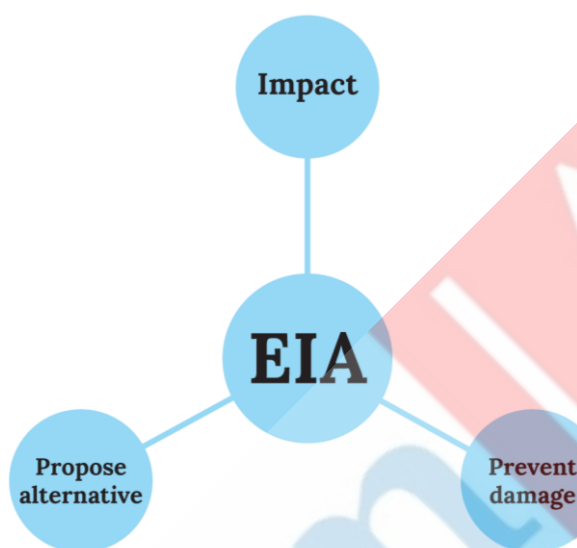


CHAPTER 3

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

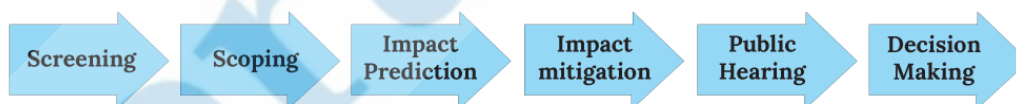
What is EIA?

EIA stands for “Environmental Impact Assessment” and is notified under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986. Simply put, EIA is a detailed study regarding the impact of any project on the environment. It serves as a decision-making tool which helps policy makers approve, reject or find an alternative to a project.



EIA Process

A project requiring environmental clearance goes through screening and scoping processes. Screening is done to see whether a project requires environmental clearance as per the statutory notification. Scoping is a process of detailing the terms of reference of EIA. Thereafter, an impact prediction and impact mitigation analysis are done. Then, a draft EIA report is prepared which is then sent for public hearing.



Under the existing **2006 EIA notification**, projects are categorized into **Category A and Category B**. EIA for Category A project requires clearance by Environment Ministry and for Category B project, State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) clearance is required. All Category A project needs to mandatorily undergo the EIA process.

However, Category-B project are further sub-classified into **Category B1 and Category B2 projects**, depending on their scope and environmental impact. Amongst the two, Category-B2 projects have been exempted from the EIA process.

Rapid EIA requires collection of one season data of all significant environmental impacts and their mitigation while comprehensive EIA collects data from all four seasons.

The **Environment Management Plan (EMP)** is a site-specific plan developed to ensure that the project is implemented in an environmentally sustainable manner where all contractors and subcontractors, including consultants understand the potential environmental risks arising from the project and take appropriate actions to properly manage that risk.

An **Environmental Supplemental Plan (ESP)** is an environmentally beneficial project or activity that is not required by law, but an alleged violator of EIA Notification 2006 agrees to undertake as a part of the process of environmental clearance. ESP allows violator companies to continue their activities by paying a financial penalty.

PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub) is a web based, role-based workflow application which has been developed for online submission and monitoring of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ Clearances from Central, State and district level authorities.

Major Provisions of draft EIA 2020

1. **Public Consultation**
 - a. Period of public consultation hearings is proposed to be reduced to a maximum of 40 days.
 - b. Time provided for the public to submit their responses is proposed to be reduced from present 30 to 20 days.
2. **More discretionary powers to government**
 - a. Central government can declare “economically sensitive areas” without public hearing or environmental clearance.
 - b. Government also gets to decide which projects are to be considered “strategic”.
3. **Post-facto clearance**
 - a. Legalisation of projects that have commenced operations without obtaining necessary clearances; subject to a payment of penalty.
4. **Extended period of clearances**
5. **Exemptions clause**
 - a. It identifies a long list of projects like roads and pipelines in border areas which have been exempted from public consultation and prior clearance.
6. **Baseline Data**
 - a. Does away with the need to carry out studies covering all seasons in a year.
7. **Frequency of compliance reports increased** from once every six months to a year.