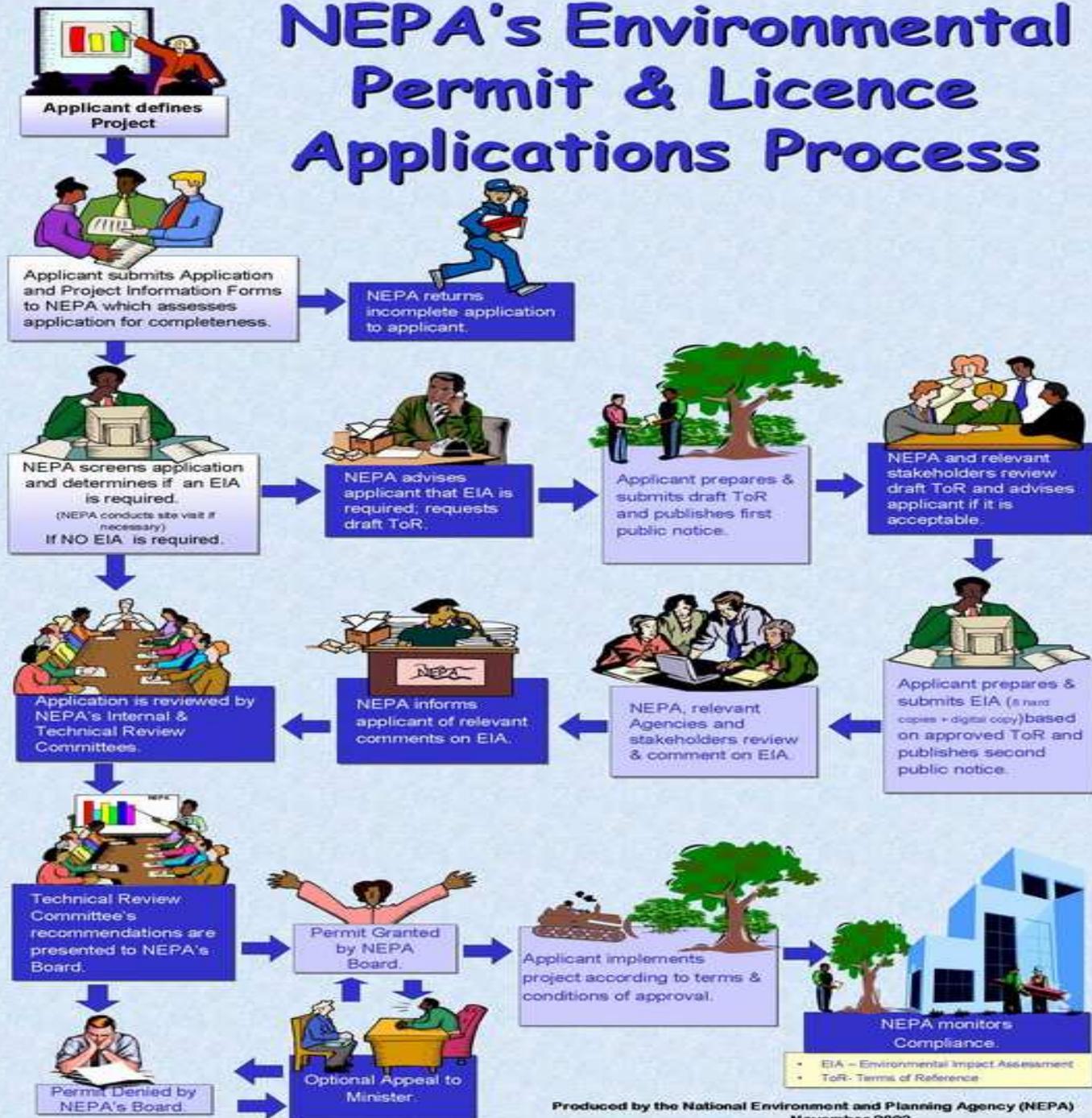


ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS



*Presenter: Natalie Davidson
National Environment and Planning Agency
(NEPA)
18 March 2009*

NEPA's Environmental Permit & Licence Applications Process



What is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)?

An EIA is a study of the effects (positive and negative) of a proposed action on the area in which the development is to be carried out. It also outlines mitigation measures necessary to reduce any negative impacts the activity may cause.

EIA Process in Jamaica

- Sections 9 & 10 of the NRCA Act 1991 give the Authority the power to request that an environmental impact assessment be conducted as part of a permit application.
- The Authority also has the power to request that the applicant furnish documents or information as the it thinks fit.

EIA Process in Jamaica

- Criteria for requesting this information may include emergency, the level of technology employed in the operation of the project, and the likely adverse impacts to be expected from the project.
- In applying for a Permit or a Licence an EIA may be required. This is determined by the screening of the application and the conducting of relevant site visit(s).

Defining Environmental Impact Assessment

- ❑ The environmental impact assessment (EIA) involves the process of identifying, predicting and evaluating potential environmental impacts of development proposals.

Defining Environmental Impact Assessment

□ The term describes a technique and a process by which information about the interaction between a proposed development project and the environment is collected, analyzed, and interpreted to produce a report on potential impacts and to provide the basis for sound decision-making.

Integrating Environmental Impact Assessment Results into Decision-Making

- The results of the study are taken into account by the Regulatory Authority in the determination of whether the proposed development should be allowed, and under what conditions.

Purpose of an EIA

The purpose of an EIA is to:

- Aid decision-making
- Help in the formulation of development actions
- Promote sustainable development
- Meet legislative requirements
- Assist countries in conforming with international environmental standards

The EIA Process

- ❑ Project screening
- ❑ Scoping
- ❑ Consideration of alternatives
- ❑ Description of the project
- ❑ Identification of key impacts
- ❑ Prediction of impacts
- ❑ Evaluation and assessment of significance

The EIA Process cont'd

- ❑ Mitigation
- ❑ Public consultation and participation
- ❑ Report presentation
- ❑ Review
- ❑ Decision-making
- ❑ Post-decision monitoring
- ❑ Auditing

Contents of the EIA Report

- The report should contain an introduction explaining the need for, and context of the project. This document should have the following basic aspects included in the Table of Contents, unless specified otherwise in the Terms of Reference.

Contents of the EIA Report cont'd

- ❑ Executive Summary
- ❑ Policy, Legal and Administrative Framework
- ❑ Description of the Existing Environment
- ❑ Description of the Proposed Project in detail
- ❑ Identification and Assessment of Potential Environmental Impacts
 - ❑ Physical
 - ❑ Natural Hazard Risk
 - ❑ Biological
 - ❑ Human/Social

Contents of the EIA Report cont'd

- ❑ Cumulative Impacts
- ❑ Positive Impacts
- ❑ Public Involvement
- ❑ Recommended Mitigation Measures
- ❑ Identification and Analysis of Alternatives
- ❑ Environmental Management of the Project
 - ❑ Environmental Quality Objectives
 - ❑ Training
 - ❑ Draft Outline Monitoring Programme

Contents of the EIA Report cont'd

- Terms of Reference
- List of References
- Appendices including:
 - Reference documents
 - Photographs/ maps
 - Data Tables
 - Composition of the consulting team
 - Notes of Public Consultation sessions

Agencies Involved in the Consultative Process

- Environmental Health Unit
- Water Resources Authority
- Mines and Geology Division
- Office of Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Management
- National Works Agency
- Jamaica Bauxite Institute
- Jamaica National Heritage Trust

Agencies Involved in the Consultative Process

- Tourism Product Development Company**
- Ministry of Energy**
- Ministry of Agriculture – Vet Services, Plant Quarantine, Forestry Department, Fisheries Division**
- National Irrigation Commission**
- Jamaica Fire Brigade**
- Civil Aviation Authority**
- Port Authority of Jamaica**

Public Involvement in the Process

- ❑ Copies of ToRs are made available at local public institutions for example: Libraries, Post Offices and Police Stations and NEPA's Website. A notice is also published in the media.
- ❑ Copies of EIAs are made available at local public institutions for example: Libraries, Post Offices and Police Stations and NEPA's Website for consultation and review. In addition, a notice is published in the media at least three (3) weeks prior to the Public Presentation.
- ❑ Public presentations are held to obtain comments on the proposed development. Comments must be submitted in writing to NEPA within thirty (30) days of the presentation. Some comments from the public are worded as conditions of the permit and feedback is provided to the them.

Review Process for EIAs

- ❑ The EIA Report is circulated to different agencies and stakeholders as necessary
- ❑ Comments on the EIA Report are submitted to NEPA
- ❑ NEPA collates comments and applicant is informed accordingly
- ❑ Applicant responds to any query or concerns in the form of an addendum to the EIA.

Review Process for EIAs cont'd

- ❑ Addendum is then circulated to the same agencies/stakeholders
- ❑ Agencies/stakeholders submit comments on the Addendum
- ❑ NEPA collate comments and valid ones are included in the submission to the Review Committees. Some comments are worded as conditions of the permit.
- ❑ The EIA process now feeds into the permit application process

Review Committees for Environmental Applications

Applications are reviewed by:-

- Technical Branches of NEPA
- Internal Review Committee
- Technical Review Committee
- Natural Resources Conservation Authority (external members)