

Socio-economic Effects Assessment

The analysis of the likely effects an activity will have on the day-to-day lives of persons and communities

The *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* was established, in part, to protect and promote the well-being of Yukon First Nation citizens, other Yukon residents, and their communities.

Generally, projects should be undertaken in a way that results in beneficial socio-economic change without undermining the environmental and social systems of individuals and communities.

Socio-economic effects are described in the Act as effects on economies, health, culture, traditions, lifestyles and heritage resources. In the context of the Act these effects can be adverse or favourable.

Socio-economic effects assessment has been defined as the systematic analysis of the likely effects an activity will have on the day-to-day lives of persons and communities whose environment may be affected by a proposed project. For example, these could include changes in the number of jobs in a community, an increase in population or the need for new services and infrastructure.

Reasons why these assessments are done include:

- The need to anticipate and understand the benefits and consequences of a project on people and communities, while paying close attention to the distribution of the benefits and consequences
- To reduce uncertainties about socio-economic change by helping individuals, groups, communities, businesses, governments and private sector organizations understand, anticipate, and prepare for possible social and economic changes that may result from a proposed project
- To incorporate the results of the assessment into better project planning and decision-making for the benefit of society.



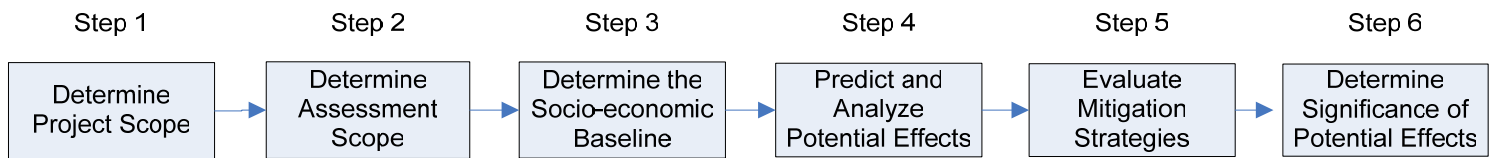


Figure 1: Basic Steps in the Socio-economic Assessment Process

Assessment Process

Once a project proposal is accepted by a Designated Office or the Executive Committee, an assessment is initiated.

Under the Act, the assessor must:

- Identify the potential environmental and socio-economic effects of a proposed project
- Determine whether those effects are negative and/or favourable
- Determine whether those negative and/or favourable effects are significant
- If so, determine their likelihood of occurring
- Finally, recommend whether the project should proceed, proceed with terms and conditions, or not proceed.

Figure 1, above, presents the basic steps in the socio-economic assessment process.



Inclusive and Comprehensive Process

Federal, territorial and First Nation governments, project proponents, affected communities and the public all play key roles in the quality of a socio-economic effects assessment under the Act.

In contrast to this Act, socio-economic effects are not a legislated requirement of many other assessment regimes. Even when legislated, other processes require that socio-economic effects be considered only when they are the result of an environmental effect.

Socio-economic effects and the principles of sustainable development are factors that must be considered in Assessments under this Act.

Further Information

YESAB has produced a draft of a detailed guidebook for the conduct of socio-economic effects assessments under the Act. Subsequent to review and revision, concise guides for proponents and the public will be prepared and made available to all.