

QUESTION No. 3

What is the difference between Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Initial Environmental Examination? List and Explain the entire EIA process. Where in the project cycle should an EIA be initiated?

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Introduction.

According to UN

"Environmental Impact Assessment is a tool used to identify the environmental social and economic impact of a project prior to decision making."

Environmental Assessment is divided into two phases. The first phase is Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) and second is detailed (EIA).

Environmental Impact Assessment has eight steps. Environmental Impact Assessment should be initiated at the earliest stages of a project cycle to ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into project planning and design phase before any physical construction of a project.

Difference between EIA and IEE

2.1 Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)

Initial Environmental Examination is carried out to determine whether potentially adverse environmental impacts are significant or whether mitigation measures can be adopted to reduce or eliminate these effects. Initial Environmental Examination is done first and if it provides a definite solution to environmental problem, then EIA is not necessary.

2.2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

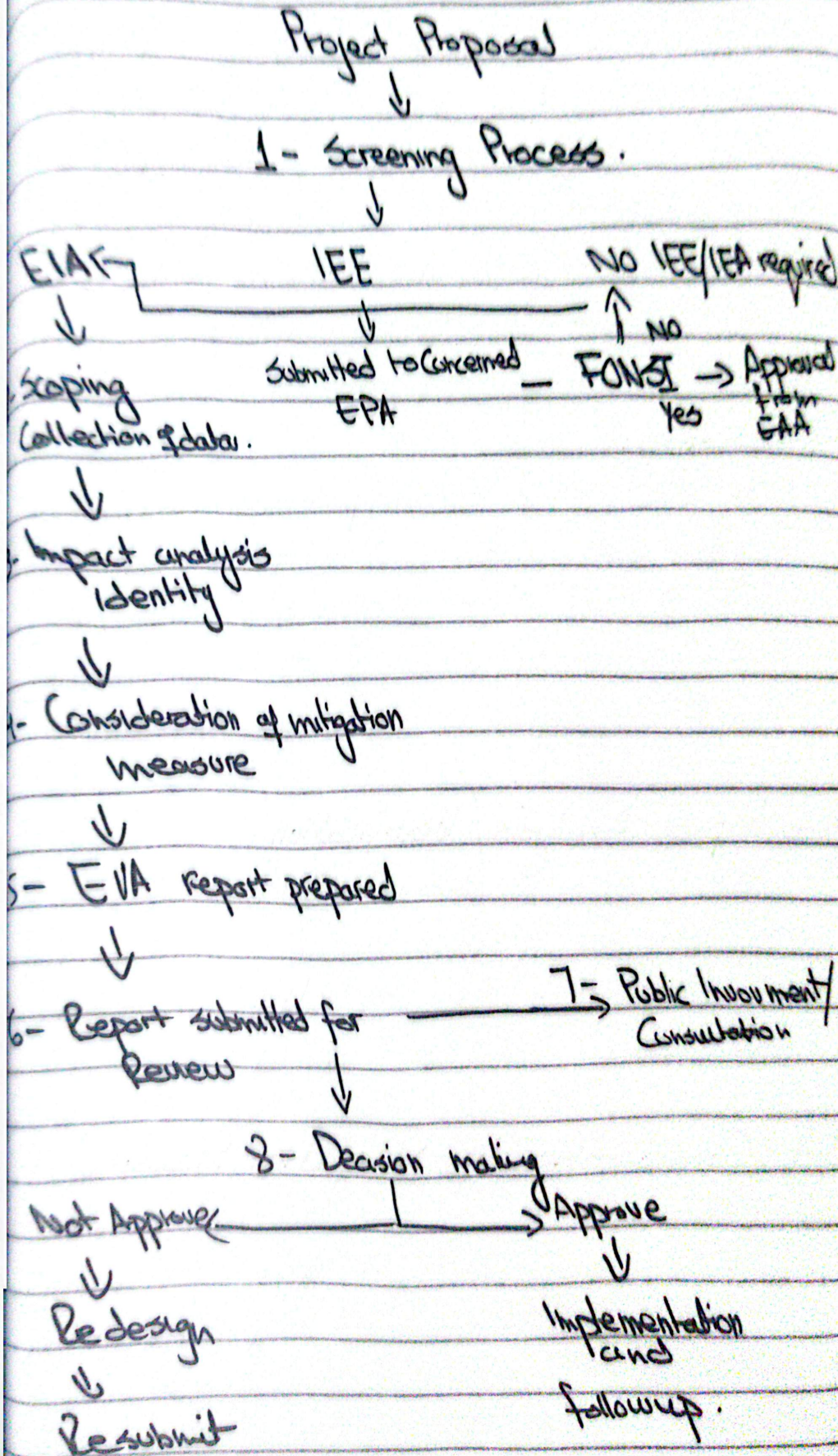
EIA is a procedure used to examine the environmental consequences or impacts both beneficial and adverse of a proposed development project.

According to **UN**

EIA is a tool used to identify social, environmental and economic impact of a project prior to decision making.

It is a detailed process that involves eight basic steps. Unlike Environmental audit (EA) it is applied before the start of a project.

Generalized EIA Process Flow Chart.



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Steps In EIA process.

3.1 - Screening

This step determines whether a project requires EIA or not, and if EIA or IEE is required then what type of assessment is needed like big project (dams, highways industries) require full EIA while small projects may not.

3.2 - Scoping:

In this step the key environmental issues and impacts that need to be studied are identified. It decides what to study (air, land, water) and what to ignore.

3.3 - Impact Analysis/Identification

Here possible environmental impacts of proposed projects are identified and analyzed such as effects on air, water, soil and people.

3.4 - Consideration of Mitigation Measure

This step suggests measures to reduce, control or prevent negative environmental impacts of the project. This step could involve suggestions regarding alternatives.

3.5 - EIA Report preparation

All information regarding project that are proposed plans impacts of a project on environment along with mitigation suggestions are compiled in a report. This is the final report of EIA.

3.6 - Report submitted for Review

Prepared EIA report is submitted to higher authorities to review the impacts and suggestions given in the report. And whether to approve or reject the report on legal or technical grounds.

3.7 Public Consultation

Views and concerns of local communities and stakeholders are taken into account regarding the proposed project.

3.8 - Decision Making

Based on EIA report and public feedback, authorities approve, disapprove or reject the project with conditions. If approved it is implemented and if not approved it is redesigned and then resubmitted to the authority.

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Implementation of EIA

Environmental Impact Assessment should be viewed as an integral part of a project. It should be initiated at an earliest phase of a project. Environmental audit (EA) is conducted on already existed project, unlike EA EIA is implemented before decision-making and on expansion of already existed plan. In the beginning only economic aspect were to be looked at before decision-making but now social and environmental impact are also taken into account and for its smoother implementation legal implication have also been made.

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Conclusion

Initial Environmental Examination is a part of Environmental Impact Assessment. If it does not provide definite solution then detailed EIA is carried out. EIA is a 8 step process and in the last steps when report is submitted its

from concerned authorities its finally
followed up.