

Environmental Impact Statement should be systematically organised (See Figure 2) to provide sections describing:-

- the Proposed Development;
- the Existing Environment;
- the Impacts of the Proposed Development;
- the Measures to Mitigate Adverse Impacts;
- a Non-Technical Summary.

The existing environment and the impacts of the development are explained by reference to its possible impact on a series of environmental topics:-

- Human Beings
- Fauna and Flora
- Soil
- Water
- Air
- Climatic Factors
- The Landscape
- Material Assets, including the Architectural and Archaeological Heritage, and the Cultural Heritage
- The Inter-Relationship between the Above Factors

Impacts should address direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent, temporary, positive and negative effects as well as impact interactions.

None of the topics outlined above (Human Beings, Fauna, Flora etc) should be omitted at the risk of invalidating the legality of the process, although their level of detail may differ depending on the likelihood of impacts. In some instances it may be sufficient to mention the topics while explaining the reasons for omitting ("scoping out") or providing minimal detail about the topic. A formal scoping procedure will further assist in determining the level of detail required under various headings.

e.g. *"Fauna:- Because of the inner city location of the development and the lack of any natural habitats (or roosting sites) no significant or likely impacts on natural fauna are anticipated. Accordingly this EIS contains no further description of existing fauna, impacts on fauna, mitigation or monitoring proposals for fauna".*

1.7 ALTERNATIVE EIS FORMATS

The above information may be organised in a number of different ways. Generally two types of EIS structure are commonly used. Both are equally valid.

1.7.1 DIRECT FORMAT STRUCTURE

An EIS is prepared that directly follows the sequence of the Regulations, i.e. separate descriptions are provided of the proposed development, existing environment, impacts and mitigation measures. Within each description there is a section on the relevant topics set out in the Regulations (e.g. Impacts on Human Beings, Fauna, Flora, Soil etc.).

The advantages of this approach are that it facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the project, environment, impacts and mitigation measures; it is very useful for competent authorities or the public because all of the mitigation measures or impacts are grouped together. The main disadvantages are that it leads to repetition, the descriptions of impacts without mitigation measures can be viewed as theoretical and to follow a single topic (e.g. air), the reader must consult three different chapters.

Though technically desirable this format inevitably leads to repetition. As a result good editing and cross-referencing are very important. Sub-consultants review and comment on the final edited text.

1.7.2 GROUPED FORMAT STRUCTURE

An EIS is prepared in a format which examines each topic as a separate section referring to the existing environment, the proposed development, impacts and mitigation measures (e.g. flora and the proposed development, flora in the existing environment, impacts on flora, etc.).

The advantages of using this type of format are that it is easy to investigate a single topic and it facilitates