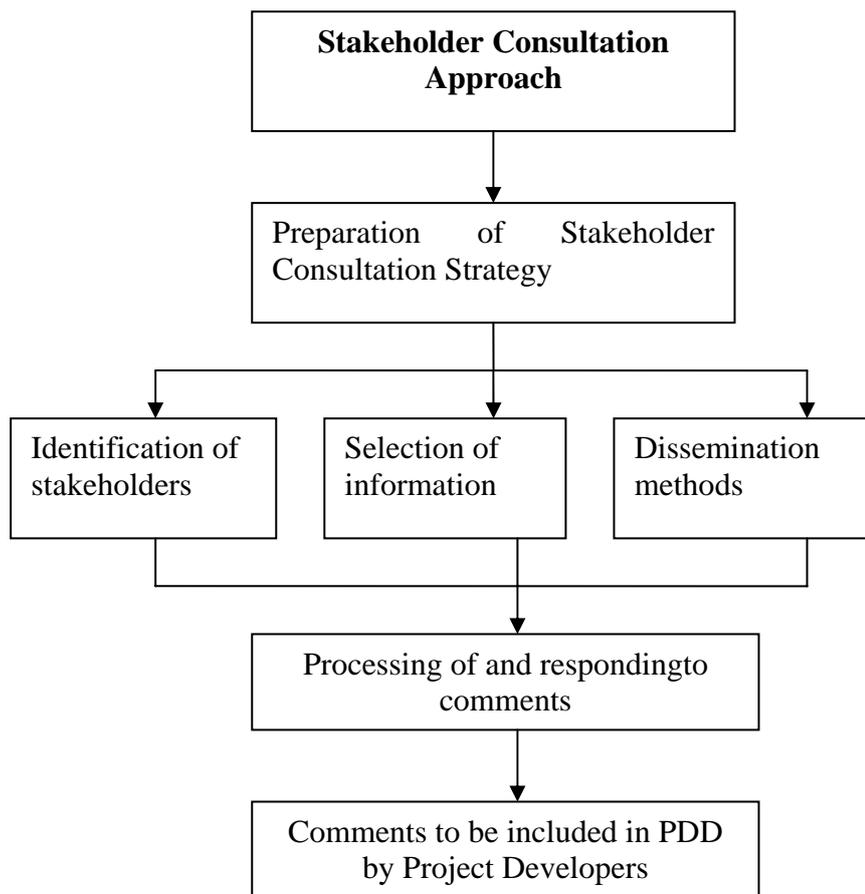
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## *Stakeholder Consultation Approach*

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Requirements on stakeholder consultations are defined by the national government of the country where the project is located. They may choose to refer to international agreements such as UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (also known as the Aarhus Convention), and an international environmental agreement. This agreement states that stakeholders have the right:

- of access to the appropriate environmental information
- to participate in decisions on specific activities
- to justice via a court of law or another independent and impartial body established by law



## *CDM Stakeholder Consultation*

The Section E of the PDD relates to information on Environmental impacts of the proposed CDM project. This includes:

- Brief description how comments by local stakeholders have been invited and compiled
- Process of stakeholder consultation (invitation, publicity etc)
- Stakeholder meeting report
- Summary of the comments received
- Identification of stakeholders making comments
- Summary of comments
- Report on how due account was taken of any comments received

In this section, legal requirements for stakeholder involvement (if exists) should be described, including how the project is in compliance with these requirements. Key stakeholders should be listed, including contact information. Stakeholder contact information can be included as an appendix to the PDD or be provided to the DOE when requested. A summary of all comments received should be included in this section, together with an elaboration on how these comments have been, or will be, taken into account. It is important to always keep detailed minutes of meetings and

records of any local stakeholder processes to be able to justify the process at a later stage.