

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) RE-CATEGORIZATION, 2008

The governments of Egypt and Denmark initiated the Environmental Sector Program (ESP) in 2001, which included six components, one being Decentralized Environmental Management. Environics was contracted under this component to provide consultancy to the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) on strengthening the decentralization of environmental management and streamlining the environmental dimension in licensing requirements. This entailed focusing on redirecting the efforts of EEAA's Central Department for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to enhance and better manage the EIA system. The EIA system had recently been updated and modified, and was being finalized at the time. The Egyptian Law 4/1994 gives EEAA the right to review the EIA system and modify it in coordination with the competent administrative authorities (CAAs).

Environics conducted workshops for the Central Department for EIA and the Environmental Management Units (EMUs) to present and discuss the EIA re-categorization criteria, the suggested modifications, and the implementation measures.

Based on the recommendations of these workshops, Environics undertook the following:

- Developed a report entitled "The Re-categorization of the EIA System for Projects." This report provided a legal background for the re-categorization; presented the re-categorization and reassessment criteria and processes, and suggested new EIA forms.
- Proposed a system for following up, assessing, and developing the implementation of the special environmental conditions of re-categorization.
- Provided training for the EMUs on the re-categorization process and its legislative framework; the special environmental conditions system and the incorporation of the conditions in the licensing procedures; follow-up and inspection procedures for facilities under the new conditions and re-categorization, and the coordination between the EEAA and the CAAs for the implementation and development of the special conditions. This training ensured the involvement of the EMUs in the process and that their feedback was considered.

These efforts resulted in a new, integrated EIA system for projects of various sizes and sectors, which took into account the required capacity building for the EMUs. Environics developed Guidelines for the Basis and Procedures of EIA, Guidelines for Investors to Complete EIA Forms A and B, and Guidelines for EMUs to Include Special Environmental Conditions in the Licensing System.