1. Social Impact Assessment – a different way of approaching environmental approvals

Rachel Maas, Principal Social Scientist, Just Add Lime; Lara Mottee, PhD candidate

Macquarie, University/University of Groningen

This paper is based on the premise that a ‘social impact’ is anything linked to a project that affects or concerns any impacted stakeholder group. Therefore, almost anything can be a social impact so long as it is valued or important to a specific group of people. We propose introduce Social Impact Assessment as the tool to identify impacts at project inception (i.e. before the legislative environmental approval process has begun) and across the life of a project. This approach broadens the scope of a SIA from a technical study undertaken as part of a environmental approval process to a management strategy to manage social risks of the project in a way that develops or maintains a proponents’ and regulators social licence to operate.