

Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA): A Systematic Process for Assessing and Minimizing Potential Impacts of Major Capital Projects Worldwide, with an Example from the LNG Business

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Chevron International Exploration and Production has initiated a logical and systematic process to help ensure compliance with corporate and in-country environmental, social, and health standards and regulations and achieve corporate goals for operational excellence. The Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) is designed to be used early in project development which also provides key information for quality business decisions by helping to identify potential “show stoppers,” gain effective input from local and regulatory stakeholders, and better assess costs related to compliance, mitigation, or project delays. Specific objectives of ESHIA are to protect human health and the environment, minimize or eliminate potential liabilities from operations, provide greater understanding of community needs and expectations, deliver sustainable benefits, and promote consistency and efficiency within and between projects.

The process is scalable to cover a wide range of project complexity, but the general procedure consists of five procedures performed from project inception through operations. The steps include: Screening (a checklist-guided process to determine if full assessment is warranted), Scoping (identify, scale, and prioritize issues identified in the screening process), Impact Assessment (evaluation of potential impacts and mitigation measures), Stakeholder Engagement (on-going communication and feedback from all local, regulatory and business stakeholders), and a Management Plan (links impact and mitigation assessments to construction and operations to help ensure compliance).

The ESHIA process generates value by providing clearer understanding of potential environmental and social potential impacts from proposed projects, improves project efficiency and decision-making quality, and helps ensure ongoing operational compliance.