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**Environmental  
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Assessment**

## Environmental Impact Assessment

### Introduction

Keeping in view the tenets of Sustainable Development, it has been realized that all developmental efforts need to be harmonized with conservation of environment and ecology. With this in view, the Ministry has formulated various policies and legislations for the protection and conservation of environment. It has been experienced that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important management tool for integrating environmental concerns in development process and for improved decision making. To achieve this, the Ministry had notified certain developmental activities which could be taken up only after prior environmental clearance from the Ministry under environmental regulations such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification.

### Objectives

The objective of EIA is to foresee and address the potential environmental problems at an early stage of planning and design. Environmental clearances based on EIA study was introduced as an administrative measure in 1978-79 and was made mandatory for 32 categories of developmental projects through EIA Notification, 1994 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Over the period, certain bottle necks, limitations/ constraints were observed in smooth implementation of the Notification. Ministry had therefore undertaken a comprehensive review of the existing Environmental Clearance Process for further enhancing the quality of the appraisal and to reduce time in the decision-making within the prescribed statutory period. After holding extensive consultations with stakeholders over a period of one year, a draft notification on the revised environmental clearance process was notified on September 15, 2005 inviting objections and suggestions from the public within sixty days. After due consideration of all the suggestions received, the Ministry notified the final Notification on September 14, 2006 superceding the EIA Notification 1994.

## The Re-engineered Environmental Clearance Process - EIA Notification, 2006

With the notification of Environmental Impact Assessment, 2006, environmental clearance process has been re-engineered. This path breaking re-engineered process is comparable to the best practices followed internationally. The important improvements/changes include introduction of screening and scoping of the project proposals for the identification of the actual environmental priorities without asking for irrelevant and time-consuming studies. The projects will require prior environmental clearance based on the impact potential instead of investment criteria. Public Hearing proceedings are also better structured and time bound. The environmental clearance process has also been decentralized for certain categories of projects, termed as Category 'B' projects, which are below a prescribed threshold level. Such projects will be appraised at State level by constituting a State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC). These will be constituted by the Central Government in consultation with the State Governments / UTs Administration. For construction projects, considerable simplification in the application and appraisal procedures has been proposed, so that development of this sector is not retarded. Such projects have been exempted from the public hearing also. The notification also provides for exemption from public hearing for certain categories/types of projects.

### Interim Operational Guidelines Providing Inter-Link between EIA Notifications, 1994 and 2006

Para 12 of the EIA Notification, 2006 provides that Central Government may relax one or all provisions of EIA Notification 2006, except the activities requiring prior environmental clearance in Schedule 1 of the Notification. This provision is for disposing the applications submitted before September 14, 2006. The Ministry has issued Interim Operation Guidelines (IOG) from time to time providing methodology for disposing of pending cases with the Central and State Govt. at various stages. The following Interim Guidelines have been issued under this Para:



- ◆ Interim Operational Guidelines dated October 13, 2006 in respect of applications made under EIA 1994.
- ◆ IOG dated November 21, 2006 for the Projects requiring clearance under the new Notification but did not require clearance as per the earlier Notification.
- ◆ IOG dated December 14, 2006 providing clarification regarding EIA clearance for change in Product-Mix.
- ◆ IOG dated December 8, 2006 in respect of applications made under EIA 1994 for River Valley and Hydro Electric Power Project.

The EIA Notification, 2006 and the IOGs are available on the Website of the Ministry.

### Good Practices Guidelines for Speedy Disposal of Applications for Environmental Clearance

The Ministry also issued Good Practices for the speedy disposal of applications for Environmental Clearance. These guidelines are being practiced and have resulted in early disposal of the applications for Environmental Clearance. These have been uploaded at the website of the Ministry.

### Scheme for Accreditation/Registration of EIA Consultants

The Ministry has recently fostered a scheme for accreditation/registration of EIA Consultants with an objective of improving the quality of EIA studies and making it more authentic. The scheme will be operated by Quality Council of India (QCI). Under this scheme, QCI shall organize ten Awareness Workshops about Accreditation/Registration Scheme in ten regions. QCI will also organize a Harmonization and Training Workshop for the Assessors/Registration Committee Members. The scheme is available at the website of the Ministry.

### Preparation of Sector-wise EIA Guidance Manuals and Capacity Building

Recognizing the urgent need for capacity building for proper implementation of the EIA Notification 2006, Guidance Manuals in various

sectors of developmental projects are being prepared. The manual for the Building Sector has already been finalized with The Energy Research Institute (TERI) as consultant. In-depth training programmes in each sector for decision makers, both Central and State Governments and various other stakeholders are also being undertaken.

### Coastal Regulation Zone Notification and Coastal Zone Management Plans

The Coastal Regulation Zone Notification was reviewed by the Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan in June, 2004. After accepting the recommendation of the report, the Division has initiated several activities which includes pilot studies for demarcation of vulnerability line taking into account the extent of flooding and shoreline changes. The vulnerability mapping on pilot scale is being undertaken by Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad, Survey of India, Dehradun, Department of Ocean Development and Centre for Earth Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. Further, technical and financial assistance from donor agencies such as World Bank and Asian Development Bank have been sought for implementing the various recommendations including preparation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

In the meantime, the Ministry has received the reports of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan prepared for 20 islands of Andaman and Nicobar Island and 13 Islands of Lakshadweep by Institute of Ocean Management, Chennai and Centre for Earth Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram respectively.

### Monitoring Cell

During the year, more than 1760 projects had been monitored by the six Regional Offices of the Ministry. Action is being taken for the non complying projects.

### Progress / Achievements made during the year

During the year, up to January 2007, a total of 1229 project proposals were appraised for the grant of environmental clearance. Out of these

proposals 765 projects were accorded environmental clearance (up to January 2007). Details of the projects received during the year 2005-2006 (April-March) and the year 2006 -

2007 (April-January) is provided in Table-11. State wise environmental clearance accorded during the years 2005-2006 (April-March) and 2006 -2007 (April-January) is given in Table-12.

Year	Projects pending at the beginning of the year	Project received	Project appraised	Projects cleared	Projects closed/rejected/exempted/returned/under process
2005-2006	493	1,042	681	901	115
2006-2007	798	1,812	1,229	765	260

Sl. No.	State	Period	Industry	Mining	Thermal	River - valley	Infra-structure	New Construction & Industrial Estate
1.	Andhra Pradesh	April 05-Mar.06	108	21	1	10	15	1
		April 06-Jan 07	32	11	3	7	5	2
2.	Madhya Pradesh	April 05-Mar.06	1	16	-	-	5	-
		April 06-Jan 07	2	18	1	-	1	2
3.	Orissa	April 05-Mar.06	7	18	2	1	2	-
		April 06-Jan 07	2	14	1	-	-	-
4.	Goa	April 05-Mar.06	-	34	-	-	7	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	21	-	-	8	-
5.	Gujarat	April 05-Mar.06	31	16	5	-	12	1
		April 06-Jan 07	25	5	3	-	3	1
6.	Haryana	April 05-Mar.06	49	-	-	-	-	1
		April 06-Jan 07	44	2	-	-	1	6
7.	Himachal Pradesh	April 05-Mar.06	3	1	-	6	2	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	2	-	1	-	-
8.	Jharkhand	April 05-Mar.06	2	6	1	1	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	13	-	-	-	1
9.	J & K	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	4	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	2	-	-	-	1	-
10.	Maharashtra	April 05-Mar.06	34	20	2	2	24	25
		April 06-Jan 07	32	20	2	2	4	64
11.	Chattisgarh	April 05-Mar.06	8	12	1	-	1	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	14	2	-	-	-

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Sl. No.	State	Period	Industry	Mining	Thermal	River - valley	Infra-structure	New Construction & Industrial Estate
12.	Karnataka	April 05-Mar.06	11	29	2	3	6	13
		April 06-Jan 07	7	59	2	-	5	55
13.	Kerala	April 05-Mar.06	2	-	-	-	12	-
		April 06-Jan 07	3	-	-	-	2	-
14.	Punjab	April 05-Mar.06	5	-	-	1	1	3
		April 06-Jan 07	5	-	-	-	-	4
15.	Rajasthan	April 05-Mar.06	14	54	4	-	4	-
		April 06-Jan 07	17	85	-	-	1	-
16.	Lakshadweep	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	4	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	-	-	-	9	-
17.	Assam	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	5	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	-	-	-	-	-
18.	Sikkim	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	1	2	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	-	-	3	-	-
19.	Tamilnadu	April 05-Mar.06	116	22	1	-	20	1
		April 06-Jan 07	32	3	-	-	7	4
20.	Uttar Pradesh	April 05-Mar.06	12	2	2	-	5	-
		April 06-Jan 07	16	1	1	1	2	1
21.	Uttarakhand	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	1	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	2	2	-	-	-	1
22.	West Bengal	April 05-Mar.06	4	-	1	-	1	3
		April 06-Jan 07	2	-	4	-	-	11
23.	Others	April 05-Mar.06	16	-	-	-	—	-
		April 06-Jan 07	9	-	-	-	-	-
24.	Bihar	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	-	-	-	1	-
25.	Meghalaya	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	1	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	1	-	2	-	-
26.	Nagaland	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	1	1	-	-	-	-
27.	Arunachal Pradesh	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	-	-	1	-	-
28.	Manipur	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	-	-
		April 06-Jan 07	-	-	-	1	-	1
29.	Delhi	April 05-Mar.06	-	-	-	-	-	2
		April 06-Jan 07	-	-	-	-	-	11