

# Guidelines for Sida's Screening prior to an Environmental Assessment

This guide intends to support Sida programme officers during the initial step of integrating environment and climate change in a contribution. More specifically, it is guidance for the step “**1. Sida's Screening**” of the document “Introduction to Environment and Climate Change Integration in Contributions”.

By answering the questions below, the programme officer should get an initial understanding of the environmental risks of a programme/project, and determine whether it is sufficient that the partner conducts a simplified environmental assessment, or whether it needs to conduct/commission an Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA. Note that if the partner already intends to conduct an EIA based on national legislation demands, or for other reasons, Sida should accept that and does not need to make a screening. In other cases, the programme officer should proceed with the screening. *The screening should be a relatively simple process carried out by the Sida programme officer, based on information from the partner.* A closer dialogue with the partner and further support may be needed in unclear cases, as described under “Proceed with the results” below.

## A. IDENTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

To make an initial identification of risks, consider the planned programme/project with the following points in mind:

### Risks to what/whom?

Are there direct or indirect risks expected for, for example, humans, plants, animals, land, water, air, or other natural resources?

**Types of activities?** The following are examples of activities that often cause environmental risks<sup>1</sup>. Does the programme/project include any of them, or similar activities?

- Infrastructure development
- Agriculture / forestry / fisheries
- Extractive operations including quarries and mining

---

<sup>1</sup> These are types of activities for which an EIA often (depending on the scale) needs to be conducted in Sweden according to Swedish legislation. Although countries have different legal requirements, many demand EIA's for these types of activities.

- Water operations such as mini- or larger hydropower; water transfer between areas; or dredging in sensitive areas
- Chemical use in for example agriculture, aquaculture, health services, research facilities
- Pipelines for transport of gas or oil
- Industrial operations
- Electricity generation or distribution
- Waste and waste water management
- Development of plans<sup>2</sup> for e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industries, transports, regional development, waste management, water resources management, telecommunications, tourism, physical planning or land use.

**Types of risks?** Look out for:

- Transformation of ecosystems and/or loss of biological diversity
- Depletion of surface or ground water levels
- Pollution of water resources, soil or air
- Significant greenhouse gas emissions from burning of fossil fuels, or from land use change

## B. ASSESS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RISKS

Here, the Sida programme officer should assess what the consequences and the likelihood of the identified risks could be.

- Assess what the consequences would be if the risks would be realized. For example, the consequences may be much larger if the activities are at large scale or industrial scale.
- Assess the likelihood of the risks to be realized.

If the consequences and likelihood are low and / or if one of them is assessed to be moderate, this indicates that the risks are likely not significant. If both consequences and likelihood are considered to be moderate, and/or one of them would be considered high, this indicates that the risks may be significant.

## C. PROCEED WITH THE RESULTS

- i.** Are the risks likely **not significant**? Proceed to check in the programme documentation if the information of a simplified environmental assessment is already included. If not, proceed to request a simplified environmental assessment from the partner.
- ii.** Are the risks likely to be **significant**? If the partner has not already prepared to conduct an EIA, inform them that Sida considers it necessary in order to process the funding request. Note that the identification of significant risks does not necessarily mean that the programme/project cannot be

---

<sup>2</sup> The development of the plans themselves may not pose any direct risks. They may however pose significant indirect risks, assuming they will be implemented.

funded. In the subsequent step, the EIA may identify ways to avoid and/or reduce and manage the risks in a way that makes it possible to proceed with support.

- iii. In the grey zone?** Are you unsure of whether the risks are significant or not? Discuss with environment and climate change advisors in your department, discuss with the partner, with other donors, and/or ask Sida's helpdesk to help determine whether a simplified environmental assessment will be sufficient or whether an EIA should be made.

### Related documents in the Green Tool Box

This is the second of the following four, closely related, documents on environment and climate change integration in contributions in the Green Tool Box:

Box:

- "Introduction to Environment and Climate Change Integration in Contributions"
- **"Guidelines for Screening prior to an Environmental Assessment"**
- "Guidelines for a Simplified Environmental Assessment"
- "Guidelines to Appraise a Simplified Environmental Assessment"