



This project is funded by the European Union



A checklist for the review of environmental impact assessment studies - tables

This checklist is based on the European Commission's 'Guidance on EIA: EIS Review' from June 2001, which was reviewed in detail. Considering the audience for this document, nongovernmental organizations and the general public, the most pertinent questions were selected to enable a comprehensive check of the quality of an environmental study by non-specialists. For the purpose of clarity and ease of following an environmental study, this checklist is divided into specific sections dedicated to the most important segments of an environmental study. The importance of these sections is explained under each heading, followed by a set of questions to which qualitative answers are to be provided after the study had been read. Possible answers are:

Not applicable: This answer is appropriate in cases where questions are specific to one type of development or technology, which is not the topic of the environmental study being evaluated. These questions carry no weight in evaluating the overall quality of the study.

Fully meets best practices: This answer indicates that the information that would answer the relevant question is well elaborated, based on appropriate data and other information, and thus can serve as a basis for making development decisions. Such data and information need to be up-to-date, comprehensive, and relevant for the topic of discussion; with official sources properly quoted and any cited background studies available for review.

Partially meets best practices: This answer indicates that there is not enough information or analysis provided in the environmental study to fully answer a particular question; the study does not consider all important data or up-to-date information, so before any development decision can be made these evaluations should be improved.

Does not meet best practices: This answer indicates a significant deviation from the purpose of an environmental study, raising serious concerns about the quality of a decision that can be made based on the information presented in the study. It implies that these aspects of the study need to be re-evaluated or improved with more data before a development decision can be made.

Description of the project

Question	Score	Notes
Is the alignment of the project with relevant strategies, development plans, and regulatory frameworks explained?		
Is the programme for implementation of the project described, detailing the estimated length of time and start and finish dates for construction, operation, and decommissioning?		
Are all the main components of the project described and represented graphically on a plan showing the boundary of the development, including any land required temporarily during construction?		
Are all activities described during (i) construction, (ii) operation and (iii) decommissioning stages (if appropriate), including size, capacity, throughput, input and output?		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are all additional services and/or developments required for the project described and, if applicable, quantified, including details of other permits required?</p>		
<p>Are any developments likely to occur and likely to be altered as a consequence of the project identified?</p>		
<p>Are any other existing or planned developments with which the project could have cumulative effects identified?</p>		
<p>Is the area of land occupied by each of the permanent project components, based on project layout, quantified and shown on a scaled map?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Is the area of land required temporarily for construction quantified and mapped, and a plan for reinstatement of that land described?</p>		
<p>Are the size, form and appearance of any structures or other works developed as part of the project described?</p>		
<p>For projects involving the displacement of people or businesses, are the numbers and other characteristics of those displaced described?</p>		
<p>Are the types and quantities of outputs produced by the project described based on calculation (and not estimates)?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are the types and quantities of raw materials and energy needed for construction and operation discussed?</p>		
<p>Are the environmental implications of the sourcing of raw materials discussed?</p>		
<p>Is employment created or lost as a result of the project during (i) construction, (ii) operation, and (iii) decommissioning (if appropriate) discussed?</p>		
<p>Are the types and quantities of appropriate residues and emissions (i.e. solid waste, liquid effluents, and gaseous and particulate emissions) generated during (i) construction, (ii) operation and (iii) decommissioning (if appropriate) identified?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are the composition and toxicity or other hazards of all appropriate residues and emissions (i.e. solid wastes, liquid effluents, and gaseous and particulate emissions) produced by the project discussed?</p>		
<p>Are the methods for collecting, storing, treating, transporting, and finally disposing of all appropriate residues and emissions (i.e. solid wastes, liquid effluents, gaseous and particulate emissions) described?</p>		
<p>Are the locations for final disposal of all appropriate residues and emissions (i.e. solid wastes, liquid effluents, gaseous and particulate emissions) discussed?</p>		
<p>Are any sources of noise, heat, light or electromagnetic radiation from the project identified and quantified?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are the methods for estimating the quantities and composition of all residues and emissions identified and any uncertainty attached to estimates of residues and emissions discussed?</p>		
<p>Are any risks associated with the project discussed, such as risks from handling of hazardous materials, risks from spills, fire, explosion, risks of traffic accidents, risks from breakdown or failure of processes or facilities, and risks from exposure of the project to natural disasters?</p>		
<p>Are measures to prevent and respond to accidents and abnormal events described?</p>		

Consideration of alternatives

Question	Score	Notes
Is the baseline environmental situation in the 'no action' situation described?		
Are alternatives considered during the project development described in detail, with their respective environmental effects?		
Are the considered alternatives and their environmental effects compared to the 'no action' situation and the proposed project?		
Is the process of project development described, including elaboration of reasons for the chosen project?		

Description of environment likely to be affected by the project

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Is the existing land use plan of the area to be occupied by the project and the surrounding area presented? Are the land uses of the area to be occupied by the project and the surrounding area described, including any potential land use conflicts with existing land uses?</p>		
<p>Are the topography, geology and soils of the land to be occupied by the project and the surrounding area described? Are any significant features of the topography or geology of the area described and are the conditions and use of soils described?</p>		
<p>Is the water environment of the area described?</p>		
<p>Are the hydrology, water quality and use of any water resources that may be affected by the project described?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are microclimate and meteorological conditions and existing air quality in the area described?</p>		
<p>Is the existing situation regarding light, noise, heat and electromagnetic radiation described?</p>		
<p>Are any material assets in the area that may be affected by the project described?</p>		
<p>Are locations or features of landscape, townscape, archaeological, historic, architectural, or other community or cultural importance in the area that may be negatively affected by project described, including any designated or protected sites, landscapes and important viewpoints?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are demographic, social and socio-economic conditions (e.g. employment) in the area described?</p>		
<p>Are methods and investigation process undertaken properly disclosed? Have sources of data and information on the existing environment been adequately referenced?</p>		
<p>Given the environmental information presented and prospective effects of the proposed projects and its alternatives, are there any issues left unclear? Are all the necessary data presented? If there are aspects of the environment that are not adequately described, are there any measures planned to clarify these issues?</p>		

Description of the likely significant effects of the project

Question	Score	Notes
Is the process by which the scope of the environmental study was defined described?		
Was full consultation carried out during scoping, and are the comments and views fully presented?		
Are relevant direct, primary effects on land uses, people, and property described, and where appropriate quantified?		
Are relevant direct, primary effects on geological features and characteristics of soils described, and where appropriate quantified?		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on fauna, flora, and habitats described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on the hydrology and water quality of water features described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on uses of the water environment described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on air quality and climatic conditions described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on the acoustic environment (e.g. noise or vibration) described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on heat, light or electromagnetic radiation described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on material assets and depletion of non-renewable natural resources (e.g. fossil fuels, minerals) described?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on locations or features of cultural importance described?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on the quality of the landscape, and on views and viewpoints described, and where appropriate illustrated?</p>		
<p>Are relevant direct, primary effects on demography, social and socio-economic condition in the area described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are secondary effects on any of the above aspects of the environment caused by primary effects on other aspects described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are temporary, short term, long term, and permanent effects caused during construction or during time-limited phases of project operation or decommissioning described?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are effects which could result from accidents, abnormal events or exposure of the project to natural or man-made disasters described, and where appropriate quantified?</p>		
<p>Are cumulative effects on the environment of the project, together with other existing or planned developments in the locality, described?</p>		
<p>Are the geographic extent, duration, frequency, reversibility, and probability of occurrence of each effect identified, as appropriate?</p>		
<p>Are primary and secondary effects on human health and welfare described, and where appropriate quantified, where appropriate?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
<p>Are impacts on issues such as biodiversity, global climate change, and sustainable development discussed, where appropriate?</p>		
<p>Is the significance or importance of each predicted effect discussed in terms of its compliance with legal requirements and the number, importance, and sensitivity of people, resources, or other affected?</p>		
<p>Where effects are evaluated against legal standards or requirements, are appropriate local, national or international standards used and relevant guidance followed?</p>		
<p>Are methods used to predict effects described, and are the reasons for their choice, any difficulties encountered, and uncertainties in the results discussed?</p>		

Question	Score	Notes
Where there is uncertainty about the precise details of the project, or when data is insufficient and its impact on the environment, are worst case predictions described?		
Is the basis for evaluating the significance or importance of impacts clearly described?		
Are impacts described on the basis that all proposed mitigation has been implemented, i.e. are residual impacts described?		
Is the level of treatment of each effect appropriate to its importance for the development of consent decision? Does the discussion focus on the key issues and avoid irrelevant or unnecessary information?		
Is appropriate emphasis given to the most severe, adverse effects of the project with lesser emphasis given to less significant effects?		

Description of mitigation

Question	Score	Notes
Where there are significant adverse effects on any aspect of the environment is the potential for mitigation of these effects discussed?		
Are any measures which the developer proposes to implement to mitigate effects clearly described and their effect on the magnitude and significance of impacts clearly explained?		
Is it clear whether the developer has made a binding commitment to implement the proposed mitigation, or that the mitigation measures are just suggestions or recommendations?		
Are the developer's reasons for choosing the proposed mitigation explained?		

Question	Score	Notes
Are responsibilities for implementation of mitigation, including funding, clearly defined?		
Where mitigation of significant adverse effects is not practical or the developer has chosen not to propose any mitigation are the reasons for this clearly explained?		
Is it evident that the full range of possible approaches to mitigation, including measures to reduce or avoid impacts, including alternative strategies, locations, methods/processes, compensation measures, were considered?		
Is a monitoring plan elaborated in the EIA study?		

Question	Score	Notes
Are the indicators for monitoring clearly defined based on the baseline information, the objective, and likely impacts identified by the EIA study?		
Where monitoring may reveal significant adverse effects, does the EIA study clearly define commitments for actions to be made in response to these adverse effects?		
Is a plan outlined for how affected stakeholders will be informed of these adverse effects?		
Does the suggested monitoring scheme include monitoring of likely transboundary impacts?		
If so, is it clear how the likely affected foreign country will be informed about monitoring results and participate in actions in response to any adverse effects?		

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