



Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment

Project proposal for an SEA for coordinated reconstruction planning (reconstruction plan clearing house structure)

Memorandum by the NCEA

2 March 2005



Advice of the Secretariat

To The Central Environmental Authority of Sri Lanka
Attn D.G. Manel Jayamanna
CC Netherlands Embassy in Colombo, Mr. Jan Huesken
From Mr. Reinoud Post (Technical Secretary - Netherlands Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment)
Date 2 March 2005
Subject Project proposal for an SEA for coordinated reconstruction planning (reconstruction plan clearing house structure).

By: Secretariat of the Netherlands Commission for EIA

Advice 2005-006

1. INTRODUCTION

After the tsunami on 26 December 2004, the president of Sri Lanka installed a national task force to plan and coordinate the reconstruction works (TAFREN). The CEA identified the necessity to assist post tsunami reconstruction planning with a Strategic Environmental Assessment. CEA proposed to the Netherlands Embassy to invite the Netherlands Commission to assist the CEA in this venture and to ask the Netherlands Commission to make available its administrative system for rapid deployment of all expertise that would be needed to perform the SEA. The Ministry for Environment and Natural Resources (MENR) had already engaged in a rapid assessment of tsunami damage to nature resources (green assessment) and CEA was preparing a rapid assessment of tsunami damage to the non nature areas (brown assessment).

On 29 January the NCEIA, in compliance with the ToR, submitted advice to the CEA on how to set up an SEA for post tsunami reconstruction planning. The advice included a draft MoU between the NCEIA and MENR, the agency envisaged to implement the SEA.

In a letter to the Netherlands Embassy, reacting on NCEIAs advice, MENR expressed the opinion that the proposed SEA should rather be directed towards capacity building as main objective instead of supporting real planning. MENR submitted a counter proposal in line with this opinion.

TAFREN made clear to the CEA and the Netherlands Embassy that it needed the proposed structure (as clearing house for reconstruction planning), but that the structure as presented in the advice was too complex and needed to be simplified.

2. CEA'S QUESTION

Having taken knowledge of the observations of TAFREN and MENR, the CEA invited the NCEIA to assist the CEA in reformulating the SEA set-up so that the wishes of TAFREN and MENR would be included in the SEA set-up.

3. OUTPUT

The output of the mission is a draft advice that presents:

1. a draft project proposal for an SEA for coordinated reconstruction planning (reconstruction plan clearing house structure) in a concise version for TAFREN (Appendix 1)
2. a draft project proposal for an SEA for coordinated reconstruction planning (reconstruction plan clearing house structure) in an elaborate version for MENR (Appendix 2), with 9 annexes
3. A stand alone draft version of a MoU between the NCEIA and the agency that would be designated to implement the proposed clearing house structure (appendix 3).

As the needs of TAFREN and the needs of MENR were to a certain extent contradicting, the CEA decided to focus on the needs of TAFREN and to maintain the original idea of proposing a support structure for post tsunami reconstruction planning. In order to better meet the demands and observations of MENR and on request of the CEA, the NCEIA has put the set-up in the template of a project proposal, has made explicit the capacity building activities included in the exercise and has made clear that the calculated budget ceiling was, indeed, a budget ceiling (assuming a maximum external expert input) and not a contract sum.

As TAFREN might decide to give the assignment (to facilitate the clearing house structure) to another government agency than MENR, NCEIA decided to separate the draft MoU from the project proposal and leave that document at the Netherlands Embassy so that the Embassy could make it available to the agency that would like to collaborate with the NCEIA in implementing the SEA set-up. This way of acting also allowed, if so desired, for selection of other institutions than NCEIA to assist the agency that is assigned to facilitate the clearing house structure.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUEST

The output complies with the request, with the exception that the advice does not support the demand of MENR to focus the SEA set-up mainly on capacity building. In order to respond to the MENR need for SEA capacity building, the NCEIA has made clear to the CEA (EMA) that NCEIA was and is available to provide free of charge training and capacity building expertise on SEA and that a simple e-mailed request to the NCEIA is enough to mobilise the NCEIA to provide such training.