



# The environmental aspects of the European Commission's development cooperation

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The campaigning NGO for greater environmental and social justice, with a focus on forests and forest peoples rights in the policies and practices of the EU





**1980** Commission's commitments to installing procedures for documenting the environmental impacts of development projects

**1985** Directive 337/85 on EIAs

**1990** Lome IV Convention required EIAs (large-scale projects and projects posing a significant threat to the environment);

**1992** the donor community, including the EC, established that EIAs were a condition *“for ensuring aid is directed at long term sustainable development and environmental management systems need to be strengthened so that clear priorities procedures and responsibilities are established for integrating environment factors into development co-operation activities”* (Rio Declaration, art 17);

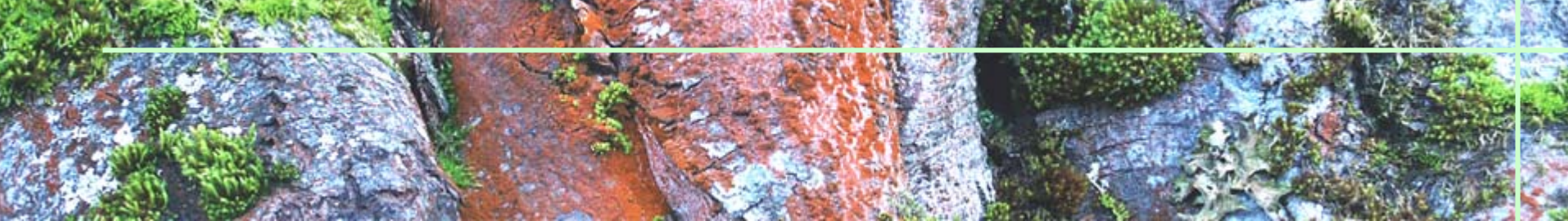
**1993** Commission's document notice stating that the use of Environment Procedures were compulsory



*Of the several thousand projects funded by the EC in the period 1985-1995, only 37 EIAs had been undertaken*

ERM, 1996, Evaluation of the Environmental Performance of EC Programmes in developing Countries, London

**What is the situation 10 years later?**



**1996** the use of the Environment Manual, which includes the need to undertake EIAs, became compulsory;

**2001** the Council makes it a requirement to undertake EIAs and SEAs

and yet:

- 1996-2006: 88 EIAs and 3 SEAs ONLY
- EIAs have been carried out in only 25% of transport projects (2004 Commission evaluation of 'EC interventions in the transport sector)



*‘Systematic Environmental Impact Assessments have not yet been undertaken’*

European Commission’s  
Director General for Development  
1996

And even more (2005 Courts’ audit):

*“Insofar as EIAs were carried out and mitigating measures identified, there is no system to ensure that these measures were laid down in an environment management plan to be implemented during the course of the project. Nor was the inclusion of EIA recommendations, where appropriate, in the technical specifications of works contracts systematically foreseen.”*

A stream of reports and evaluations flagged up the Commission's consistent failure to take environmental issues into account in its aid policies, programmes and projects:

- 1996 Eurostep, The Reality of EC aid
- 1998 ECO, Evaluation of the forestry component of EC aid programmes
- 1999 FERN, The EU and TROPICAL FORESTS: on a new track
- 2002 Dávalos ME, Mainstreaming Environment in the CSPs, DG Dev
- 2002 FERN, Forests at the Edge
- 2003 ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly
- 2004 Evaluation for the Commission of the Environment and Forest Budget line
- 2004 Evaluation for the Commission on EC interventions in the transport sector
- 2005 WWF, The importance of poverty-environment linkages
- 2005 Court of Auditor's Special Report



## **Institutional Failures**

1. *Lack of a coherent strategy governing different EC aid programmes.*
2. *Failure to implement internal EC guidelines.*
3. *Insufficient manpower and lack of competent staff.*
4. *Weak or non-existent monitoring systems.*

## **Slow Progress in Environmental Mainstreaming**

5. *Limited progress in mainstreaming the environment into EC aid strategies.*
6. *Failure to integrate environmental protection into EC budgetary support.*

## **Project Management Failings**

7. *Flawed system governing environmental impact of EC funded projects.*
8. *Poor project outcomes.*



## Recommendations

- **IMPLEMENTATION!**

1) Concrete integration guidelines and indicators; 2) EIAs and SEAs the norm and not the exception; 3) ensure the participation of civil society;

- **Transparency** of EU documents (CEPs/REPs, EIAs, SEAs,...);
- **Address manpower effects** (Commission staff)
- **State clear responsibilities** - who is accountable for what?
- **Support the creation of a framework that ensures that aid** (budget support) **makes the link with ‘poverty alleviation and sustainable development’.**

An easy tool to achieve this? Empower civil society to allow them to

- 1) voice their needs,
- 2) demand policy reforms when necessary and
- 3) hold governments to account!



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