



# Best Practice for Ecological Consultants

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# Environmental Impact Assessment [EIA]

EIA -

- ☞ gathers reliable information about likely environmental impacts in advance
- ☞ seeks to prevent environmental problems before they arise
- ☞ institutionalises foresight
- ☞ implements Ecologically Sustainable Development [ESD]

# Quality in EIA

- ☞ When EIA is to be undertaken a study of requisite standard must be completed
- ☞ Ten principles may be distilled from court cases decided in jurisdictions which have adopted NEPA
- ☞ ‘Ten Principles of Quality in Environmental Impact Assessment’ (1997) 14 *Environmental and Planning Law Journal* 207

# Quality in EIA

- 1 An assessment cannot be restricted to "site-specific" environmental effects
- 2 Alternative courses of action and their environmental significance
- 3 Greater Plans must be assessed in addition to single phases in their execution
- 4 Rule against segmentation

# Quality in EIA

## 5 Viable time frames

- rule against science fiction
- rule against crystal ball inquiries

## 6 Alternative courses of action must include the option of doing nothing.

## 7 Must be a real inquiry and not merely arrive at a decision

# Quality in EIA

- 8 Environmental effects are not to be disregarded just because difficult to identify or quantify
- 9 Must take "hard look" at environmental consequences of the project
- 10 Findings must be presented in clear language and methodologies explained

# Environmental Impact Assessment [EIA]

EIA -

- ☞ takes time and resources
- ☞ often is not entirely transparent

But seeks to institutionalise foresight which should  
in any case be exercised

- ☞ Ecologically Sustainable Development [ESD]