

# Environmental and Social Assessment a practical approach to plan for Climate Adaptation



## Climate robust plans and projects



Related to these and other SDGs

Climate change urges countries and their inhabitants to adapt their society in many ways. Decision-making is complex and puts heavy pressure on governments. Environmental and social impact assessment - especially when applied at strategic level first - helps national governments step by step to plan for climate adaptation. The first step is to assess vulnerability to climate change by using climate change projections. Based on this information, a vision on the future development of nearly all sectors and areas can be developed. This then results in a decision-making framework to guide the investments of the government and the private sector.

## For plans and projects

Environmental and social assessment is legally adopted by almost all countries around the world. Ideally, it is performed at two levels of decision making: the strategic level and the project level.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):** Decision making on plans, policies or programmes, such as a coastal development or river basin plan.

**Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA):** Decision making on projects, such as a new reservoir dam or coastal defence works.

ESIA & SEA assess the **compatibility** of a proposed project / plan with (inter)national policies and agreements.

What international agreements and standards need to be considered? What does this mean for transboundary policy and action?

How to ensure my community has access to water in the coming decades?

SEA & ESIA provide a roadmap for **informing and involving stakeholders**, including specific groups.



Is this a climate resilient investment?

ESIA & SEA contribute to **accountability and transparency** which enhances credibility and trust, and prevents conflict.

How can our proposal serve multiple objectives at the same time?

SEA & ESIA offer **alternative development pathways**. All alternatives are compared and judged by their effect on environment and society.

# Expertise Independency Transparency

The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment has more than 30 years of experience in supporting governmental organisations in the Netherlands and abroad with SEA and ESIA. Our expertise includes: independent advice at the request of governments, coaching, capacity building and knowledge & learning activities. We follow national legislation and apply international good practice.



## Examples of recent activities of the NCEA

**June 2023** - Coaching of a SEA process and facilitation of a multi-stakeholder meeting to discuss and adopt a vision for Lac Nokoué > [Benin](#)

**June 2023** - ESIA review of 'Zuidplaspolder' city expansion with eye for climate adaptation measures > [The Netherlands](#)

**September 2022**- Series of workshop and seminars about applying ESIA for climate-proof decision-making (in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment) > [Jordan](#)

**April 2021**- Independent advice on the scoping document of an integrated sustainable development plan / SEA for the Sankarini river basin based on inclusive stakeholder involvement. > [Mali](#)

All NCEA advisory reports are available at [www.eia.nl](http://www.eia.nl)

## What does the NCEA look for in an environmental and social assessment process?

### Quality of information

Does the process deliver all information needed for decision making, such as impacts, alternative options, mitigation measures and impact management measures?

### Dialogue

Does the process engage affected stakeholders in a timely, transparent and inclusive way?

### Influence

Does the process address relevant issues and provide usable information for decision makers? Is this done at the right time? Can decision makers be held accountable for their use of the assessment outcomes?

## Contact us



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