

Quality control in EIA

Goals, directions and
international practices



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Quality control in EIA

THE GOALS OF QUALITY CONTROL



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General Aims

- To ensure procedures are correctly applied (e.g. on screening or participation).
- To promote the EIA Directive's main goal of "a high level of protection of the environment and of human health"
- To ensure EIAs are objective, scientifically / methodologically rigorous, and address the appropriate issues (scope).
- To promote appropriate professional practices amongst EIA consultants / government agencies.
- To learn from experience (e.g. through monitoring of impacts).



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Lessons from 25 years of experience

- Quality over much of the EU has been problematic.
- Numerous academic studies have highlighted serious problems with objectivity, scope (too much!), and clarity of EIA reports.
- Problems with procedural compliance: e.g. screening in UK in 1980s & 1990s.
- But quality has generally improved over time.



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THE 2014 AMENDMENT DIRECTIVE



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2014 Revisions to EU EIA legislation

Directive 2014/52/EU

4 2014 Official Journal of the European Union 1.124/1

I
(legislative act)

DIRECTIVES

DIRECTIVE 2014/52/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
of 16 April 2014
amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private
projects on the environment
(text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 192(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national Parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee ⁽¹⁾,Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions ⁽²⁾,Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure ⁽³⁾,

“It is necessary to amend
Directive 2011/92/EU in order
to strengthen the quality of
the EIA procedure ... and
enhance coherence and
synergies with other Union
legislation and policies”.



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Revisions to the EU EIA legislation

- **Timeframes** for the key stages: e.g. screening decisions, usually within 90; public consultations, at least 30 days.
- Simplification of **screening** procedures, 'duly motivated' decisions.
- **EIA reports** to be more understandable, especially as regards the baseline and alternatives.
- The **quality and the content of the reports** will be improved.
- The grounds for **development consent decisions** must be clear and more transparent for the public.
- Monitoring of significant impacts of consented projects is required, but existing monitoring arrangements may be used.

See: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/review.htm>



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INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES



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The Dutch Model

- Quality control appointed by an EIA authority: the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment.
- Can establish project-specific expert panels to advise on scope of EIA, alternatives to be considered, and review the EIA report.
- Also active internationally, in terms of publishing guidance, providing technical support, etc.



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England & Wales Model

- Relatively weak legislative provisions for quality control.
- Self-regulation of EIA consultants through:
 - EIA quality Mark;
 - Professional accreditation (Chartered Environmentalist).
 - Emphasis on business competitiveness.
- Emphasis on using existing systems for monitoring.



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NATIONAL PRACTICES



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