Topic 8

Reporting

Different names for the same document

- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA report)

- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- Environmental Statement (ES)

- Environmental Assessment Report (EA report)

- Environmental Effects Statement (EES)

- Local usage: enter local terminology

The EIA report is a statement that assists:

- the proponent to plan and design

- the responsible authority to decide

- the public to understand

A successful EIA report will be:

- actionable – by the proponent

- decision-relevant – to the responsible authority

- user-friendly – for the public

Main elements of an EA report

- executive summary

- need for and aims of the proposal

- description of proposal and alternatives

- description of affected environment and community

- public consultation and views

- main impacts and their mitigation

- evaluation of significant residual impacts

- environmental management plan

Preparing an executive summary

- ◆ target to audience

- ◆ keep it short

- ◆ make it clear and consistent

- ◆ avoid jargon

- ◆ summarise key findings

An executive summary should outline:

- the proposal and its setting

- terms of reference of the EIA

- results of public consultation

- alternatives considered

- major impacts and their significance

- mitigation and management measures

- any other critical matters.

EIA Report — description of the proposal includes:

- main elements, phases and alternatives

- requirements for materials, water, energy, equipment

- operational processes and products

- summary of technical, economic and environmental features

- comparison of options (e.g. size, location, etc.)

EIA Report - description of the affected environment includes:

- spatial and temporal boundaries

- baseline conditions – biophysical, land use, socio-economic

- key trends and anticipated conditions

- relationship to other policies, plans and proposals.

EIA Report – results of public consultation includes:

- identification of interested and affected stakeholders

- method(s) used to inform and involve them

- analysis of views and concerns expressed

- how these were taken into account

- issues remaining to be resolved

EIA Report - evaluating impacts for each alternative:

- prediction of each major impact

- proposed mitigation measures

- significance of the residual impact

- limitations, uncertainty and gaps in knowledge

EIA Report - comparative evaluation of alternatives

- adverse and beneficial impacts

- effectiveness of mitigation measure

- distribution of benefits and costs

- opportunities for enhancement

- reasons for preferred alternative

An Environmental Management Plan contains:

- ◆ proposed mitigation measures

- ◆ schedule for implementation

- ◆ surveillance and monitoring programmes

- ◆ impact management strategy

- ◆ reporting, audit and review procedure

- ◆ any institution and capacity building requirements

Some common shortcomings of EIA reports

- ◆ objective of proposal described too narrowly

- ◆ description does not cover complete activity

- ◆ alternatives do not account for the environment

- ◆ key problems not described

- ◆ sensitive elements in environment overlooked

- ◆ relevant standards and legislation not described

Some common shortcomings of EIA reports (continued):

- best alternative not described (or insufficiently described)

- serious impacts not mentioned or not correctly described

- outdated or ineffective prediction models used

- impacts not compared with standards or targets

- appropriate mitigation measures not considered

- incorrect conclusions drawn