

Simulation 2: Presentation

Scoping

This simulation is concerned with the stage in the EIA process described as “scoping.” Once it is decided that an EIA is necessary – a decision that might have been taken as a result of simulation 1, for example – scoping enables those responsible for the EIA process to focus on the issues of greatest significance.

One of the major pitfalls of EIA is the tendency to collect large amounts of data without ensuring that the resources available are targeted at the most important problems or the areas of greatest political or public concern. This has several potential disadvantages. First, EIAs that are encyclopedic are very hard to use to determine the relative priority of solutions and are not cost-effective. Second, EIAs that are not focused on significant problems are not likely to contribute to the needs of decision makers or the concerns of the public. Third, EIAs that do not involve the views of affected parties are likely to omit useful sources of information or perceptions of the environmental management needs of a project.

Scoping is an exercise undertaken before the EIA study commences. The principal objectives are:

- To identify the major sources of impacts;
- To identify the potential consequences of such impacts on the environment and community;
- To identify possible design or implementation options still available that may reduce environmental impact
- To identify and consult with the principal organizations and parties affected; and
- To decide which issues are most significant and to determine what information should be collected in order to investigate these issues.

There are various options for undertaking scoping, ranging from formal conversation meetings with the public to informal brainstorming with key individuals or representatives of interested organizations. The precise method adopted is not as important as the need to ensure that potential problems or sources of conflict are identified so that the EIA study can be well focused. Your instructions include a project description, with summaries of typical effects, and several newspaper excerpts indicating public opinion or the views of interested parties. All the technical information required is included – the object of the exercise is to decide which issues you think are important, which organizations should be included in the scoping and the priorities for the EIA study. Please note that there are still two siting options for the project you are responsible for. However, the development proposals for the other 3 sectors have been reduced to 1 site each – which is indicated in the map.

Instructions: Use the materials you produced in simulation 1 and all the other pertinent materials provided. You may research on the type of industry you have to substantiate your outputs.

Power plant

1. Task.

Following your successful participation in the ministers commission to review the environmental implications of the province of Bahara’s Development Prospectus, you have been appointed as a member of a high level Inter-departmental committee reporting to the provincial department of environmental management. The task of this

Committee, which is one of 4 each focusing on 1 of the sectors identified in the development strategy, is to supervise and review the preparation of an environmental impact assessment of the individual investment projects.

The Committee has been established immediately following the acceptance of the development prospectus and the announcement that feasibility studies will be required for the proposed projects each sector. The feasibility study in your sector must take account of the choice between two different sites for the project. However you have been informed that the recommendation has already been made to proceed with one site only for the other 3 sectors. First task of the committee is to scope the environmental impact assessment. According to the environmental impact assessment procedures of the province of Bahara, scoping includes the following: consultation with the principal public agencies, interested organizations and representatives of the public; identification of the major environmental concerns that the project is likely to cause; identification of specific conflicts associated with the natural resources needs of the project; identification of the possible impacts of the project on other sectors; and distinction between those environmental concerns that are common to both sites and those that are site specific.

The output of this scoping exercise should be a short presentation to the Provincial director of environmental management that indicates the proposed scope of the EIA that must be prepared.

Materials: In addition to the attachments to simulation 1 which you have already received, you will use the outputs you have generated in simulation 1. The maps have been provided. A map showing 2 alternative sites for the project and the recommended sites for the project in other 3 sectors will be provided. Selected newspaper reports will be indicated at the last part of the instructions.

Approach:

I suggest that you adopt the following approach:

- Spend time reviewing the background materials
- Consider what will be the major environmental concerns associated with this project and the alternative sites.
- Discuss the steps involved in a scoping exercise, such as consultation with interested parties, identification of major sources of impacts, preliminary assessment of what conflicts may arise and what issues should be given priority during an EIA study
- Prepare a short zoom presentation summarizing the process and results of a scoping exercise for the project.

Output:

Your group should prepare a presentation of not more than 3 slides covering the following:

- institutions and groups you feel you need to consult during the scoping process.
- your conclusions as to the major sources of environmental impact or conflict
- your reasons on why these impacts or conflicts might be significant

-priority issues to be investigated during the EIA study.

Newspaper Material

“New Power station will damage tourism” says university expert.

Addressing parliament yesterday, the minister for environment and resources said that he was aware of the claims being made by professor Z that the proposed new power plant at Baytown would have disastrous consequences for the tourist industry as well as bird island nature reserve. He stated that it was government policy to ensure the protection of the environment; but at the same time, he criticized the conservation interest for alarming the public for any decision had been made on the siting of the plant or the development of the Coalfield.

In a separate statement yesterday, the chairman of the Bahara chamber of commerce is warned members of the Rotary club that there was inadequate electricity generating capacity in the Province and this was already having an impact on other regions economic development. He stated that the proposals to expand the hydroelectric generating capacity would provide too little, too late. The only solution was a crash program to build a coal-fired power station.

The Rotary Club meeting was chaired by the minister of recreation. He sympathized with the need for more electricity but added a note of caution. Tourism, he said, was the major money earner for both the province and the country as a whole. The recent decision to expand the Bahara airport had assumed a major increase in tourism. This was proving to be the case: the bay, the bird life in the spectacular scenery had made the Baytown resort complex a major success. There was a serious concern that a new power station would have a major impact on the river and the northern shores of Wye bay.

“Pollution of Wye Bay?”

Government scientist in the Department of fisheries, Ministry of agriculture and fisheries, have drawn attention in a recent report to the sensitivity of shellfish in Wye bay to changes in water quality and temperature. There are considerable worries that if C or river water is used as cooling water within the proposed new power station, then this could give rise to an increase in temperature in the presence of chemicals used to prevent corrosion and algal build up. According to the report, this could lead to a reduction in fish followed by a reduction in bird life that depends on the fish.

Irrigation

Task: Following your successful participation in the ministers commission to review the environmental implications of the province of Bahara development prospectus, you have been appointed as a member of a high level inter-departmental Committee reporting to the provincial department of environmental management. The task of this committee, which is one of the four each focusing on one of the sectors identified in the development strategy, is to supervise and review the preparation of an environmental impact statement of the individual investment projects. The committee has been established immediately following the acceptance of the development prospectus and the announcement that feasibility studies will be required for the proposed projects in each sector. The feasibility study in your sector must take account of the choice between two different sites for the project. However, you have been informed that the

recommendation has already been made to proceed with 1 site only for the other 3 sectors. The first tasks of the committee is to “scope” environmental impact assessment. According to the environmental impact assessment procedures of the province, scoping involves the following: consultation with the principal public agencies, interested organizations and representatives of the public; identification of the major environmental concerns that the project is likely to cause; identification of specific conflicts associated with the natural resources need of the project; identification of the possible impacts of the project on other sectors; distinction between those environmental concerns that are common to both sites and those that are site specific.

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Newspaper Report:

“Villagers worried about resettlement”

Meeting was held last week between the mayor and counselors of Baytown and leaders of community and farming associations from around the river. It is understood that there is considerable unrest in the rural areas because of the proposal of a new irrigation scheme. Local tenants fear that they will have to vacate their land as the irrigation scheme progresses. Villagers fear that whole area’s will be flooded and changes in water flow in the river will damage their water supply and fishing. Village headmen are concerned that it will entirely change their way of

life. Only the more wealthy land owners will benefit, they said. The mayor told our correspondence afterwards that he was fearful that there could be local demonstrations. However he claims he has assurance from the ministry of the environment that resettlement arising from the schemes will be minimal, and generous compensation payments will be made to oustees.

“Coal Narnia limited report leaked”

A source inside coal Narnia limited has made a copy of a report available to our correspondent that indicates considerable opposition to proposed irrigation schemes in Bahara. The trouble, according to Coal Narnia Limited, is that these schemes might inhibit the future development of a significant coal reserves nearby. Once considerable investment has been made in the irrigation, development of the mines would be more risky and costly. We understand that Coal Narnia has made strong representation to the Bahara Provincial Agricultural Development.

Coal Mine

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Newspaper Report:

“Technical Difficulties for Bahara Mines”

Recent conference on the environmental aspects of coal mining at the University highlighted the technical difficulties and cost of land reclamation of open cast mining. A representative of the forestry department attending the conference clarified the statutory requirements for reclaiming the land to use equivalent to its previous use, and two compensatory afforestation. Mining experts raised several questions during a lively session. Where should the afforestation take place if no nearby land was available? How could revegetation of the overburden and reforestation after mining is complete be carried out, given soil and climate conditions? Unless some operating guidelines can be agreed, our correspondent says, the coal mine managers will be faced with a very expensive and possibly technically unsound program.

“Water supply threatened by coal mine”

Yesterday, he learned of a row brewing in the Baytown city council over the coal mines currently proposed for development west of Baytown. There were serious concerns about their effect on water quality in the river Aye from which Baytown gets its drinking water. Opencast coal mines can produce polluted mine drainage and sedimentation.

Petrochemical plant

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Newspaper Report:

“Chamber of Commerce petitions provincial chief minister”

We, in the provincial capital, the Chamber of Commerce petition the chief minister over the sighting of a petro chemical plant. The businessmen have been arguing for sometime that too much development is located in the north of the province. The Deepport badly needs investment

and more employment opportunities. The chairman of the Chamber of Commerce was challenged outside the chief minister's office by representatives of a grass root ecological NGO from the Deepport to bitterly oppose the project.

" Fishing lobby loses patience"

This petrochemical project is the last straw says the representative of the Bahara Fishery Association. The proposal for a petrochemical plant follows discussions over recent months in various development projects which would pose risk to fisheries in the bay. "Fishermen feel that their livelihood is continuously jeopardized by other development sectors which regard the bay as a sink for their pollution." Fishermen are threatening to occupy both the sites proposed unless they are involved in the siting decision.