

UNEP's Environmental Impact Assessment Training Resource Manual -Second Edition

Environmental Impact Assessment for Sustainable Development

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a powerful tool for informed decision-making. It contributes to more environmentally sensitive decisions and the integration of environmental and social considerations in development planning. It is a process that brings about enhanced coordination between the private sector, government ministries such as environment and planning, and the public. It contributes to the transparency of the decision-making process during the development, implementation, monitoring and follow-up stages of a development project. EIA, if properly designed and coordinated, can be an effective tool for achieving sustainability.

UNEP's work on EIA

UNEP's work on EIA was undertaken in response to specific requests put forth in Agenda 21 of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, as well as UNEP Governing Council decisions. Agenda 21 calls upon UNEP to develop and promote the widest possible use of EIA. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) has acknowledged UNEP's work on the assessment of the environmental impacts of trade policies, and has stressed that such assessment should be conducted with a view to promote sustainable development. UNCSD has recommended that UNEP further work on the development of a framework to facilitate the assessment of the

environmental impact of trade policies, specifically taking into account the needs of developing countries and countries in transition (CITs).

UNEP's work on EIA is being implemented by the Economics and Trade Branch (ETB).

UNEP is actively engaged in building global EIA capacity and one of its major contributions in this area is making available the *EIA Training Resource Manual* to EIA practitioners particularly in developing countries and CITs.

The UNEP EIA Training Resource Manual - Second Edition

The first and second editions of the UNEP *EIA Training Resource Manual* is the result of cooperation among a number of organisations and individual experts committed to supporting environmental assessment as a major part of capacity building for sustainable development. The process

The EIA Training Resource Manual is intended to support capacity development in Environmental Impact Assessment. It is a tool for trainers who have some background experience and understanding of EIA. It is designed to assist them in preparing and delivering training courses that provide an understanding of, and basic capability in the application of EIA.

of its preparation has been characterized as being collaborative, participatory and open.



The preliminary version of this edition, published in 1996, underwent a series of formal trials in Uganda, Hungary (Central and Eastern Europe), Vietnam (Southeast Asia), and Tegucigalpa (Central America). The results of the trials and updates, as well as feedback from various sources, were used in preparing the second edition of the UNEP *EIA Training Resource Manual*.

This edition also has been updated to reflect the developments in EIA law, process and practice that have occurred since the preliminary version was prepared. New and revised training topics in Section E were reviewed by a number of EIA experts.

The manual is a tool to assist trainers in preparing and delivering training courses that provide an understanding of, and basic proficiency in, the application of EIA.

The manual is designed specifically to assist trainers to:

- identify local EIA needs and priorities;
- custom design training courses to meet these needs;
- undertake EIA training as part of a strategy for capacity building; and
- encourage networking of EIA professionals to facilitate exchange of information and develop new skills.

A range of courses can be prepared by using the manual. A short programme can be designed for high-ranking government officials to introduce the benefits of the EIA process and its role in sustainable development. Alternatively, longer courses can be designed for EIA practitioners who require a detailed understanding of some or all of the stages involved in the EIA process.

The manual forms the centrepiece of a package of EIA training materials, which includes two companion or supporting volumes:

- *Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: Towards an Integrated Approach*, which describes aspects of international experience in EIA good practice and

the development of integrated approaches to impact assessment.

- *Case Studies of EIA Practice in Developing Countries*, which describes the realities, and provides examples of implementation, of the main elements and steps of the EIA process.

With these materials, the manual can be used to design and present EIA training courses and programmes that draw on lessons of EIA good practice and relate these to the situation in developing and transitional countries. Above all, the manual should be applied and adapted based on EIA capacity building needs. These should be identified at the start of the process and before training commences. This analysis should also assist in incorporating local sources of information, contacts and case studies, which can be used to make the training more relevant, useful and interesting to course participants.

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(1) Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment: Towards an Integrated Approach, and (2) Case Studies of EIA Practice in Developing Countries.

Manual design and content

The manual is in five main sections:

Section A introduces the manual and how to use it.

Section B describes the role and importance of EIA training and capacity building.

Section C contains the outline of a Training Needs Analysis, some or all of which can be used to identify or confirm the specific training requirements.

Section D contains advice on how to design, present and evaluate training courses.

Section E is a series of training topics addressing the key steps involved in the EIA process. These topics are all in a similar format and provide session outlines; a selection of training activities; a reading list and other references; as

well as other resource materials such as overhead projector sheets and handouts.

These sections are briefly described below.

Section A: The manual in perspective

This section describes the rationale, aims and approach of the manual. It provides an orientation for trainers and others on the use and interpretation of the manual and lists contacts and references that can be used to obtain additional information about the EIA process.

Section B: Capacity building and the environment

This section outlines a framework for undertaking EIA training based on the concept and principles of capacity building. It elaborates several perspectives that EIA trainers should bear in mind when using this manual, including precepts and measures to support and ensure the quality of EIA training.

Section C: Training needs analysis

This section of the manual first provides guidance about collecting background EIA information and materials, as part of training needs analysis. It can be used to identify or confirm specific EIA training requirements and to highlight the influence that the economic, political and social contexts may have on the presentation of the course. Several aids and tools for this purpose are described, including a training needs workshop to bring together a cross-section of EIA stakeholders.

The full workshop may not always be needed if the training needs are very clear and the context in which the training is undertaken is well understood.

Finally, this section on the analysis of training needs contains a short questionnaire that can be completed by each course participant before a course begins so that the trainer can gain an understanding of their individual needs.



Section D: Course design, delivery and evaluation

This section provides the tools to:

- develop course outlines
- present courses effectively
- prepare participant handbooks
- evaluate the success of a course

Section E: Training topics

A series of training topics is provided. These are focused on the key stages of EIA and other important related issues.

The training topics are structured to provide:

- background materials in the form of session outlines;
- training activities including detailed group activities and themes for discussion or speakers;
- references; and
- resource materials.

These materials have been packaged to encourage the trainer to incorporate local materials and information. The trainer should add or delete materials to suit the needs of the participants as identified during the training needs analysis.

It is envisaged that practitioners developing new country-specific materials will make these available to their colleagues and will build up a network of training and practitioner contacts to encourage this exchange of materials.

UNEP EIA Network

UNEP is currently setting up a network of collaborating institutions which would assume responsibility to:

- customize the manual, reflecting regional requirements and cases;
- distribute the manual and support its use for EIA training in the regions;
- facilitate the launch of regional workshops to introduce the manual; and
- monitor and report back on developments and experience, through the Internet.

Collaborating institutions so far identified are:

- Asian Institute of Technology, (AIT), Thailand
- Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanza (CATIE), Costa Rica
- Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), Hungary
- Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA), Namibia

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The UNEP EIA Training Resource Manual was prepared by:

The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment Centre for Environmental Assessment and Management, UK, (Barry Sadler and Karl Fuller, 2000); and

Environment Australia (formerly the Environment Protection Group), Canberra, Australia (Bronwyn Ridgway, Mary McCabe, John Baily, Robin Saunders, Barry Sadler, 1996).

With the guidance and technical support of the UNEP International Working Group on EIA and under the direction of Hussein Abaza, UNEP/Economics and Trade Branch, Geneva.

For institutions interested to be part of the UNEP EIA Network, and for other enquiries, inputs and feedback on the use of the UNEP EIA Training Resource Manual, please contact:

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For access to the manual and its companion publications, manual updates and information on the Internet, please access the Australian EIA Network at:
<http://www.environment.gov.au/net/eianet.html>



UNEP/ETB Publications

"From Globalization to Sustainable Development, UNEP's work on trade, economics and sustainable development," UNEP, Geneva, 2002. <http://www.unep.ch/etu/wssd/index.htm>

"Environment and Trade: A Handbook," (also available in French and Spanish) UNEP-IISD, 2000. http://www.unep.ch/etu/publications/Envi_and_Trade.htm

"Reference Manual for the Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies," UNEP, Geneva, 2001. http://www.unep.ch/etu/publications/Envi_and_Trade.htm

The UNEP first round country case studies on trade and environment (integrated assessments at the sectoral level) are available on: http://www.unep.ch/etu/publications/Ctry_studies.htm

A synthesis of the results of these studies is available in the following publication: *Trade Liberalization and the Environment, Lessons learned from Bangladesh, Chile, India, Philippines, Romania and Uganda*, UNEP, New York and Geneva, 1999. http://www.unep.ch/etu/publications/Ctry_studies.htm

The preliminary synthesis report of the second round of country studies (2000-2002) can be found on <http://www.unep.ch/etu/doha/papers.htm>

"Integrated Assessment as a Tool for Achieving Sustainable Trade Policies" by H. Abaza and R. Hamwey, reprinted from: *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, Volume 21, Number 6, December 2001

Download or access bibliographical information for these and other documents via the UNEP/ETB internet site: <http://www.unep.ch/etu/publications/index.htm>

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