

Public Participation in Environmental Assessment Process in Nepal

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Introduction

- ☞ Use of EA tool for 'informed choice' and 'informed decision-making'
 - ☞ Usage of EA tool started in 1980s and ramified after 1992 Rio Summit, EIA guidelines (1993) and environmental laws in 1997
 - ☞ Environmental law focuses on
 - ❖ Threshold criteria for environmental screening and over 225 types of projects require IEE or EIA
 - ❖ Investment criteria
 - ❖ Broad project category
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Development of EA System

Development Plans

Additional Commitments

1980s

Conduct EA of large-scale projects

National Conservation Strategy
Master Plan for Forestry Sector

1990s

Conduct and expand EIA
Develop guidelines

Sectoral policies related to industry, hydropower, irrigation, tourism, solid wastes management

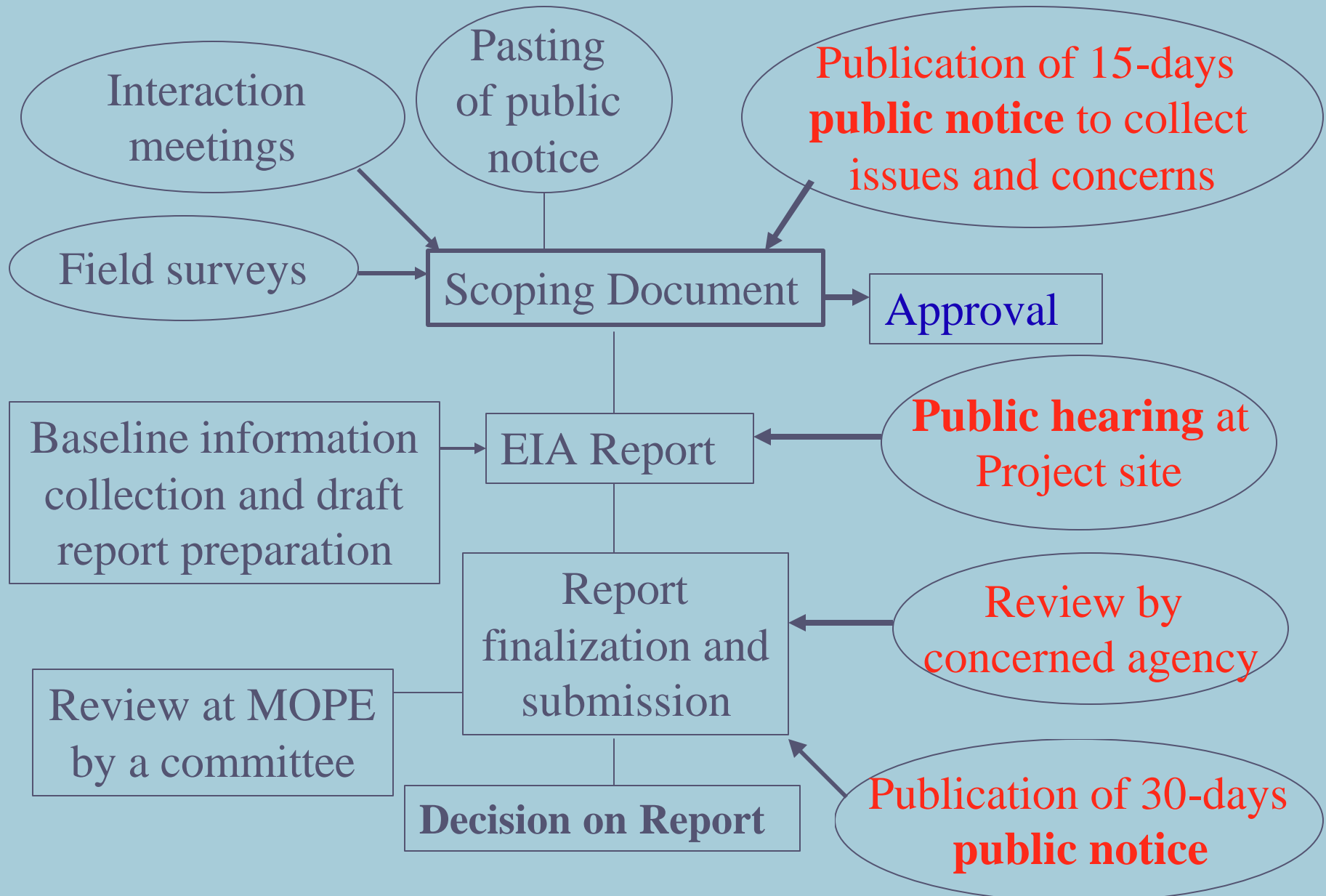
2000-
2004

- Make EA process effective
- Conduct environmental monitoring
- Conduct SEA

- Sectoral policies related to public infrastructure, hydropower, irrigation, biodiversity, and wetland
- Water Resources Strategy & Biodiversity Strategy
- Sustainable Dev. Agenda

Public Participation on EIA

Legal requirements



Public Participation: Proponent's Responsibility

Scoping Document

- Preparation and distribution of the project information
- Publication of the public notice
- Pasting the public notice at the project site
- Interaction meeting at the project site or district
- Collection of issues and concerns
- Preparation and submission of the Scoping Document for approval

Proponent's Responsibility ..

EIA Report

- Preparation of the draft EIA report
- Preparation and distribution of note on environmental impacts
- Publication of the public notice inviting local people and stakeholders to attend public hearing
- Statements during the public hearing
- Open discussion and responses on queries
- Documentation of concerns and suggestions
- Finalization and submission of EIA report

Responsibility of Competent Authority

EIA Report

- Review and interaction with professionals
- Disclosure of the report for 30-days
- Collection of concerns and opinions
- Analysis of concerns
- Review by the expert committee
- Approval of the EIA report
- Environmental Monitoring and Auditing

Public Consultation: A Case of Modi Khola HEP


- 14 MW run-of-the-river, located in Annapurna Conservation Area
- NEA identified project in 1990, conducted feasibility study in 1994
- GITEC Nepal is planning to generate hydropower
- Public notice for scoping published in January 2000
- SD and TOR approved in May 2000
- Public meeting conducted in July 2000
- Public hearing conducted in September 2000
- Over 235 persons attended the meeting
- About 15 persons made statements and some provided written comments

Major Issues Raised

1. Construct a permanent bridge over the Modi River
2. Provide compensation to project affected people at realistic price
3. Appreciation for allocating some fund to school
4. Be responsible for blasting-induced landslides
5. Electrify affected villages and provide electricity at reasonable price
6. Provide one percent revenue for community development in four project-affected VDCs
7. Certain percentage of annual profit must be allocated for development of affected VDCs



Major Issues Raised

8. Approach road to be less damaging to the environment and consider geological aspects
 9. Provide employment to severely affected people as a first priority
 10. Provide assistance to needy schools of all VDCs
 11. Do blasting out-of-school-time or provide scholarship to students for additional educational time
 12. Plant trees taking into account the number of felled trees
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Benefits and Problems Faced

Benefits

- Opportunity to provide information
- Knowledge on concerns and issues
- Seeking practical and technical inputs
- Avoiding or minimizing conflicts
- Knowing natural resources, land and property to be affected
- Selecting priority activities
- Participation of local people in project implementation

Benefits and Problems Faced

Problems

- Collection of people's 'wish' lists
- Dealing with local demands irrelevant to project
- Difficulty in identifying stakeholders
- Unclear on nature of information to be shared
- No. of public meetings and hearings required
- Number of participants
- Selection on time, venue and season
- Being costly for small projects

Lessons Learnt

- ✓ Appropriate to get people's confidence
- ✓ Increased local participation in project activities
- ✓ Effective to resolve conflict
- ✓ Local demand - outside the scope of the project
- ✓ Time consuming or much time required
- ✓ Costly for small-scale project
- ✓ Need for defining and identifying stakeholders
- ✓ Need for informing local people and stakeholders in advance, and provoking voiceless, vulnerable and DAG people to speak
- ✓ Suitable venue and time
- ~~✓ Tell frankly what project can do for people~~




At the End

Public consultation has:

- Changed the role and attitude of the proponents and competent authorities; and
- Empowered local people, NGOs and CBOs due to disclosure of information

Problems faced are not the drawbacks of EA tool

Require to simplify process, bring affected people, and create awareness to the proponent, stakeholders and decision-makers on the benefits of public participation and EA



Thank You for Your Attention

