

## REQUIRED CONTENTS OF EIAs

All EIAs must contain the following:

- < Cover Page
- < Summary of Proposed Project
- < Table of Contents
- < Policy, Legal and Administrative Framework
- < Description of Proposed Development
- < Description of the Environment
- < Significant Environmental Impacts
- < Description of Likely Significant Effects
- < Presentation of Reasonable Alternatives
- < Environmental Consequences of Project
- < Mitigation Plan
- < Monitoring Plan
- < Inter-agency and NGO Involvement
- < Report on Public Hearings (if any)
- < Summary in Non-Technical Language
- < List of Preparers
- < List of Recipients of the EIA
- < Index
- < Appendices

## EIA (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS

The EIA Regulations were recently amended by the Government in March 2007. These Regulations specify when EIAs are required, what EIAs must contain, timelines, and the duties and composition of the National Environmental Appraisal Committee.

## MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

All projects, for which EIAs are conducted

and recommended for approval by NEAC, are subject to certain conditions. These conditions are set forth in an Environmental Compliance Plan (ECP), which must be signed by the Developer before Environmental Clearance is granted.

Monitoring is thus an important component in the environmental clearance process. Project proponents are required to include a monitoring plan in the EIA, and must comply with all conditions of approval set in the ECP.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The D.O.E. has published a booklet entitled "Procedures for the Preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment", which can be downloaded from our website, and a "Guide for Developers", for which more information can be found on our website. Both of these publications specify in greater depth the processes involved in obtaining environmental clearance for development projects.

Environmental Impact Assessment Reports prepared for projects can also be downloaded from our website.

**Department of the Environment**

**10/12 Ambergris Avenue**

**Belmopan**

**Phone: 822-2816/2542**

**Fax: 822-2862**

**Email: [envirodept@btl.net](mailto:envirodept@btl.net)**

**Website: [www.doe.gov.bz](http://www.doe.gov.bz)**

**Environmental Protection  
is Everybody's Business**

A BRIEF GUIDE

TO THE

ENVIRONMENTAL

IMPACT

ASSESSMENT

PROCESS



*"WHEN PEOPLE PUT THE  
ENVIRONMENT FIRST,  
DEVELOPMENT WILL LAST"*

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has gained widespread acceptance as a tool for promoting environmentally sound development practices. The EIA process reflects a preventative approach to environmental management. Rather than responding to environmental problems after the fact, EIA enables developers, managers, and planning authorities to avoid problems before they occur. Using the EIA process, decision makers can predict the effects of a range of development scenarios, make plans for minimizing negative impacts, and select a wise course of action.

EIAs are designed to examine the environmental consequences, both positive and negative, of proposed development projects and to ensure that these consequences are taken into account in project design. They evaluate the expected effects on human health, the natural and cultural environment, and on property, as well as on local communities. EIAs also consider alternative project designs, including a "no-action" alternative, as well as mitigation measures that should be incorporated into the project design to ensure from the outset that the project is sound and sustainable.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

The **Environmental Protection Act**

requires EIAs to be prepared by all persons who intend to undertake projects that may significantly affect the environment. Such EIAs are to be submitted to D.O.E. for evaluation. The EPA requires that EIAs shall identify and evaluate the effects on human beings, flora and fauna, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets including cultural heritage and landscape, natural resources, and the ecological balance.

Environmental Impact Assessments are also required under certain sections of the **National Lands Act** and the **Mines and Minerals Act**.

## PROJECT CATEGORIES

In determining whether EIAs are necessary, there are three categories of projects. Schedule I projects are those that are likely to have significant adverse impacts that may be sensitive, irreversible, and diverse. These impacts could include pollution discharges, large scale physical disturbances of the site, and consumption of large amounts of natural resources. EIAs are required for all Schedule I projects. Schedule II projects differ from Schedule I projects only in scale, and therefore may or may not require an EIA or other form of environmental studies. Schedule III projects are those programmes, projects, undertakings or activities which shall be referred to the D.O.E. for Environmental Clearance.

## STEPS TO ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The process starts when a project is submitted to a permitting and/or licensing agency.

**Screening:** This process determines what category the project falls into and whether an EIA is required. If a full-scale EIA is not necessary, screening may determine whether specific environmental studies are needed. The screening process will be conducted by permitting/licensing agencies, by D.O.E, or by the National Environmental Appraisal Committee (NEAC).

**Scoping:** Where EIAs or environmental studies are required, scoping determines the scope and breadth of issues and impacts to be addressed. Scoping usually occurs in meetings comprised of the project proponent, D.O.E., other relevant government agencies, and the public.

**The EIA:** The Environmental Impact Assessment is undertaken. When completed, the EIA is submitted to D.O.E. and NEAC.

**Decision:** A decision is made by D.O.E. based on advice of NEAC. Projects may be approved, approved with conditions, not approved (in which case additional investigations may be undertaken), or that further public consultation is necessary.