WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)?

An EIA is a research process carried out by the project developer and an EIA consultant:

• To gather information and understand the environmental and social impacts of a development project before the project happens.

• To provide information and recommendations to decision-makers about whether a project should go ahead and about how to avoid or reduce the project's impacts.

An EIA should identify, predict, evaluate and show how to mitigate environmental, social and other impacts of a project before any major decisions are made. It should consider alternatives to the project.
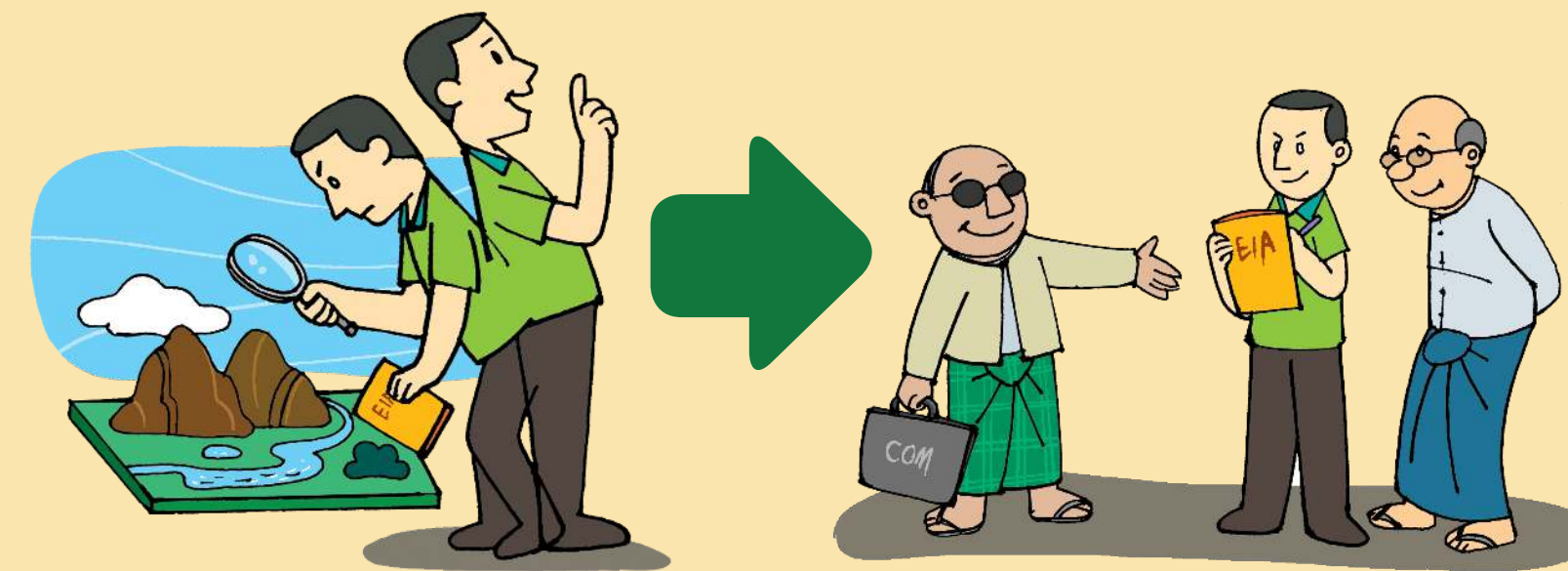
WHAT ARE THE STAGES OF AN EIA?

1) Screening determines whether a proposed project needs an EIA and, if so, how detailed it will be. Projects with less serious impacts may not require a full EIA.

2) Scoping identifies what will be considered in the EIA and includes **Public Consultation**. A Scoping Report must be approved by Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC). It should say how Public Consultation will happen in the next stages.

3) The EIA Investigation documents impacts of the proposed project, including through **Public Consultation**. It proposes how to avoid or reduce impacts, and documents and addresses **the concerns of the public and communities.**

This can take 6 months to 2 years. It results in a draft EIA Report which must include Environmental Management Plans (EMP), with details on how negative impacts will be reduced and monitored. There should be two EMPs: one for project construction and one for project operation.
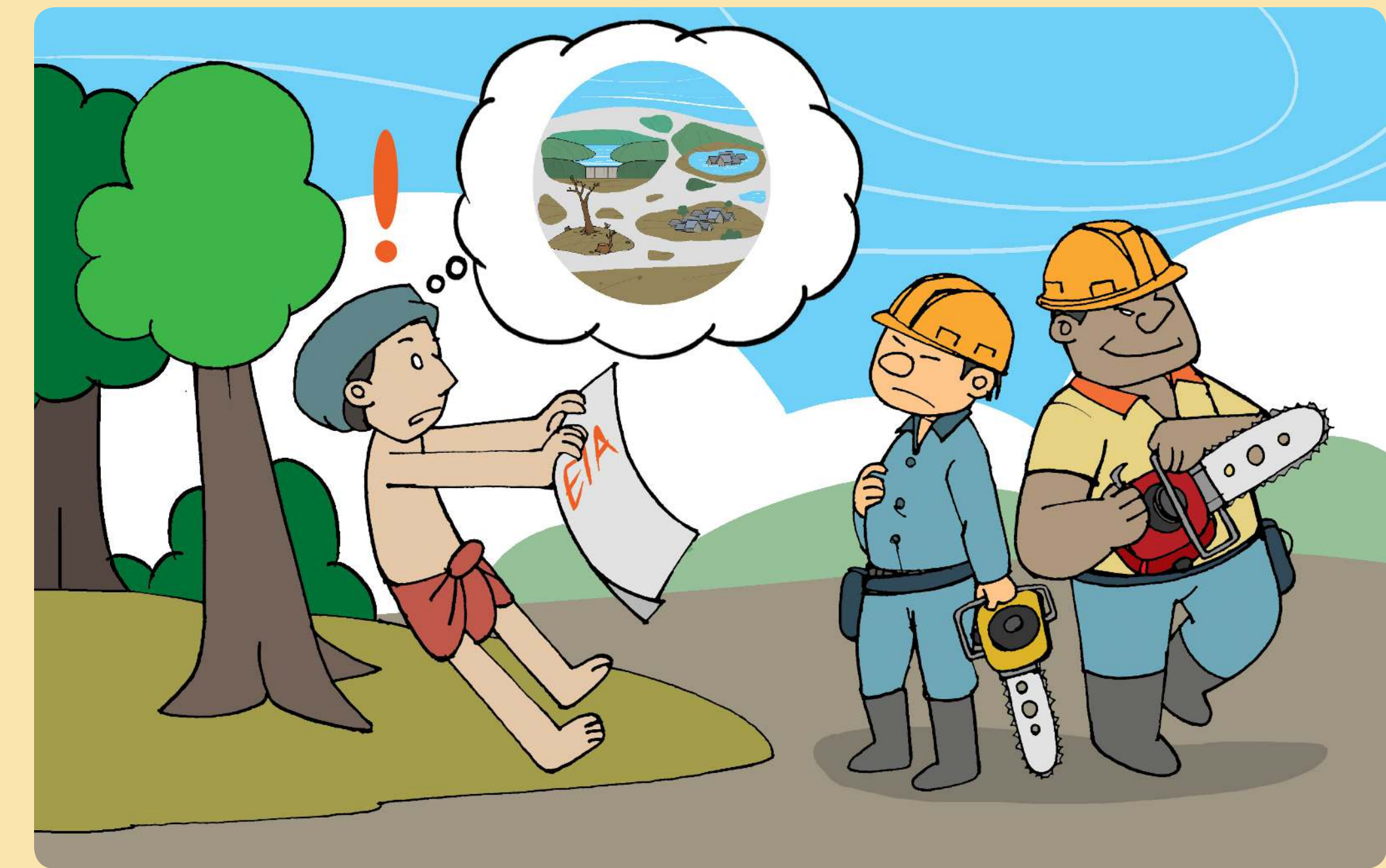
4) EIA Review: The project developer must submit the EIA report to MONREC. MONREC and the project developer must make it publically available. The EIA Report is subject to **Public Consultation.**

5) MONREC Decision: MONREC can approve or reject the EIA for the proposed project, or order more investigation. MONREC can set terms and conditions for the project, including environmental mitigation and monitoring.

PUBLIC CONSULATION

Public Consultation is a process to inform potentially affected people and the public about the proposed project and to collect their opinions. It involves:

1. Giving information about the EIA process and the project in a way that is easy to understand and with enough time for people to consider it.

2. Consultation through meetings with the community. People must be given plenty of notice before meetings take place and be told what will happen at the meetings.

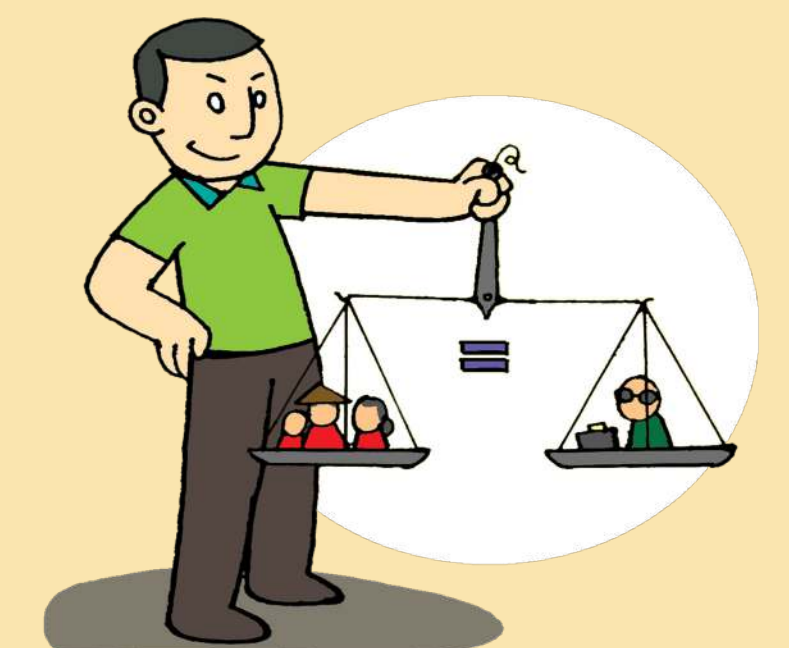3. Recording people's concerns and showing how these will be addressed, including during decision-making.

Special steps may be needed to protect vulnerable groups, including Indigenous Peoples, and to address armed conflict.

6) Administrative Appeal: Persons or organizations affected by the project can appeal an approval of an EIA to the Environmental Conservation Committee.

7) Implementation and Monitoring:

• If MONREC approves an EIA, it issues an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). This sets out a list of duties and commitments that the project must follow in addition to its EMP.

• The Project developer must implement the EMPs and monitor the impacts of the project and whether mitigation measures are working. The Project developer must submit a Monitoring Report every six months.

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