



Environment Institute of  
Australia and New Zealand Inc.

## ABSTRACT SPECIFICATIONS

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### **Title: EIA – adding value for everyone**

Author: Jack Krohn

Organisation: Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

Country: Australia

Email: jackgkrohn@gmail.com

#### *Abstract:*

*EIA has been part of the legislative landscape since the 1970s, and to-day EIA procedures are administered in all Australian State and territories.*

*We are all doing it. How best, then, to make the most of it?*

*EIA is a process, operating in a statutory framework, intended to reduce the risk that proposals, with possible adverse impacts that could outweigh their benefits, will be approved in ignorance of those impacts. The project proponent pays for gathering the necessary information and sharing it with stakeholders.*

*EIA is often criticized because (allegedly, and along with other criticisms more specific to particular jurisdictions):*

- *It costs too much;*
- *It takes too long;*
- *It causes stress and division in communities;*
- *It is inherently biased when the proponent prepares the impact statement;*
- *It leads to foregone conclusions, especially for government projects;*
- *Proponents are inequitably resourced compared to community objectors.*

*How can we overcome these concerns and optimise the benefits of participating in the EIA process for all parties – proponents, decision-makers, authorities, consultants and the community?*

*The session will use a modified “World Café” format, with a number of tables, each hosted by a facilitator who will encourage discussion and record key comments on the topic allocated to that table. Other participants will move from table to table to join whichever discussions are of greatest interest to them. The session will conclude with a “voting” exercise where table facilitators will announce the most significant outcomes of their respective conversations, and participants will endorse (or oppose) and rank those outcomes as conclusions. This will create a collective communique from participants on principles for optimising the use and benefits of EIA.*

*The session will be convened collaboratively in partnership with other IA professionals from other Australian jurisdictions.*

