

Environmental and Social Assessment a practical approach to facilitate Open Government



Putting principles into practice



Related to these
and other SDGs

Governments and officials who express the brave desire to make their decision-making more open and transparent, will meet all kinds of practical challenges. How can meaningful participation of citizens be arranged? Who needs to be involved and when? What data is relevant and how can people access it?

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment helps governments to apply good governance principles in every phase of project or plan development. It guides well-informed and sustainable decisions, reflecting the needs and views of all stakeholders. A crucial approach for impactful and complex topics such as mining, river basin planning and energy transition.

For strategies and projects

Environmental and social assessment is legally adopted by almost all countries around the world. Ideally, it is performed at two levels of decision making: the strategic level and the project level.

Strategic Environmental

Assessment (SEA): Decision making on plans or policies, such as a coastal development or river basin plan.

Environmental and Social Impact

Assessment (ESIA): Decision making on projects, such as a new landfill or a wind park.

ESIA & SEA assess the **compatibility** of a proposed project / plan with (inter)national policies and agreements.

What are the national and global objectives, norms and standards in relation to this decision?

How to include the perspectives of my family and community?

SEA & ESIA provide a roadmap for **informing and involving stakeholders**, including specific groups.

Government

Community member

Developer

What alternatives have been considered and where can I find this information?

Here are some great insights in how to improve biodiversity. Can we include this?

Press and media

ESIA & SEA contribute to **accountability and transparency** which enhances credibility and prevents conflict.

SEA & ESIA offer **alternative scenarios** including various measures. All options are compared and judged by effect on environment and social life.

Expertise Independency Transparency

The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment has more than 30 years of experience in supporting governmental organisations in the Netherlands and abroad with SEA and ESIA. Our expertise includes: independent advice at the request of governments, coaching, capacity building and knowledge & learning activities. We follow national legislation and apply international good practice.



Examples of recent activities of the NCEA

June 2023 - Coaching of a SEA process and facilitation of a multi-stakeholder meeting to discuss and adopt a vision for Lac Nokoué > [Benin](#)

May 2023 - Independent review of spatial plan for port-industrial area 'Merwe-Vierhavens' in Rotterdam > [The Netherlands](#)

July 2022 - Workshop to address the social impacts of mining in ESIA, organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy, Mines & Quarries. > [Burkina Faso](#)

April 2021 - Independent advice on the scoping document of an integrated sustainable development plan / SEA for the Sankarini river basin based on inclusive stakeholder involvement. > [Mali](#)

All NCEA advisory reports are available at www.ncea.nl

What does the NCEA look for in an environmental and social assessment process?

Quality of information

Does the process deliver all information needed for decision making, such as impacts, alternative options, mitigation measures and impact management measures?

Dialogue

Does the process engage affected stakeholders in a timely, transparent and inclusive way?

Influence

Does the process address relevant issues and provide usable information for decision makers? Is this done at the right time? Can decision makers be held accountable for their use of the assessment outcomes?

Contact us

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