



Instructions:
How to prepare an environmental scoping
document

Environmental Protection Authority

March 2024

Version	Change	Date
1.0	Version aligned with EP Act amendments 2020	29 October 2021
1.1	Updated with new Environment Online submission and contact details; links and minor formatting	March 2024

As EPA documents are updated from time to time, users should consult the [EPA website](#) to ensure they have the most recent version.

Environmental Protection Authority 2024,
Instructions: How to prepare an environmental scoping document,
EPA, Western Australia.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

National Relay Service

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(To assist persons with hearing and voice impairment)

More information

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1 Purpose of these instructions

The purpose of this document is to instruct proponents in how to provide the necessary information to prepare an environmental scoping document (ESD). An ESD is required where the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has decided that the proponent must undertake an environmental review under section 40(2)(b) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act).

2 Purpose of an ESD

The ESD is a document which the EPA uses to specify the form, content, indicative timing, and procedure of the environmental review to meet the requirements of s. 40(3) of the EP Act. The Environmental scoping document outlines the preliminary key environmental factors, any specific work required and key areas of focus for the environmental review. The environmental scoping document also includes an indicative outline of the timing of the environmental review (indicative timeline), which the EPA is required to publish under s. 40(3).

The EPA requires the use of the ESD template for all proponent-prepared ESDs.

Note: The EPA requires that the form and content requirements of the report on the environmental review under s. 40 (Environmental Review Document, ERD) be in accordance with the [Instruction and template: How to prepare an Environmental Review Document](#).

Note: the EPA will release the ESD for public review on its consultation hub if the EPA specifies that public review of the ESD is required when it specifies the level of assessment of the proposal.

3 How to prepare an ESD

Template

The ESD template provides the document's structure and layout. The EPA requests that ESD content specifically follows and is limited to the ESD template (unless otherwise agreed with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's EPA Services). This ensures conciseness and consistency with EPA-prepared ESDs.

Proposal information

The EPA needs sufficient information in the ESD to specify the form, content, indicative timing and procedure of the environmental review. The quality of information provided to the EPA in the ESD, and the nature of proposal elements and likely environmental effects associated with the proposal, may affect expected timeframes. There may be delays to expected timeframes if adequate information is not provided in the ESD and the EPA may also require further information under s. 40(2)(a) of the Act.

Advice

Proponents may contact EPA Services, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), if they need assistance in preparing an ESD.

Refer to the EPA's [Administrative Procedures](#) and [Procedures Manual](#) for more information about the scoping processes.

Completing the template

The following information is provided to assist proponents to complete the *Template: Proponent prepared environmental scoping document*. The following sections are aligned with the key headings in the template for ease of completion.

Content of an environmental scoping document

Where public review of an ESD has been specified in the EPA's level of assessment decision, proponents should follow the EPA's [Instructions and template – Publishing requirements for information or reports for public review](#).

1 Introduction

The ESD specifies the following to meet the requirement of s. 40(3) of the Act:

- form of the report on the environmental review (Environmental Review Document)
- content of the ERD
- indicative timing of the environmental review
- procedure of the ERD, according to procedures in the EPA's [Administrative Procedures](#) and [Procedures Manual](#) and any proposal-specific requirements.

Proponents are required to include general proposal and proponent information.

1.1 Indicative timing of the environmental review

The EPA is required to publish an indicative outline of the timing of the environmental review under section 40(3) of the EP Act. The indicative outline of the timing of the environmental review (indicative timeline) is usually agreed between the EPA and the proponent. The indicative timeline is based on the target timeframes for the EPA's assessment set out in the Procedures Manual and the timeframes proposed by the proponent for their parts of the assessment process.

Proponents are expected to meet the agreed indicative timeline and provide adequate, quality information to inform the assessment. Refer to the EPA's Administrative Procedures and Procedures Manual for more information on indicative timing requirements.

1.2 Commonwealth Government approvals

Complete this section if the proposal will potentially impact matters of national environmental significance, protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

If the EPA and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has decided that the proposal is a controlled action, and have decided to assess the proposal under a Bilateral Agreement between the State of Western Australia and the Commonwealth Government, or as an accredited assessment, include:

- the relevant matters of national environmental significance (MNES), protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, for the proposal
- potential impacts on MNES under the relevant preliminary environmental factor
- the required work to address the potential impacts on MNES under the relevant preliminary environmental factor.

2 Form and content (required work)

The ESD must specify the general form and content required for the ERD to be prepared and submitted by the proponent.

The EPA requires that the ERD is completed by following the EPA's [Instruction and template: How to prepare an Environmental Review Document](#).

2.1 Preliminary key environmental factors

The ESD must identify the preliminary key environmental factors for the environmental review. These are usually the factors identified in the record of the level of assessment required by section 39(b) (Chair's Determination) when the EPA decides to assess a proposal.

However, there may be changes to these factors as the assessment progresses, including when the EPA approves a proposal amendment during the assessment (under section 43A).

2.2 Specific additional work required for assessment of proposal

The ESD must identify any specific additional work which is particular to the assessment of the proposal which was not completed as part of the referral process and which is not already required to be included in the ERD.

The required work may include:

- specific technical studies and investigations, and provide associated reports and data packages, as they relate to:
 - preliminary key environmental factors
 - proposed offsets package
 - the preparation of an Impact Reconciliation Procedure for proposals located within the Pilbara Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) – refer to [Instructions on how to prepare an Impact Reconciliation Procedure and Impact Reconciliation Report](#)
- environmental management plans
- peer review of the scope, methodologies, findings and/or conclusions of surveys and investigations, and/or other information
- stakeholder consultation.

Where cumulative impact assessment is needed to assess cumulative effects in respect of one or more environmental factors, the ESD must identify this as specific additional work which is required for assessment. The ESD must also identify the activities, boundaries and values relevant for the cumulative impact assessment in relation to each factor.

3 Decision-making authorities

State whether the decision-making authorities (DMAs) or decision-making processes are the same as those identified in the referral or any approved amendments approved by the EPA under section 38C.

If any identified DMAs or decision-making processes have changed since the referral process (new or removed), identify any changes. For any new DMAs or decision-making processes, include whether it can mitigate the potential impact of the proposal.

For any removal of DMAs or decision-making processes, include whether there is an alternate DMA or decision-making process which can mitigate the potential impact of the proposal.

Submitting an ESD

Ensure that all required information in the template is provided with your request to the EPA Services of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER). It is preferred that requests are submitted via [Environment Online](#); however, emailed and postal submissions will be accepted. For assistance in using Environment Online, please contact EOsupport@dwer.wa.gov.au.

Submissions

EO portal: environmentonline.dwer.wa.gov.au

Email: EOsupport@dwer.wa.gov.au

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