

Session 4.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Field Exercise: Practicing Core EIA Skills

Field Exercise Followed by Small-Group Work

Summary

This session provides participants with an interactive learning experience through a short excursion to sites at/near the workshop venue. Participants observe local environmental conditions to develop core EIA skills, such as baseline characterization and identification of potential impacts of concern. Through facilitator-led observation and discussion, participants are prepared for the more extensive field visits later in the week.

Session 4a: Briefing (approx. 30 minutes)

During this pre-field work component, participants will receive instructions on the methodology and objectives of the field exercise. This classroom preparation will enable participants to understand general baseline conditions of the site(s) to be assessed, as well as the types of activities proposed for implementation. Small groups will also be formed during this period.

Scenario and Instructions

- Listen carefully to the EIA scenario(s) presented by the facilitator(s).
- Observe any notes or additional instructions for your small group.

Session 4b: Field Visits (approx. 90 minutes)

As part of their respective small groups, participants will embark on the field component as briefed by the facilitator(s). This field-based activity will enable participants to practice observation skills needed to characterize the baseline situation and identify impacts and issues of concern.

Scenario and Instructions

- Observe and discuss key elements of baseline conditions and identify potential environmental impacts of the proposed activities on your assigned area.
- Participants should consider socio-economic dimensions of the proposed activity, as well as potential impacts on the physical environment. Feel free to query stakeholders, as appropriate.
- Take note and photos.

Session 4c: Group Work & Plenary Synthesis (approx. 60 minutes)

This session is aimed at strengthening participants' knowledge of baseline analysis and the identification of environmental impacts as informed by the field visits. During this component, participants will work with their small groups to synthesize field observations and prioritize impacts/issues of concern that were observed during their time in the field. Small groups will also discuss possible approaches for limiting potential adverse environmental impacts.

Scenario and Instructions

Using the observations and information collected during the field visit, each small group will:

- **Review and characterize** the most relevant elements of the baseline situation, including ongoing environmental management efforts and measures (if any); and
- On this basis, decide which of the **potential adverse impacts** and other potential “ESDM failures” are real and present serious concerns.

Working groups should record their findings. Facilitators will serve as resources throughout the process. Note that:

- This session is intended to practice basic observation and impact identification skills—not to practice development of Reg. 216 environmental documentation.
- For those who already know these terms, working group outputs are **not** expected to be in the form of an IEE outline or phrased in terms of “recommended determinations.”