



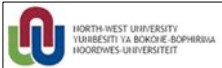
Nordic-Baltic Impact Assessment Conference 2012  
 Impact assessment in the Nordic-Baltic region: acquiring  
 cross regional experience, linking practice and research

**Keynote Address:**

**Effectiveness and Importance of  
 EIA Follow-up**

**Angus Morrison-Saunders**

- North West University, South Africa
  - Murdoch University, Australia
  - *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* journal
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Impact Assessment  
 and Project Appraisal

**Main Points**

EIA follow-up = learning and managing

- Projects (impacts) & EIA process (procedures)

**Effective EIA follow-up**

- Be creative – legislation may not be needed
  - regulators/consultants/proponents/NGOs each can create effective EIA follow-up

**Importance of EIA follow-up**

- To demonstrate the benefits of EIA as an essential tool for sustainable development

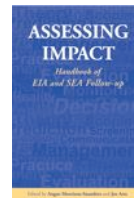
**Presentation Outline**

- 1. EIA follow-up definition**
- 2. Effective EIA follow-up – project level**
  - some international examples
- 3. Importance of follow-up – EIA concept**

Questions/discussion...

**1. EIA follow-up definition**

*The monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of a project or plan (that has been subject to EIA) for management of, and communication about, the environmental performance of that project or plan*

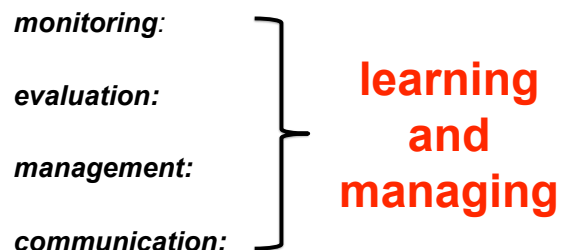


Morrison-Saunders & Arts (2004)

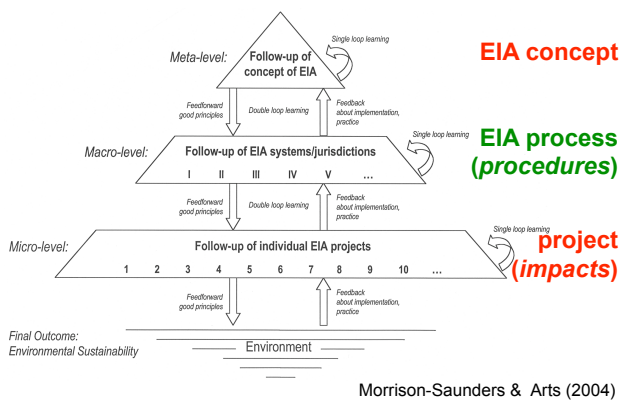
**EIA follow-up definition –  
 4 elements**

- monitoring:** collecting data
- evaluation:** interpreting/analysing data
- management:** responsive decisions & action
- communication:** informing/engaging stakeholders

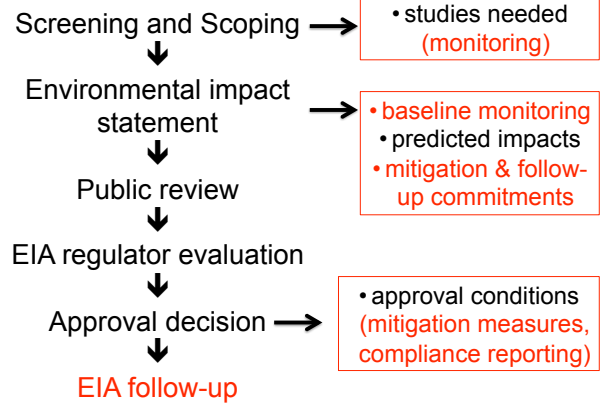
**EIA follow-up =**



## Tiers of learning and managing



## 2. Effective EIA follow-up – projects



**"Follow-up" is simply part of good EIA practice...**

## Follow-up as part of normal EIA practice - Western Australia

### Objectives of EIA:

- (4) ensure that **proponents take primary responsibility for protection of environment** relating to their proposals
- (5) promote **continuous improvement in EIA** through **learning** and knowledge gained through EIA
- (6) provide basis for **ongoing environmental management and improvement**, including through the results of monitoring.

[EIA Administrative Procedures 2010, s3]

## Western Australia...

EIA approval conditions include requirements for:

### 1. Annual Auditing Compliance Reporting

- proponent demonstrates compliance with conditions along with corrective action taken

### 2. Performance Review and Reporting

- proponent reports on environmental outcomes, including best practice for industry and evidence of continuous improvement

[public reporting – no other 'regulations' on follow-up]

## Independent follow-up agency – Canada

Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency - Ekati Diamond Mine



- established by Government of Canada EIA approval

[www.monitoringagency.net/](http://www.monitoringagency.net/)

- funded by proponent

- reports on both proponent and government activities



↳ [strategic/sustainability actions]

## Web cameras & online monitoring data streaming – Hong Kong



- proponent does work, public accountability
- set in EIA approval conditions



thermal desorption plant treating dioxin contaminated soil

Au & Hui (2004)

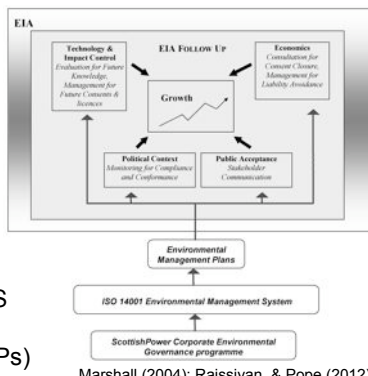
## Hong Kong refs

Hong Kong EIA Ordinance  
 Technical Memorandum  
 Annex 21 Contents of an Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A)  
<http://www.epd.gov.hk/eia/english/legis/memorandum/annex21.html> [accessed 25 July

2012]

## Apply EIA Follow-up through EMPs and EMS

- ScottishPower – voluntary EIA follow-up is good business sense
- Iran – oil and gas sector integration of EIA and EMS
- South Africa – development of EMS part of EIA approval conditions (also EMPs)

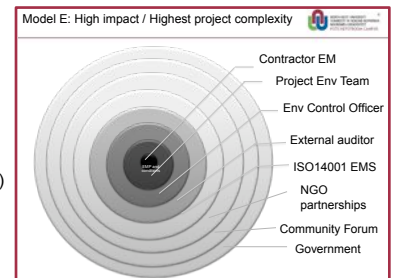


Marshall (2004); Raissiyani & Pope (2012)

## Match follow-up approach to specific circumstances

- 'onion skin' approach for increasing project complexity – South Africa

Wessels (2012)



- industrial area odour monitoring by smell – Bhuddist monk, Thailand

Ross et al (2001)

## There is no single 'right way' for doing EIA follow-up

creative solutions need to be found that work in a particular context or 'EIA culture'



you can't make a Mona Lisa with 'painting by numbers'!

## Conclusions on effective EIA follow-up at project level

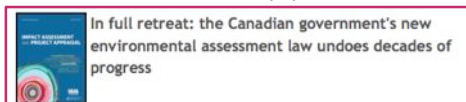
- Be creative – legislation may not be needed
  - Just do it!
- Regulators/consultants/proponents/NGOs can all create effective EIA follow-up through project implementation strategies
- Follow-up warrants attention throughout entire EIA process
  - EIA approval conditions especially important

### 3. Importance of follow-up – EIA concept

*EIA seems to be under some threat worldwide(?)*

- e.g. recent changes to Canadian EIA legislation
- also The Netherlands, England, Australia... Nordic-Baltic(?)

Gibson (2012)



### Global importance of EIA...

*...191 of the 193 member nations of the United Nations either have national legislation or have signed some form of international legal instrument that refers to the use of EIA*

Morgan (2012)

### Motivation for EIA changes – in recent/ongoing reviews

- efficiency – faster and fewer EIAs
- merge with other tools/instruments (e.g. planning) – i.e. replace EIA
- delegate EIA from national to local/municipal level [but capacity issues?]
- promote SEA as a way to avoid project level EIAs

### But have we demonstrated the benefits of EIA?

Sustainable Development



*role for EIA follow-up...*

### Effective EIA is needed... Does the following sound familiar?

"Some of the main criticisms of the EIA system [in South Africa] have been couched in terms of 'ticking the box' with respect to procedural compliance; in other words a superficial check that each step in the process has been addressed rather than in-depth quality control or analysis (e.g. Macleod 2006; DEA 2011b, p32).

It has been argued that the legislative framework has led to the **legalistic and mechanistic straight jacketing of assessment processes**, transforming it into a **lifeless and bureaucratic exercise**, a move away from the need for flexibility and issues driven approaches typical during the early years of EIA (Sowman *et al.*, 1996; Kidd and Retief, 2009)".

Morrison-Saunders and Retief (2012)

### What are the benefits of EIA?

- good project design & planning (e.g. alternatives)
  - change organisational (proponent, regulator) values and behaviour
  - effective mitigation (modify projects)
- avoid impacts  
save \$\$ for proponent

Orotolano and Shepherd (1995)  
Bartlett and Kurian (1999)

## The benefits of EIA are relatively hard to document...?

It is much easier to identify perceived costs of EIA

- e.g. time and money...

Is it time for practitioners to demonstrate the benefits of EIA?

- i.e. follow-up of the *EIA concept*

## The inefficiency of environmental impact assessment: reality or myth?

Garry Middle and Isaac Middle

*Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 28(2), June 2010, pages 159–168

## The Australian Government's environmental impact assessment (EIA) regime: using surveys to identify proponent views on cost-effectiveness

Andrew Macintosh

*Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 28(3), September 2010, pages 175–188

What is ~~wrong~~ with EIA?

↑  
right !!

["Does IA have an impact?"]

## Can we demonstrate that EIA is making a positive contribution to sustainable development?

Enhancement is needed (not just impact mitigation)

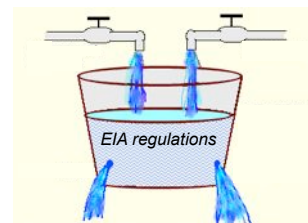
- i.e. *learning and managing for progress to sustainability*
- e.g. *IAPA special issue Sept 2011*



## Conclusions on importance of EIA follow-up

- Follow-up is necessary to demonstrate the benefits of EIA
- EIA practitioners (regulators, consultants, academics) personally are best placed to do this

## "More legislation" may not be necessary...



sometimes simple solutions, implemented by enlightened individuals can be just as effective as regulatory approaches...

### Contributing to sustainability as an environmental impact assessment practitioner

Alex Weaver, Jenny Pope, Angus Morrison-Saunders and Paul Lochner

*Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 26(2), June 2008, pages 91–98

### Emphasising enhancement in all forms of impact assessment: introduction to a special issue

Elsa João, Frank Vanclay and Lea den Broeder

*Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 29(3), September 2011, pages 170–180

### Walking the sustainability assessment talk – Progressing the practice of environmental impact assessment (EIA)

Angus Morrison-Saunders<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, Francois Retief<sup>a</sup>

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### Additional References (provided in response to questions received)

#### Hong Kong website addresses:

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- Hong Kong EIA Ordinance, Schedule 4: Matters That May be Specified in Environmental Permit, <http://www.epd.gov.hk/eia/english/legis/s4.html>
- The Role of Independent Environmental Checker, EIAO Guidance Note No. 4/2002, [www.epd.gov.hk/eia/hb/materials/GN4.doc](http://www.epd.gov.hk/eia/hb/materials/GN4.doc)

#### Publications on SEA follow-up

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