



TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Office of The Chief Minister

P.O. Box 834, 33 Admin Drive
Road Town, Tortola, B.V.Is.
Phone No. 284-494-3701 Ext. 2158 Fax No. 284-494-5794 E-mail: bvitcp@candwbvi.net

Environmental Impact Assessment Process Guidelines

Introduction

The Planning Authority has responsibility for managing any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process under the Physical Planning Act No. 15 2004. Some major projects in the BVI are required to undertake performance of an EIA and the production of an environmental impact assessment report. One of the main differences between an EIA process and other statutory assessment processes is that the public have more opportunities to comment on how a project is assessed and, if approved, how it should be managed.

A comprehensive and thorough EIA process assists in achieving ecologically sustainable development in meeting environmental management responsibilities and encourages community participation.

A main purpose of an EIA process is to inform government (the decision maker) of the likely impacts of a development and practicable mitigation measures before an approval decision is made. The EIA report is a summary of information and commitments on environmental management for consideration by stakeholders including government decision-makers.

EIA Process Summary

It is recognised that each proposal has project-specific and site-specific features and issues that must be taken into account in the development of requirements for an EIA.

The introduction of an Environmental Screening Form is required to be submitted with each development application. Screening will identify the need to:

- Mitigate environmental effects;
- Modify the project plan;
- Determine Category of Project

- Carry out further assessment of the environmental effects of the project

Upon evaluation of the critical issues for a proposed development, a category will be determined for the development using the Category Determination Form, and the subsequent requirements for each category will be outlined for the development application. The categories and requirements are listed below:

Category A; Full environmental assessment is required:

High Impact; Category A projects are likely to have significant, numerous and complex adverse social, health or biophysical impacts because of the scale, extent and location of the project action. Before a decision can be made to proceed with this type of project, an environmental assessment is required and specific mitigation measures need to be agreed to reduce negative impacts to an acceptable level.

Required Outputs:

- 1) Environmental Screening Form
- 2) Development Application
- 3) Consultant Qualifications
- 4) Scoping Report; identification of critical issues,
- 5) Modified Terms of Reference to conduct an EIA
- 6) EIA Workplan; methodology and schedule
- 7) Public Meeting/Consultation
- 8) EIA Report
- 9) Public Hearing
- 10) Environmental Management Plan
- 11) Emergency Response Plan
- 12) Environmental Monitoring and Report

Category B; Limited environmental impact assessment is required:

Medium Impact and/or significant potential for environmental enhancement; Category B projects tend to be less complex than Category A projects, although they may have some significant adverse environmental impacts or risks. These impacts are generally more predictable than those for Category A projects and can often, but not always, be mitigated through standard and widely recognised measures. Category B will often require a limited EIA in a simplified form without a separate scoping study.

Required Outputs:

- 1) Consultant Qualifications
- 2) Limited Environmental Impact Assessment Form
- 3) Limited Environmental Impact Assessment Report
- 4) Public Meeting/Consultation (based on type of development)
- 5) Environmental Management Plan
- 6) Emergency Response Plan
- 7) Environmental Monitoring and Report

Category C -No assessment required:

Low impact and no significant potential for environmental enhancement

Category C projects are not expected to have either significant adverse environmental impacts, or significant scope for further environmental enhancement.

Required Outputs:

- 1) Development Application
- 2) Required design drawings

Purpose of the guideline

The purpose of this EIA guideline is to inform stakeholders in general and assist proponents in particular by providing a clear guide to the EIA process (see Process flowchart on the following page). The intended audience is industry, proponents and consultants of development, community stakeholders, interested third parties, decision-makers and members of the public.

The objectives of this guideline are:

- To provide direction and information for projects undergoing the EIA process per Section 26 of the Physical Planning Act.
- To assist proponents and stakeholders in understanding the EIA process and participating effectively and efficiently in related regulatory outcomes.
- To introduce the required documents for the EIA process:
 - Environmental Screening Form

- Limited Environmental Screening Form (Category B)
- Limited Environmental Impact Assessment Report Format (Category B)
- EIA Scoping Study Terms of Reference (Category A)
- EIA Standard Terms of Reference (Category A)
- EIA Standard Report Format
- Environmental Assessment Guidelines (All categories)

Future Documents

The Environmental Assessment Guidelines is currently being modified to include helpful methods to conduct an EIA. It will also include examples of mitigation measures to offset negative impacts from a development. These guidelines will continually be updated to include additional information as needed.

Environmental Management Plan Guidelines document will also be provided to the applicant for guidance.

Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, Standards, and Criteria are being constructed and will be available to the public upon completion.

Environmental Review Criteria is being drafted and will be used by the Development Control Section for guidance during the review of applications.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN OTHER DOCUMENTS, THE TERM “IMPACT ASSESSMENT”, OR “IA” IS USED RATHER THAN “ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT”, OR “EIA”. THESE TERMS REFER TO THE SAME PROCESS, BUT THE TERM “EIA” IS BEING GRADUALLY REPLACED WITH “IA” BECAUSE THIS TERM MAKES IT CLEAR THAT ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

ARE TO BE CONSIDERED IN ASSESSMENTS SUBMITTED FOR DEVELOPMENTS

Enquiries:

Town and Country Planning Department

Government of the British Virgin Islands

33 Admin Drive

Road Town, Tortola, BVI

Ph. 284-494-3701

Fax. 284-494-5794

Website: www.tcp.gov.vg