

Scoping Phase Methodology

The purpose of the Scoping Report is to identify and evaluate the main issues and potential impacts of the proposed project at a desktop level based on existing information. The scoping report must be in-line with the terms of the EIA Regulations of 2014, as amended on 07 April 2017 and should:

- » Identify potential sensitive environments and receptors that may be impacted on by the proposed facility and the types of impacts (i.e. direct, indirect and cumulative¹) that are most likely to occur.
- » Provide an evaluation of the expected significance of identified impacts (including nature, extent, significance, consequence, duration and probability of the impacts including the degree to which these impacts can be reversed; may cause irreplaceable loss of resources; and can be avoided, managed or mitigated)
- » Identify sensitive and 'No-Go' areas, where applicable.
- » Summarise the potential impacts that will be considered further in the EIA Phase.

The scoping report must include:

- » a description of the environment that may be affected by the activity and the manner in which the environment may be affected by the proposed project
- » a description and evaluation of environmental issues and potential impacts (including direct, indirect, cumulative impacts and residual risks) that have been identified
- » Direct, indirect, cumulative impacts and residual risks of the identified issues must be evaluated within the Scoping Report in terms of the following criteria:
 - * the nature, which shall include a description of what causes the effect, what will be affected and how it will be affected, for each impact anticipated;
 - * the extent, wherein it will be indicated whether the impact will be local (limited to the immediate area or site of development), regional, national or international.
- » a statement regarding the potential significance of the identified issues based on the evaluation of the issues/impacts
- » a comparative evaluation of the identified feasible alternatives, and nomination of a preferred alternative for consideration in the EIA phase
- » Identification of potentially significant impacts to be assessed within the EIA phase and details of the methodology to be adopted in assessing these impacts. This must be included within the Plan of Study for EIA and must include a description of the proposed method of assessing the potential environmental impacts associated with the project. This must also include any gaps in knowledge at this point of the study and further recommendations for the EIA Phase. Consideration of areas that would constitute "acceptable and defensible loss" should be included in this discussion.

The following table format has been used within the scoping report for the assessment of impacts:

¹ The cumulative impacts are expected to be associated with the scale of the project and any existing impacts affecting the study area. Cumulative effects can only be assessed once the detailed layouts are known. They will then be considered in the detailed specialist studies to be undertaken in the EIA Phase.

Example of Impact table summarising the evaluation of Potential Impacts Associated with the Construction of the Facility at the Scoping phase

<p>Impact Description of the expected impacts. Areas anticipated to be affected.</p> <p>Desktop Sensitivity Analysis of the Site: Sensitivity analysis in terms of the impacts expected. Discuss areas of high concern.</p>			
Issue	Nature of Impact	Extent of Impact	No-Go Areas
i.e. Disturbance to and loss of indigenous natural vegetation	Discussion of the consequences of the construction of the facility to the issue/impact considered in column 1.	i.e. Local/Regional/National	No-Go areas would include sensitive features
<p>Description of expected significance of impact Describe expected significance, consequence, duration and probability of the impacts as well as degree to which these impacts— (aa) can be reversed; (bb) may cause irreplaceable loss of resources; and (cc) can be avoided, managed or mitigated</p>			
<p>Gaps in knowledge & recommendations for further study</p>			