Environmental impact assessment: Adding value for everyone

A challenge to the *status quo*…

Why doesn't everybody love EIA???

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What do (some) people like about EIA?

- **Better informed statutory decision-making**
- **Transparency and accountability, especially for public sector projects**
- **Better understanding by proponents of their projects and their environmental settings**
- **Review and reshaping of project concepts in the light of EIA study conclusions**
- **High quality community and stakeholder engagement**
- **Co-ordinated and integrated assessment and approvals procedures**
- **Better environmental outcomes**

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Why don't people like EIA?

- **EIA costs too much**
- **EIA takes too long**
- **EIA causes stress and division in communities**
- **EIA is inherently biased when it is the proponent who prepares the EIS (or equivalent)**
- **EIA leads to foregone conclusions, especially for government projects**
- **Proponents are inequitably well-resourced relative to community objectors.**

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Challenging the *status quo*…

What do we as environmental practitioners think?

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Questions for discussion

Do we believe that the criticisms are valid? At all? A little bit? Substantially?

How best can we frame a response or alternative view, to reinforce the strength, value and relevance of EIA and to argue its positives for all the players in the EIA space?

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Where to from here???