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Vancouver **CANADA**

Impact assessment at-a-glance: Process booklets for a wide audience



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Opening Anecdote

- Impact Assessment – What is it?
- How do we communicate it to diverse audiences?



Who are we, what do we do, and where are we located?



OUR VISION

Making wise environmental impact assessment decisions that balance the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of all residents of the Mackenzie Valley, while ensuring the protection of the environment for present and future generations.

- Co-management organization derived from land claims with Indigenous peoples of the area under Canada's Constitution Act
 - Not Government, per-say
- Board-members: No less than 7, including 1 Chair.
 - ½ appointed by Aboriginal Land Claim Orgs, ½ by Federal and Territorial governments
- Small yet nimble staff: 10-15 employees
- Our business: Impact Assessment



Who are we, what do we do, and where are we located?



What We Do

Environmental assessment is a set of steps for decision making. It involves predicting whether a proposed project is likely to cause environmental impacts that matter (“significant impacts”), and identifying ways to avoid or reduce them.

- Must consider social, economic, cultural and environmental effects; consider Traditional Knowledge



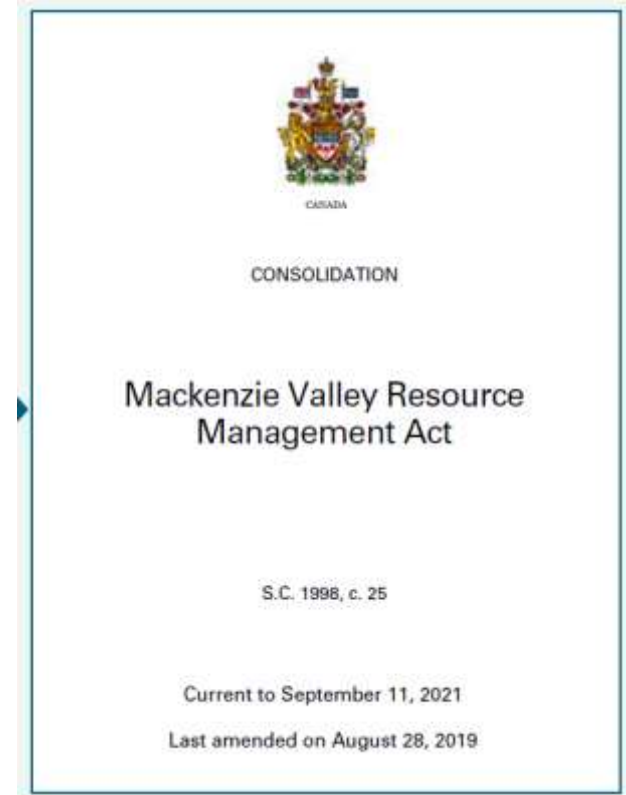
What We Do...

- We rely on participation for our process:
 - Indigenous Groups
 - Government
 - Public



Does all of this shape how we desired to communicate our complex process to others?

- YES
- So, how then, do we communicate a complex, legal process like Impact Assessment to a broad audience?



Started from existing Tools

- EIA Guidelines



- “Micro”-level of detail

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

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EIA Guidelines

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Started from Existing Tools

- “Pop-Up Display Banners”
 - Created around 2018
 - “Macro” – level of detail



Created something Different/In-Between

- “EA Process Booklets”
 - Not “Micro detail” ...
 - Not “Macro”
- Simple, explanatory textual explanations, yet visual appeal
- Applicable for a ***broad audience***



USE THESE BOOKLETS TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE EA PROCESS



Overview: How environmental assessment fits into the co-management system.



Project Planning: What should happen before an environmental impact assessment?



Preliminary Screening: The co-management system decides if an environmental assessment is needed.



Environmental Assessment: What steps happen during an environmental assessment by the Review Board?



Follow-up: What happens after an environmental assessment is completed?



Participation: How to make your voice heard in environmental assessment.

Nesting Doll/Fractal Approach

- One builds upon the next:
 - Scalable or Tiered approach
- The resolution changes, but the messaging from us (the Review Board) does not



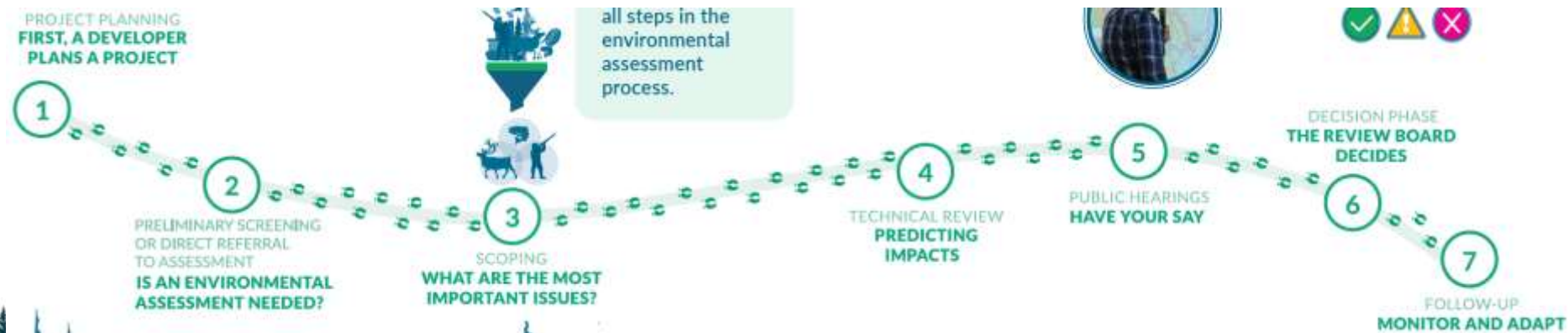
Know your Audience!

- Many diverse groups (Indigenous Groups, Government, Public, Developers & Industry Groups)
 - Main focus on the public and those new to the EA Process
- Who's the public? Also diverse:
 - NWT a very diverse territory.
 - Statistics Canada : NWT 51% Indigenous
 - If major cities of Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Inuvik, Hay River are excluded, many smaller communities are large majority Indigenous (80-90%)
 - 11 official languages in the NWT: English, French and 9 diverse Indigenous



Plain Language

- Plain Language! A variety of reading-levels; English may be a second-language
- Consistent grammar, style formatting
- Bullet text/explanations when possible
 - Keeps concise
- TOC should tell a story of document
- Consistent flow-chart for process steps for all booklets is useful/grounding



Visual and Written Balance

- Still very engaging/visual-heavy
- Simple, explanatory text, and visuals/examples that represent the text whenever possible



Think Local, Show Local

- Local pictures
- Local people
- Local examples/case-studies

- NWT Diverse:
 - Vast in size
 - very differing regions, concerns in communities in those regions

- Showing local examples from a variety of communities and regions shows commitment to the area in which we work



Give Relevant Examples/Case-Studies

Safe water for ALL uses

A recent EA completed for a mine waste project at the Diavik Diamond Mine resulted in measures that require the developer to ensure that not only is water safe for people, aquatic life, and wildlife, but also acceptable for cultural use.

Measure 1 says that Diavik will make sure that once the mine closes, water will be safe for people, aquatic life, and wildlife, and suitable for cultural uses.

Measure 2 says Diavik will work with Indigenous groups to develop ways to judge if the water is acceptable for cultural uses.



Photo: Pat Kane



CASE STUDY: THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Exploration around Drybones Bay

In 2003, Consolidated Goldwin Ventures wanted to conduct small-scale exploration drilling in the Drybones Bay area. The developer applied to the Land and Water Board for a land use permit. During the preliminary screening, the Land and Water Board heard many concerns about the effects this exploration work might have on cultural, social, and traditional land use in the area. The Land and Water Board determined that there was public concern about the project, and sent it to environmental assessment because of the cultural importance of this area.



Other Tips

- Utilize existing tools: Policy docs, guidance, visuals
- Consistent Colour-Scheme / Visual Theme
- Consistent language with different authors (tone, terminology, etc.)
- Avoidance of acronyms
- Avoid 'wall of text'
- Definition text-boxes
- Key Take-Aways: Some sort of summary up-front as to what someone gets out of the booklet



Other Tips...

- Does what is in policy/words reflect what happens on the ground?
 - Avoid often-used jargon. Reflect reality whenever possible
- Keep in touch with management
- Keep in touch with your design person/one doing the 'desktop publishing work'
 - Explain most every change and edit explicitly (don't assume they understand)
 - If they have access to illustrators/relevant clip-art – very helpful
- Realize things take time (longer than likely expected)



Other Tips...

- You WILL LEARN more about your process! Relish the opportunity
 - New insights gained
 - Does on-the-ground reflect the Policy/Procedures? Loop-back to management, Policy
- Only Version 1...



Thank-You



- Thanks to Alan Ehrlich, EA Team Manager at MVEIRB
- Entire current and past EA and Policy Team members at the Review Board for their input and creative ideas on design: Chuck Hubert, Kate Mansfield, Catherine Fairbairn, Simon Toogood, Amanda Annand, Chris Rose
- Our ED for support: Mark Cliffe-Phillips
- Our board members, and Chair, JoAnne Deneron



Thank-You



- Drafts of these EA Process Booklets will be available soon on our website, and a draft printed-version on-hand at the front
 - (Not yet ready for wide, published format release)

www.reviewboard.ca

Thank-you!



Let's continue the conversation!

Post questions and comments via chat in the IAIA22 platform.



#iaia22

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