
Using EIA to move towards sustainability

- EIA is a foundation tool
- EIA is a tried and tested process
- EIA is a legal requirement in many countries
- EIA is an integrative tool already
- EIA is well positioned for the next steps
- EIA is suited to capacity building

Using SEA to move toward sustainability

- SEA adds value to foundation tool
- SEA complements and extends EIA
- SEA being adopted by more countries
- SEA addresses major alternatives
- SEA is step toward comprehensive options assessment

Current realities

- **EIA basics need strengthening in many developing countries**
- **SEA still used primarily by developed countries**
- **EIA and SEA yet to realise their full potential**
- **limited consideration of global, large scale changes**
- **current practice provides minimal level of 'sustainability assurance'**

Emerging challenges

- new challenges imposed by globalisation
- environmental impacts becoming larger, more complex
- increasingly difficult to predict and mitigate
- shift toward adaptive and integrative assessment
- emphasis on precautionary rather than predictive approach
- use of best estimate science to identify safe margins
- backed by monitoring, auditing and other checks

Considering future directions step by step

- **Step 1: What ideally should happen?**

Identify needed changes from national sustainability agenda

- **Step 2: What realistically is likely to happen?**

Consider development aims and trends that apply locally

- **Step 3: What probably could happen with capacity building?**

Reach conclusions based on strategies in place or pending

Key trends and imperatives for sustainable development

- *impacts* –
rate and scale of global change
unparalleled
- *drivers* –
population growth, increasing
consumption and technology
- *response* –
linkages must be assessed
systematically and holistically
- *sustainability* –
reconciling environmental, economic
and social aims

Two main directions for EIA and SEA

- 'upstream' toward sustainability appraisal
 - integrating EIA and SEA with other impact assessment tools
- 'downstream' toward environmental management
 - combining assessment, accounting and auditing tools

Aspects and issues of sustainability appraisal

- full cost analysis of development proposals
- equated with integrated impact assessment
- identifies economic, environmental, and social effects
- incorporates sustainability aims, principles, criteria
- clarifies trade-offs and facilitates balanced decision-making

Aspects and issues of sustainability appraisal (continued)

- **triple bottom line must be met at minimum level**
- **new approach to decision-making needed**
- **examples of applications include:**
 - **sustainability assessment of trade framework for environmental assurance and assessment**
 - **core values and criteria for decision-making**

Aspects and issues of integrated environmental management (IEM)

- **focus on environmental impacts of all development actions**
- **particular attention given to business and industrial operations**
- **EMS certified to ISO 14001 cover larger enterprises**
- **many activities and enterprises not subject to control**

Aspects and issues of integrated environmental management (IEM)

(continued)

- lack of IEM framework and tools
- building blocks of IEM system include:
 - environmental accounting to cost depletion and damage
 - environmental assessment to provide sustainability assurance
 - environmental auditing to verify compliance and performance

Interim measures to improve EIA and SEA practice

- ♦ move toward integrated approach step by step
- ♦ getting there will take time
- ♦ progress will vary from country to country
- ♦ use TNA to identify priority requirements
- ♦ identify improvements that can be made now
- ♦ identify improvements that could be made in near term
- ♦ identify improvements that could achieve sustainability appraisal over medium term