

Assess the Strategies Mentioned to Improve the Environmental Impacts of the EIA Report on the Central Expressway Project: A Case Study in Mirigama to Kurunegala Expressway in Sri Lanka

H.P.P.Madhusan Dissanayake¹

Abstract

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is one of the main processes involved in the construction of highways under Sri Lanka's infrastructure development. In the environmental impact assessment report of the Central Expressway from Mirigama to Kurunegala (39.7KM), which is a selected section of highway in Sri Lanka, there were many proposals presented to reduce environmental impacts. This research aims to find out how successful the environmental protection measures are and identify the weaknesses of the proposals and suggest strategies to improve them. Based on the facts which are not addressed in the EIA report obtained through the field observations and previous research studies. It is possible to identify environmental weaknesses mentioned in the final EIA report such as the removal of natural plant cover, the practicality of methods to reduce soil erosion, and the artificial methods to reduce noise pollution, non-maintenance of the road after the construction of the road and the lack of commercial value of the plants that have been replanted on the sides of the road. The Environmental Impact Assessment of this selected Central Expressway segment is expected to be studied in depth and solutions are about to be proposed for the above weaknesses such as cultivating plants with a commercial value on both sides of the road, maximum protection of natural plant cover, use of natural plant cover to reduce noise pollution, regularization of soil conservation and proper maintenance and supervision of the road after the completion of the project which can reduce the intensity of the impact. It is hoped to improve the final environmental impact assessment report by considering the previous research reports and using its knowledge and preparing strategies for it.

Keywords: Environmental impact assessment, environmental problems, Central Expressway, infrastructure development, Strategies for Improving

¹ *Department of Environmental Management, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka; prabathdissanayaka1998@gmail.com*