

## TOOL 1 EIA screening checklist

The screening checklist tool is designed to assist EIA officers with determining if an EIA is required, based on the characteristics of a proposed development project, its planned location and potential environmental impacts. Completion of a checklist supports structured, robust EIA decision-making and good record-keeping. The checklist can also be referred to during later stages of the EIA process to help inform further actions and decision-making, e.g. it can provide a foundation for project scoping and development of ToR.

Answers to checklist questions will be primarily based on information supplied by the project proponent in their development proposal. Sometimes it may be necessary to seek additional information in order to complete the checklist. Alternatively, the proponent could be asked to work through the checklist as a form of preliminary environmental assessment, sometimes referred to as a Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment or a Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report.

Many of the checklist questions can be answered with yes, no, or not applicable (N.A.), however, some may require a short descriptive answer. There is a degree of overlap between some of the questions; this is to ensure important issues are adequately considered.

For the purpose of the checklist a 'significant impact' is defined as an impact that is important, notable, or of consequence for natural/biophysical, social or economic aspects of the environment. When determining if a project is likely to have a significant impact, the following factors should be considered: the sensitivity, value, and quality of the environment which is to be impacted; and the intensity, duration, magnitude, geographic location and extent of the impacts.

Upon completion of the screening checklist an EIA officer should be able to reach an informed decision and deliver a recommendation to the EIA administrator about whether a full EIA is required. In situations where there are many potential impacts; where management of impacts is likely to be difficult or is unclear; or where there are unknown and uncertain impacts; the proponent should be asked to undertake a full EIA.



The EIA process promotes sound development planning and management to protect community values and livelihoods. Photo: Stuart Young

## EIA SCREENING CHECKLIST

SECTION 1 – PROJECT DETAILS			
Project reference no.			
Project name			
Project proponent (developer)			
Proponent's email address			
Proponent's phone number			
Project location (including coordinates, if available)			
Type and purpose of project (brief description)			
SECTION 2 – SIZE AND SCALE OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT			
Questions to be considered	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
2.1 What area of land and/or sea will be developed? (indicate size of area, in m <sup>2</sup> or km <sup>2</sup> )			
2.2 Will a large amount of energy, water or other natural resources be required for project construction and operation?			
2.3 Will a large workforce be needed? Is a local and/or external workforce to be employed?			
2.4 What is the expected timeframe for the project? (including construction, operation, closure and decommissioning – if appropriate)			
SECTION 3 – CHARACTER OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT			
Questions to be considered	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
3.1 What type of construction or operational activities will be undertaken by the project?			
3.2 Are the project activities novel (new) or have they been undertaken before within the country, or in the Pacific region?			
SECTION 4 – PROJECT LOCATION			
Questions to be considered	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
4.1 Is the project to be located within or adjacent to a vulnerable area (e.g. low-lying coastal area, waterways, floodplain, wetland, steep sloping land)?			
4.2 Is the project to be located adjacent to a sensitive site or facility (e.g. historical or archaeological site, conservation reserve, school, hospital/ medical facility)?			
4.3 Is the project likely to impact on existing land or sea uses/activities?			
4.4 Is the proposed site suitable for the project (e.g. appropriate set-back from the coast, streams or rivers; no steep or eroding slopes)?			

4.5 Is the proposed project site customary land? Are all customary land/resource owners aware of the project proposal? Have they been consulted/meaningfully engaged?				
4.6 Are there special land zoning considerations that need to be taken into account (e.g. will the project be within a conservation reserve, rural, urban or industrial area)?				
<b>SECTION 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS</b>				
Aspect of the environment	Questions to be considered. Is the proposed project likely to result in...	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
<b>5.1 Topography, geology and soils</b>	5.1.1 Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geological or landscape feature?			
	5.1.2 Soil contamination or disturbance of previously contaminated soils?			
	5.1.3 Disturbance of soils that are fragile, or susceptible to erosion or compaction?			
	5.1.4 Creation of steep slopes or other unstable land conditions?			
	5.1.5 Changes in the channel of a stream, a floodplain, or the bed of the ocean or lagoon?			
<b>5.2 Water</b>	5.2.1 Extraction or use of ground, surface or tank water resources, leading to reduction in the volume and quality of water available for the public water supply?			
	5.2.2 Pollution of ground, surface, coastal or sea water, via direct or indirect discharges or seepages; or through interception of an aquifer by drilling, cuts or excavations?			
	5.2.3 Changes in currents, or the course or direction of marine or fresh water movement?			
	5.2.4 Changes in runoff, drainage patterns or absorption rates?			
	5.2.5 Coastal, stream or river flooding?			
<b>5.3 Air</b>	5.3.1 Release of dust?			
	5.3.2 Release of hazardous, toxic or noxious air pollutants/emissions?			
	5.3.3 A significant increase or decrease in local or regional greenhouse gas emissions?			
<b>5.4 Noise</b>	5.4.1 A significant increase in existing (baseline) noise levels that will adversely affect people or animals?			
<b>5.5 Plant life</b>	5.5.1 Damage to or clearing of vegetation communities (e.g. upland forest or mangrove communities)?			
	5.5.2 Damage to or destruction of important plant communities (e.g. seagrass beds; plants with medicinal, cultural or commercial value; unique, threatened or endangered plant species)?			
	5.5.3 A reduction in agricultural crop production?			
	5.5.4 The farming or production of an exotic plant species?			
	5.5.5 The spread or introduction of an invasive plant species?			

Aspect of the environment	Questions to be considered. Is the proposed project likely to result in...	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
<b>5.6 Animal life</b>	5.6.1 Damage to or destruction of coral reef areas?			
	5.6.2 Reductions in the numbers of unique, rare or endangered animal species?			
	5.6.3 Reductions in animal populations harvested regularly for human consumption (e.g. fisheries)?			
	5.6.4 Damage to or destruction of habitat for animal communities on land, in rivers or in the ocean?			
	5.6.5 Barriers to the migration or movement of animals?			
	5.6.6 The farming or production of an exotic animal species?			
	5.6.7 The spread or introduction of an invasive animal species?			
<b>5.7 Natural resources</b>	5.7.1 The extraction, harvest or consumption of natural resources (e.g. timber, minerals, water)?			
	5.7.2 A noticeable increase in the rate of use of any natural resource?			
	5.7.3 Substantial depletion of non-renewable resources?			
<b>5.8 Human communities</b>	5.8.1 Encroachment into existing settlement areas or customary lands?			
	5.8.2 Influx of an external workforce or in-migration to the project area?			
	5.8.3 Demand for additional housing to accommodate an external workforce?			
	5.8.4 Increased traffic or increased use of roads and the existing transport system; and an increase in associated health risks (dust, noise)?			
	5.8.5 Increased demand for and disruption to social services and infrastructure (e.g. water and energy supply, communications, sewage and waste disposal, fire protection, police, schools, medical care)?			
	5.8.6 A reduction in visual amenity?			
	5.8.7 Infringement on customs or customary rights?			
	5.8.8 Social change or impacts on traditional governance structures, resulting in community dislocation or loss of community cohesion?			
	5.8.9 Restrictions in access to customary areas or restrictions in resource use in customary areas?			
	5.8.10 Changes in access to or the quality of recreational opportunities (e.g. sites used for nature-based tourism)?			

Aspect of the environment	Questions to be considered. Is the proposed project likely to result in...	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
<b>5.9 Local and national economy</b>	5.9.1 Local economic displacement or loss of livelihoods (including subsistence and informal economic activities)?			
	5.9.2 Creation of jobs/livelihood opportunities for locals?			
	5.9.3 Influx of the cash economy in areas where there was previously a subsistence-based economy?			
	5.9.4 Training or educational opportunities for locals?			
	5.9.5 Increased tax revenue for the national government? Royalties or benefits for sub-national levels of government?			
	5.9.6 Industry development opportunities?			
	5.9.7 Benefits for directly affected people and communities (which may include direct economic benefits, community development programmes etc.)?			
	5.9.8 Benefits for the broader community (e.g. upgrading of social services or infrastructure)?			
<b>SECTION 6 – ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS (INCLUDING HAZARDS THAT ARE NATURAL, HUMAN-INDUCED OR TECHNOLOGICAL IN NATURE)</b>				
	Questions to be considered. Will the proposed project be subject to, or affected by...	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact on the project – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact on the project need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
	6.1 Increased risk of an explosion or release of toxic pollution related to the use, handling, storage or production of hazardous substances?			
	6.2 Increased health and safety hazards or risks for people (e.g. from the use of machinery/equipment or the presence of hazardous substances)?			
	6.3 Increased vulnerability of people or property to water-related hazards (e.g. flooding, tidal waves)?			
	6.4 Increased vulnerability of people or property to geological hazards (e.g. landslides, ground failure, earthquakes)?			
<b>SECTION 7 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE</b>				
	Questions to be considered. Will the proposed project be subject to, or affected by...	Yes/no/ N.A./ brief description	Is this likely to result in a significant impact on the project – yes/no? Negative or positive? Long-term, short-term or irreversible?	Does the potential impact on the project need to be further investigated? Will it require management?
	7.1 Loss of land from shoreline change or coastal erosion, especially associated with extreme weather events?			
	7.2 Sea-level rise?			
	7.3 Flooding from high tides, large swells, extreme rainfall or storm-related events?			
	7.4 Other impacts related to climate change or climate variability?			

<b>SECTION 8 – UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND RISKS</b>		
Questions to be considered	Yes/no/N.A./brief description	Is further investigation required?
8.1 Are the potential project impacts and risks easily identified and well-understood?		
8.2 Are cumulative impacts in the project's area of influence well understood and have they been properly analysed?		
<b>SECTION 9 – BROADER POLICY AND PLANNING CONTEXT</b>		
Questions to be considered	Yes/no/N.A./brief description	Is further investigation required?
9.1 Are there particular goals, targets or obligations under government policies, plans or legislation that are relevant to this project?		
9.2 Is the project relevant to any MEA commitments or obligations? (e.g. CBD, CMS, CITES, Ramsar, Stockholm Convention, MARPOL, UNCLOS, UNCCD, UNFCCC)		
9.3 Are there any areas within or around the proposed project site that are protected under international, national or local laws?		
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	EIA required	
<input type="checkbox"/>	EIA not required. No conditions recommended for the development approval	
<input type="checkbox"/>	EIA not required. It is recommended the following conditions be attached to the development approval:	
<b>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:</b>		
<b>Name(s) and job title(s) of screening officer(s):</b>		
<b>Ministry/department:</b>		
<b>Signature(s):</b>		
<b>Date:</b>		