

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA):

Tracking Federal Practices and Developing Protocols for Reverse EIAs

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Project Background:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal agencies must consider the environmental impacts of proposed federal projects by constructing “Environmental Impact Statements” (EIS’s) that allow the public and government officials to consider how a project will impact the environment. However, there are no legal requirements that EISs consider how a project might specifically influence climate change, or conversely, how climate change might influence a project. While the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued draft guidelines in 2010, these drafts have not been finalized and are therefore not legally enforceable.

Project:

- 1) Updating the Sabin Center’s NEPA EIS Database so that it is current through the end of 2014.
- 2) Developing recommended protocols for the assessment of climate change-related impacts on federally proposed projects.



Various Types of Federal Action Subject to NEPA Review

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| - Energy Development and Mining | - Other Land Management |
| - Forestry | - Fisheries and Marine Management |
| - Park and Wildlife | - Buildings and Real Estate |
| - Transportation | - Public Infrastructure |
| - Electric Generation | - Military Operations |
| - Electric Transmission | |

Impacts Analyzed:

1. Direct operational impacts.
2. Purchased electricity
3. Induced trips
4. Construction impacts
5. Impact of climate change on action
6. Impact of climate change on water resources
7. Energy efficiency
8. Water efficiency
9. Other emissions / impacts
10. GHG Emissions from Alternatives to Proposed Action