

Developing an Environmental Impact Statement

**AHAPC TOPIC II WORKSHOP
ROLE OF YUKON FIRST NATIONS IN
A MAJOR PROJECT EA PROCESS**

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What is an Environmental Assessment?

A planning process to predict the environmental effects of proposed activities/developments before they are carried out.

A proponent's **environmental assessment** for a proposed project is submitted to a Review Panel in the form of an ***environmental impact statement***.

Environmental Impact Statement

- Promotes informed decisions by making information concerning potential significant environmental impacts available to regulatory agencies and the public
- Provides environmental information to the proponent to use in project planning
- Is consistent with the “Terms of Reference” as detailed by the review panel undertaking the review of the environmental assessment
- Includes input gathered from public participation and traditional knowledge studies
- Satisfies regulatory requirements

Environmental Impact Statement

Overview

Typically, an EIS presents a project proponent's environmental assessment of the project by providing:

- an overview of the proposed project
- the purpose of and need for the proposed project
- a range of alternatives to the project and ways of carrying out the preferred alternative
- an analysis of the environmental impact of alternatives determined by the proponent to be technically and economically feasible
- a description of the biophysical and socio-economic baseline conditions of the affected environment
- an assessment of potential biophysical and social (including cultural, depending on context), and economic impacts
- a description of mitigation measures to reduce adverse impacts and enhance beneficial impacts
- a summary of environmental monitoring and management plans

EIS Preparation Process

- Consultations with all stakeholders related to issues identification, valued components, potential mitigation methods
- Review all relevant legislated and regulators' environmental and project EA information requirements
- Review EA case law for principles affecting EIS development
- Determine assessment area
- Determine assessment methodology
- Identify and review relevant existing environmental information (including traditional knowledge and scientific information)
- Identify relevant data gaps
- Plan and undertake research (i.e., field work and traditional knowledge collection) to address relevant gaps
- Carry out the environmental assessment
- Draft the EIS anticipating the Terms of Reference

EIS Preparation Timeline

Project Determined
Feasible

Select
Concepts

Begin PIP
& EIS Preparation

Submit PIP

Receive TOR
& Revise Draft EIS

Submit EIS

Early Stakeholder Engagement
Followed by Consultation

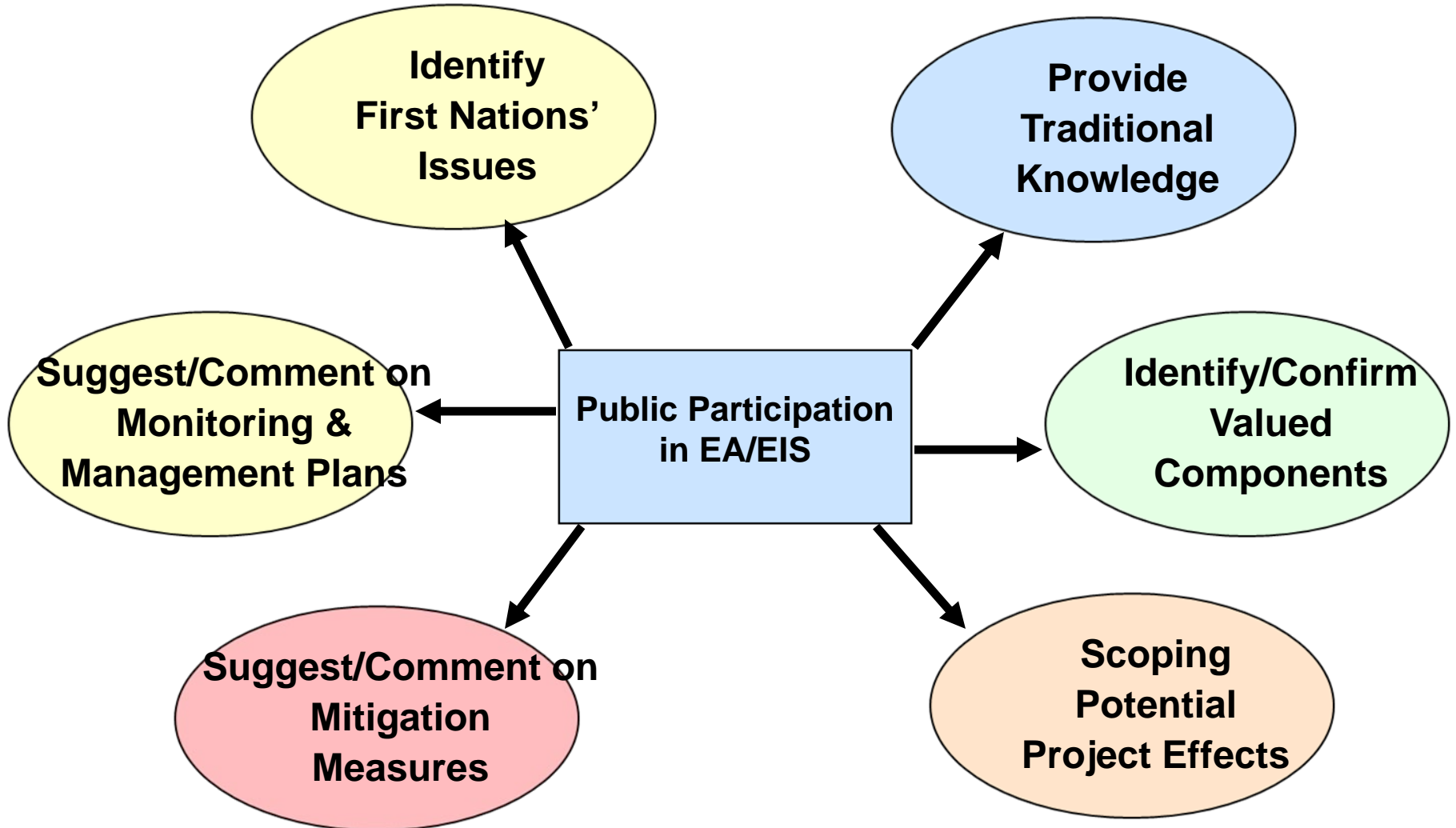
“PIP” means:

The Project Description suggested by CEAA (sometimes called **P**reliminary or **P**roject **I**nformation **P**ackage), as well as application(s) required to start environmental screening processes that are NOT triggered by the Project Description

Environmental Assessment Process

- **Consult** with stakeholders, including First Nations and government regulators
- **Collect baseline information**
- Use stakeholder input, traditional knowledge and scientific studies to **identify potential effects**
- **Develop mitigative measures** to reduce possible negative effects and strengthen positive effects
- **Assess post-mitigation effects** for their significance
- **Develop monitoring plans** for construction and operations
- **Apply adaptive management** including revising plans based on monitoring results and community input

EA/EIS Public Participation



Determining Significance of Effects

After consideration of mitigation, would the resulting effect be:

**Positive
or
Negative?**

?

**Localized
or
Regional?**

?

**Small
or
Large?**

?

**Short term
or
Long Term?**

EIS Topics – Biological & Physical

- Air
- Noise
- Land
- Vegetation
- Water
- Fish
- Wildlife
- Cumulative Effects



EIS Topics – Examples

AIR

- dust management
- greenhouse gases

NOISE

- impact on communities
- dislocation of wildlife

LAND

- slope stability
- permafrost and discontinuous permafrost

VEGETATION

- rare plants
- harvested plants

EIS Topics – Examples

WATER

- stream crossings
- water use & withdrawal

FISH

- habitat disturbance
- management of non-resident fishing
- identify & study species of interest
- identification of sensitive areas

WILDLIFE

- SARA/COSEWIC species
- protected areas
- habitat impact
- waste disposal
- management of non-resident hunting
- identify & study species of interest
- identification of sensitive areas

EIS Topics – Socio-Economic

- Economy
- Employment and Income
- Communities
- Community Wellness
- Traditional Culture
- Non-traditional Land and Resource Use
- Heritage Resources
- Cumulative Effects

EIS Topics – Examples

ECONOMY

- business opportunities
- revenue base for local government

EMPLOYMENT/INCOME

- education & skill levels
- employment by sector

COMMUNITIES

- demographics
- in/out movement of people
- impact on infrastructure & services

COMMUNITY WELLNESS

- air & water quality
- food choices & affordability
- living conditions

EIS Topics – Examples

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

- social organization
- harvesting
- lifestyle and values

HERITAGE RESOURCES

- historical/heritage sites
- archaeological sites

NON-TRADITIONAL LAND & RESOURCE USE

type/rates of extraction
ownership of & access
to resources

Conclusion

In order to develop an EIS that responds to all requirements, the proponent must...

- hear from all stakeholders on matters of interest and concern**
- apply relevant information it received to the EIS**
- provide alternatives and measures to mitigate potential negative effects of the proposed project and enhance positive effects**
- assess the environmental implications, providing the methodology and conclusions with regard to the significance of effects**