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Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PACIFIC YEAR OF THE CORAL REEF
HEALTHY REEF, HEALTHY PEOPLE

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Guidelines for Pacific Island Countries and Territories

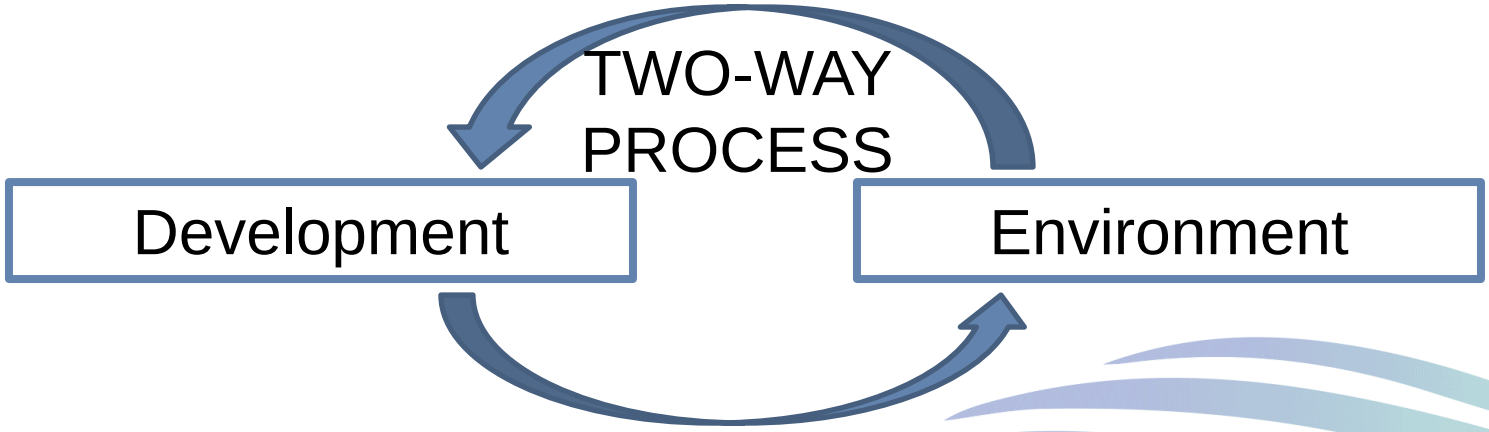
- SPREP developed Regional EIA guidelines…within the context of rapidly-changing Pacific land and seascapes.

- The Regional EIA Guidelines are applicable to the full range of projects and economic development sectors in the Pacific and aim to support the implementation of current EIA legal requirements and to strengthen Pacific-based application of the EIA process

EIA Purpose

EIA is a tool for sustainable development

- **Proactive planning & decision making process**: identifies impacts and propose safeguards and mitigation measures *before* development commences
- Addresses:
  - negative & positive impacts of development on the environment
  - impacts of the environment on development e.g. flooding, climate change, coastal erosion.



Important outcomes of the EIA process

By using the principles of the mitigation hierarchy

1. Selection of an optimal development site & design
2. Preparation & implementation of an environmental management & monitoring plan (EMMP)
3. Reduced vulnerability to environmental hazards & environmental change

How do SEAs fit in with EIAs?

- **Strategic** Environmental Assessment (SEA) are a **complementary** to EIAs but look at **broader issues** and help to evaluate alternative development visions and identifies the best broad-scale options during the **early planning stage**.
- SEAs are either used to

(1) **prepare a strategic development or resource use plan for a defined land and/or ocean area;**

(2) examine the potential environmental impacts that may arise from, or impact upon, the implementation of government policies, plans and programmes; and

(3) **assess different classes or types of development projects, so as to produce general environmental management policies or design guidelines for the development classes/types.**

Further information in Section 2.1 and 4.5 of Regional EIA Guidelines

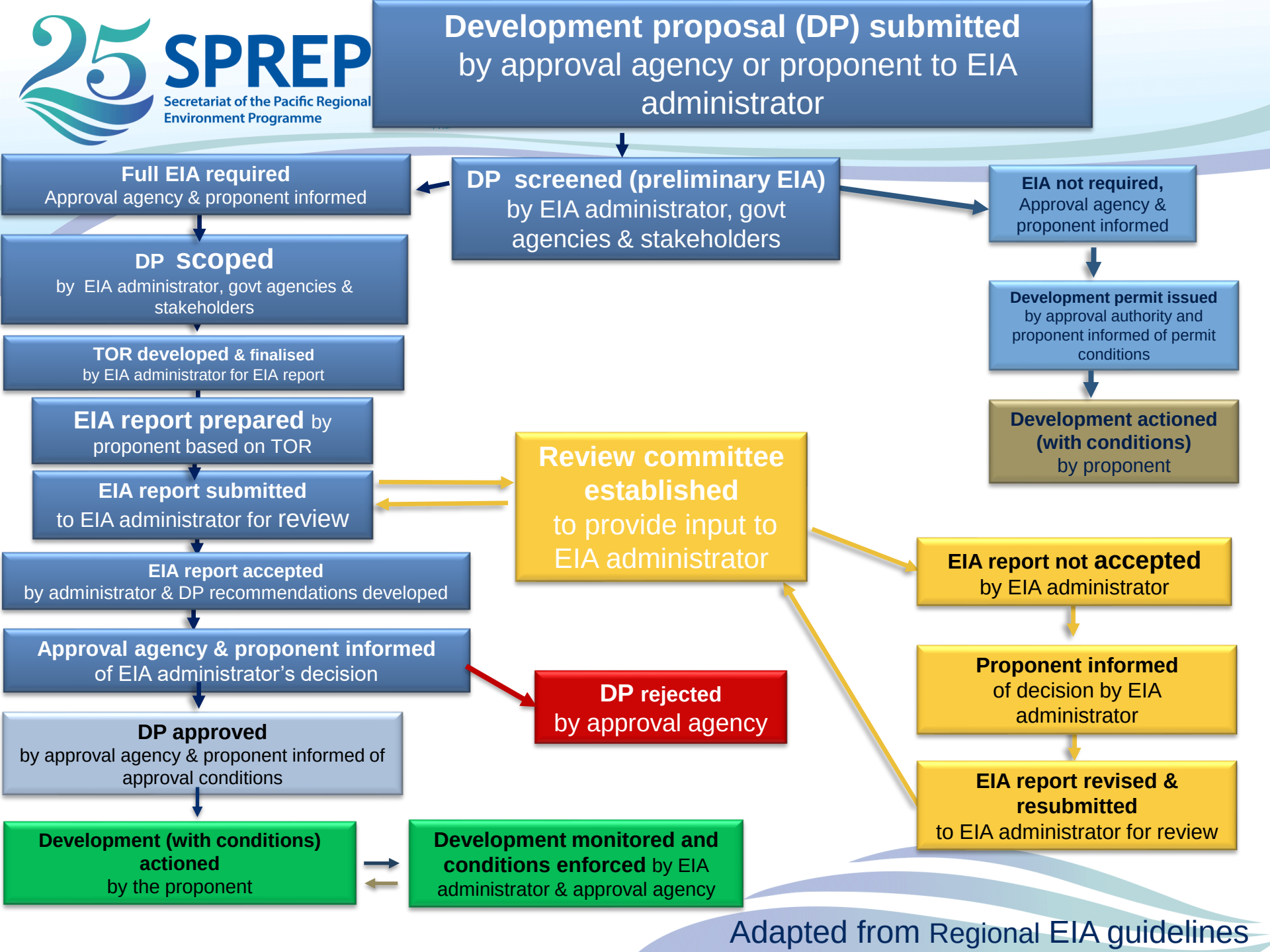
Comparing and contrasting the EIA and SEA process

Taken from Table 2, p24 of Regional EIA Guidelines

	EIA: PROJECT SCALE	SEA: POLICY, PLAN AND PROGRAMME SCALE
OBJECTIVE	To minimise and mitigate environmental impacts for projects, by setting specific environmental performance and management standards	To promote sustainable and resilient development by embedding sound environmental management within policies, plans and programmes
SCOPE	Identifies environmental impacts for a specific project and location	Identifies environmental impacts related to a broad policy, plan or programme for development
PERSPECTIVE	Narrow perspective, high level of site-specific detail	Broad, strategic perspective, more general environmental details
TYPE OF PROCESS	Well-defined process, clear beginning and end	Multi-stage, flexible and iterative process
ALTERNATIVES	Considers a limited number of feasible development alternatives, within the scope of a project	Considers a broad range of feasible development alternatives across a development sector, theme or land/oceanscape
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS	Limited review of cumulative impacts	Early warning of cumulative impacts
MONITORING	Focuses on measuring actual impacts	Focuses on the outcomes of policy, plan and programme implementation

Who are the Regional EIA Guidelines for?

- Targeted at government officers involved in the EIA process
  - (e.g. officers working in areas such as planning, health, energy, water, transport, fisheries, agriculture, natural resources).
- Applicable to full range of projects and development sectors
- To support implementation of current EIA legal requirements
- Emphasise the importance of assessing potential impacts of development on the environment and the potential impacts of the environment on development, especially impacts related to climate change and disasters;
- Supported by an **EIA toolkit** that includes templates and checklists for EIA screening, scoping and review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Development proposal (DP) submitted by approval agency or proponent to EIA administrator
DP screened (preliminary EIA) by EIA administrator, govt agencies & stakeholders
Full EIA required
Approval agency & proponent informed
EIA not required,
Approval agency & proponent informed
DP scoped
by EIA administrator, govt agencies & stakeholders
Development permit issued
by approval authority and proponent informed of permit conditions
TOR developed & finalised
by EIA administrator for EIA report
Development actioned (with conditions)
by proponent
EIA report prepared by proponent based on TOR
EIA report submitted
to EIA administrator for review
Review committee established
to provide input to EIA administrator
EIA report not accepted
by EIA administrator
EIA report accepted
by administrator & DP recommendations developed
Approval agency & proponent informed
of EIA administrator's decision
DP rejected
by approval agency
Proponent informed
of decision by EIA administrator
DP approved
by approval agency & proponent informed of approval conditions
EIA report revised & resubmitted
to EIA administrator for review
Development (with conditions) actioned
by the proponent
Development monitored and conditions enforced by EIA administrator & approval agency
Adapted from Regional EIA guidelines

Provides step by step examples

TABLE 1 Step-by-step EIA process

STEP IN PROCESS	DESCRIPTION
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED	• A typical EIA process begins with the proponent submitting a development proposal to government, usually to the EIA administrator. • The proposal should outline the type, scale and location of the development; the proposed development timeframe (including construction, operation, and closure/rehabilitation, where relevant); known or potential impacts the development will have on the environment; and potential impacts the environment will have on the development. • The initial proposal provides an overview rather than comprehensive details. It should be regarded as a 'work in progress', to be progressively expanded upon, modified and improved as a result of EIA feedback and investigations.
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SCREENED Refer to Tool 1: EIA screening checklist	• Screening is the preliminary assessment of a development proposal to determine if an EIA is required. • It is usually led by the EIA administrator in consultation with other government agencies, local communities, local land/resource owners and other stakeholders where relevant, and where consultation is permitted under legislation. • In some countries this step may involve the proponent preparing and submitting a Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment or a Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report to the EIA administrator. • The EIA administrator's screening decision is usually made on the basis of answers to a set of standard questions that evaluate the size, scope, technical complexity, physical/environmental location, social setting of a development, and any relevant legal matters. See Tool 1 for a screening checklist with example questions.

EIA toolkit (Section 6.0 of guidelines)

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TOOL 1 EIA screening checklist

TOOL 2 Terms of reference template

TOOL 3 EIA report review template

TOOL 4 Risk assessment for EIA reports – an example approach

Available online

- The SPREP Regional EIA guidelines “Strengthening Environmental Impact Assessment for Pacific island countries and territories” can be found here

- https://www.sprep.org/publications/strengthening-environmental-impact-assessment-guidelines-for-pacific-island-countries-and-territories-renforcement-des-etudes-dimpact-environnemental-directives-pour-les-etats-et-territories-insulaires-oceaniens
  on the SPREP Virtual Library

- Just log onto https://pnea.sprep.org/ and search the Resources Tab

- Or Email myself Greg Barbara gregoryb@sprep.org or
  Jope Davetanivalu joped@sprep.org

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THANK YOU!