

SCOPING CHECKLIST

Instructions

This checklist is designed to help users identify the likely significant environmental effects of proposed projects during scoping. It is to be used in conjunction with the [Checklist of Criteria for Evaluating the Significance of Impacts](#). There are two stages:

- first, identifying the potential impacts of projects;
- second selecting those which are likely to be significant and therefore require most attention in the assessment.

A useful way of identifying the potential impacts of a project is to identify all the activities or sources of impact that could arise from construction, operation or decommissioning of the project, and to consider these alongside the characteristics of the project environment that could be affected, to identify where there could be interactions between them. The two parts of the [Scoping Checklist](#) have been developed to assist in this process.

Start with the checklist of questions set out below. Complete Column 2 by answering:

- yes - if the activity is likely to occur during implementation of the project;
- no - if it is not expected to occur;
- ? - if it is uncertain at this stage whether it will occur or not.

For each activity for which the answer in Column 2 is “Yes” or “?”, refer to the second part of the [Scoping Checklist](#) which lists characteristics of the project environment which could be affected, and identify any which could be affected by that activity. Information will be needed about the surrounding environment in order to complete this stage. Note the characteristics of the project environment that could be affected, and the nature of the potential effects in Column 3.

Finally, use [Checklist of Criteria for Evaluating the Significance of Impacts](#) to help complete Column 4. This will identify those impacts which are expected to be significant. The questions are designed so that a “yes” answer will point towards a significant impact. It is often difficult to decide what is or is not significant but a useful simple check is to ask whether the effect is one that is of sufficient importance that it ought to be considered and have an influence on the development consent decision. As much information as possible about the degree of significance should be included in Column 4 as a guide for planning the environmental studies.

Some examples illustrating how to use the checklist are given below.

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
1. Will the project involve any actions during construction, operation or decommissioning which would create changes in the locality as a result of the nature, scale, form or purpose of the new development?				
1.6	Demolition works?	yes	Will require demolition of 2 historic buildings	Yes - Buildings are nationally designated
1.11	Dredging?	yes	Will involve dredging of canal to create new waterfront	No - Canal is regularly dredged anyway
2. Will the project use any natural resources, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?				
2.4	Aggregates?	Yes	Creation of development platform will use large amount of imported material – soil and aggregate. Indirect effect at extraction sites which are in greenfield area	Yes – major change in environment at extraction sites. Impact on large numbers of people nearby. Will place major strain on local supplies
3. Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?				

3.4	Are there especially vulnerable groups of people who could be affected by the project eg hospital patients, the elderly?	Yes	Project location is adjacent to regional hospital and long term care centre. Potential for significant noise and other disturbance during construction	Yes - Hospital environment may become much noisier over one year construction period.
4. Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?				
4.2	Municipal waste (household and or commercial wastes)?	Yes	New population will generate household and other wastes	No- there is ample local waste management capacity
5. Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?				
5.5	Dust or odours from handling of materials including construction materials, sewage and waste?	yes	Earth moving during construction could be dusty in dry climate and affect neighbouring habitats and residents	Yes - Habitat is internationally protected and vulnerable to dust deposition. Condition of hospital patients could be worsened by exposure to dust
6. Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?				
6.5	From construction or operational traffic?	yes	Heavy traffic flows for import of material during construction affecting residents and hospital	Yes - noise levels already elevated by traffic and industry
7. Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into sewers, surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?				
7.2	From discharge of sewage or other effluents (whether treated or untreated) to water or the land?	Yes	Increase in municipal sewage flows from new residents	Possibly - depends on requirement for new treatment facilities
8. Is there a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the project which could affect human health or the environment?				
8.4	Could the project be affected by natural disasters causing environmental damage (eg floods, earthquakes, landslip, etc)?	yes	Development is within floodplain	Yes - Government policy cautions against development in areas susceptible to flooding
9. Will the project result in social changes?				
9.1	Changes in population size, age, structure, social groups etc?	yes	New population of 10,000 will increase number in immediate area from 5,000 to 15,000 and change character from rural to urban environment. Will affect existing community, cultural identity and economic conditions and introduce differential housing conditions	Yes - local community is small scale and well-established with strong community institutions and identity

When using this [Scoping Checklist](#) it is important to remember that **secondary and higher order effects** can occur as a result of a **primary interaction** between a project activity and the project environment. So for example, a change in site run-off can affect the hydrology of a watercourse; this can subsequently affect water quality and the ecology of the watercourse; and this can then affect fishing and other uses of the water. Where a primary effect is identified the user should always think about whether secondary or further effects on other aspects of the environment could arise as a result.

Users should also remember that effects can occur not only **permanently** and over the **long term** but also **temporarily**, for example just during construction, commissioning or decommissioning or just during certain phases of project operation, or that may occur only **intermittently**, for example during certain periods of activity or times of year or as a **result of abnormal events** affecting the project (accidents, freak weather conditions, earthquakes, etc.).

The Directive also requires EIA to consider effects that could arise **indirectly** from the project, for example as a result of other development which takes place as a consequence of the project e.g. to provide access, power or water supplies, sewage treatment or waste disposal, or to house or provide jobs for people attracted to the area by the project. It also requires consideration of **cumulative effects** that could arise from a combination of the project's effects with those of other existing or planned developments in the surrounding area. Further guidance is available from the Commission in "Guidelines for the Assessment of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts as well as Impact Interactions". This document can be viewed at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/eia/eia-studies-and-reports/guidel.pdf>.

A convenient way of thinking about this checklist is to visualise the two parts as the vertical and horizontal axes of a virtual matrix. The lists are too long to be practically presented as a real matrix and even if they could be the individual cells in the matrix would be too small to contain any useful information about the nature or significance of the effects, but the concept is a useful one when thinking about scoping.

Further instructions for using the second part of the checklist are given at the beginning of the [Checklist of Criteria for Evaluating the Significance of Impacts](#).

Part 1 of The Scoping Checklist: QUESTIONS ON PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
1. Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc)?				
1.1	Permanent or temporary change in land use, landcover or topography including increases in intensity of land use?			
1.2	Clearance of existing land, vegetation and buildings?			
1.3	Creation of new land uses?			
1.4	Pre-construction investigations eg boreholes, soil testing?			
1.5	Construction works?			
1.6	Demolition works?			
1.7	Temporary sites used for construction works or housing of construction workers?			
1.8	Above ground buildings, structures or earthworks including linear structures, cut and fill or excavations?			
1.9	Underground works including mining or tunnelling?			
1.10	Reclamation works?			
1.11	Dredging?			
1.12	Coastal structures eg seawalls, piers?			
1.13	Offshore structures?			
1.14	Production and manufacturing processes?			
1.15	Facilities for storage of goods or materials?			
1.16	Facilities for treatment or disposal of solid wastes or liquid effluents?			
1.17	Facilities for long term housing of operational workers?			

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
1.18	New road, rail or sea traffic during construction or operation?			
1.19	New road, rail, air, waterborne or other transport infrastructure including new or altered routes and stations, ports, airports etc?			
1.20	Closure or diversion of existing transport routes or infrastructure leading to changes in traffic movements?			
1.21	New or diverted transmission lines or pipelines?			
1.22	Impoundment, damming, culverting, realignment or other changes to the hydrology of watercourses or aquifers?			
1.23	Stream crossings?			
1.24	Abstraction or transfers of water from ground or surface waters?			
1.25	Changes in waterbodies or the land surface affecting drainage or run-off?			
1.26	Transport of personnel or materials for construction, operation or decommissioning?			
1.27	Long term dismantling or decommissioning or restoration works?			
1.28	Ongoing activity during decommissioning which could have an impact on the environment?			
1.29	Influx of people to an area in either temporarily or permanently?			
1.30	Introduction of alien species?			
1.31	Loss of native species or genetic diversity?			
1.32	Any other actions?			
2. Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?				
2.1	Land especially undeveloped or agricultural land?			
2.2	Water?			
2.3	Minerals?			

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
2.4	Aggregates?			
2.5	Forests and timber?			
2.6	Energy including electricity and fuels?			
2.7	Any other resources?			
3. Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?				
3.1	Will the project involve use of substances or materials which are hazardous or toxic to human health or the environment (flora, fauna, water supplies)?			
3.2	Will the project result in changes in occurrence of disease or affect disease vectors (eg insect or water borne diseases)?			
3.3	Will the project affect the welfare of people eg by changing living conditions?			
3.4	Are there especially vulnerable groups of people who could be affected by the project eg hospital patients, the elderly?			
3.5	Any other causes?			
4. Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?				
4.1	Spoil, overburden or mine wastes?			
4.2	Municipal waste (household and or commercial wastes)?			
4.3	Hazardous or toxic wastes (including radioactive wastes)?			
4.4	Other industrial process wastes?			
4.5	Surplus product?			
4.6	Sewage sludge or other sludges from effluent treatment?			
4.7	Construction or demolition wastes?			
4.8	Redundant machinery or equipment?			

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
4.9	Contaminated soils or other material?			
4.10	Agricultural wastes?			
4.11	Any other solid wastes?			
5. Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?				
5.1	Emissions from combustion of fossil fuels from stationary or mobile sources?			
5.2	Emissions from production processes?			
5.3	Emissions from materials handling including storage or transport?			
5.4	Emissions from construction activities including plant and equipment?			
5.5	Dust or odours from handling of materials including construction materials, sewage and waste?			
5.6	Emissions from incineration of waste?			
5.7	Emissions from burning of waste in open air (eg slash material, construction debris)?			
5.8	Emissions from any other sources?			
6. Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?				
6.1	From operation of equipment eg engines, ventilation plant, crushers?			
6.2	From industrial or similar processes?			
6.3	From construction or demolition?			
6.4	From blasting or piling?			
6.5	From construction or operational traffic?			
6.6	From lighting or cooling systems?			

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
6.7	From sources of electromagnetic radiation (consider effects on nearby sensitive equipment as well as people)?			
6.8	From any other sources?			
7. Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into sewers, surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?				
7.1	From handling, storage, use or spillage of hazardous or toxic materials?			
7.2	From discharge of sewage or other effluents (whether treated or untreated) to water or the land?			
7.3	By deposition of pollutants emitted to air, onto the land or into water?			
7.4	From any other sources?			
7.5	Is there a risk of long term build up of pollutants in the environment from these sources?			
8. Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?				
8.1	From explosions, spillages, fires etc from storage, handling, use or production of hazardous or toxic substances?			
8.2	From events beyond the limits of normal environmental protection eg failure of pollution control systems?			
8.3	From any other causes?			
8.4	Could the project be affected by natural disasters causing environmental damage (eg floods, earthquakes, landslip, etc)?			
9. Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?				
9.1	Changes in population size, age, structure, social groups etc?			
9.2	By resettlement of people or demolition of homes or communities or community facilities eg schools, hospitals, social facilities?			
9.3	Through in-migration of new residents or creation of new communities?			
9.4	By placing increased demands on local facilities or services eg housing, education, health?			
9.5	By creating jobs during construction or operation or causing the loss of jobs with effects on unemployment and the economy?			

No.	Questions to be considered in Scoping	Yes/No/?	Which Characteristics of the Project Environment could be affected and how?	Is the effect likely to be significant? Why?
9.6	Any other causes?			
Question - Are there any other factors which should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?				
9.1	Will the project lead to pressure for consequential development which could have significant impact on the environment eg more housing, new roads, new supporting industries or utilities, etc?			
9.2	Will the project lead to development of supporting facilities, ancillary development or development stimulated by the project which could have impact on the environment eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting infrastructure (roads, power supply, waste or waste water treatment, etc) • housing development • extractive industries • supply industries • other? 			
9.3	Will the project lead to after-use of the site which could have an impact on the environment?			
9.4	Will the project set a precedent for later developments?			
9.5	Will the project have cumulative effects due to proximity to other existing or planned projects with similar effects?			

PART 2 OF THE SCOPING CHECKLIST: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

For each project characteristic identified in Part consider whether any of the following environmental components could be affected.

QUESTION - ARE THERE FEATURES OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT ON OR AROUND THE PROJECT LOCATION WHICH COULD BE AFFECTED BY THE PROJECT?

- Areas which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?
- Other areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g.
 - Wetlands,
 - Watercourses or other waterbodies,
 - the coastal zone,
 - mountains,
 - forests or woodlands
- Areas used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?
- Inland, coastal, marine or underground waters?
- Areas or features of high landscape or scenic value?
- Routes or facilities used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities?
- Transport routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems?
- Areas or features of historic or cultural importance?

1.1. Question - Is the Project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?

Question - Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?

Question - Are there existing land uses on or around the Project location which could be affected by the Project? For example:

- Homes, gardens, other private property,
- Industry,
- Commerce,
- Recreation,
- public open space,
- community facilities,
- agriculture,
- forestry,
- tourism,
- mining or quarrying

Question - Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?

Question - Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the Project?

Question - Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses which could be affected by the Project?

- hospitals,
- schools,
- places of worship,
- community facilities

Question - Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the Project? For example:

- groundwater resources,
- surface waters,
- forestry,
- agriculture,
- fisheries,
- tourism,
- minerals.

Question - Are there any areas on or around the location of the Project which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?

Question - Is the Project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?

Question - Is the Project likely to affect the physical condition of any environmental media?

- The atmospheric environment including microclimate and local and larger scale climatic conditions?
- Water - eg quantities, flows or levels of rivers, lakes, groundwater. Estuaries, coastal waters or the sea?
- Soils - eg quantities, depths, humidity, stability or erodibility of soils?
- Geological and ground conditions?

Question - Are releases from the Project likely to have effects on the quality of any environmental media?

- Local air quality?
- Global air quality including climate change and ozone depletion
- Water quality – rivers, lakes, groundwater. Estuaries, coastal waters or the sea?
- Nutrient status and eutrophication of waters?
- Acidification of soils or waters?
- Soils
- Noise?
- Temperature, light or electromagnetic radiation including electrical interference?
- Productivity of natural or agricultural systems?

Question - Is the Project likely to affect the availability or scarcity of any resources either locally or globally?

- Fossil fuels?
- Water?
- Minerals and aggregates?
- Timber?
- Other non-renewable resources?
- Infrastructure capacity in the locality - water, sewerage, power generation and transmission, telecommunications, waste disposal roads, rail?

Question - Is the Project likely to affect human or community health or welfare?

- The quality or toxicity of air, water, foodstuffs and other products consumed by humans?
- Morbidity or mortality of individuals, communities or populations by exposure to pollution?
- Occurrence or distribution of disease vectors including insects?
- Vulnerability of individuals, communities or populations to disease?
- Individuals' sense of personal security?
- Community cohesion and identity?
- Cultural identity and associations?
- Minority rights?
- Housing conditions?
- Employment and quality of employment?
- Economic conditions?
- Social institutions?