

14. Major Challenges and Issues

Major Trends and Issues affecting SEA

- Great demand for efficient and prompt decision-making and simplicity
- Need for comprehensive, reliable and affordable environmental information of proposals and alternatives
- Need for clarity on ecological criteria, energy and conservation policies

Obstacles to Faster/Smother Development of SEA

- Lack of ownership from proponents
- Lack of win-win development alternatives
- Conventional assessment techniques not suitable
- Lack of knowledge and experience by consultants
- SEA moving faster than other international or local policies – assessment in a policy vacuum

How Can Quality be Improved

- Informed discussion on scoping and process
- More ownership and accountability from proponents (sticks and carrots)
- Early public consultation on key issues and criteria
- Integrate environmental considerations when options are being formulated by others

Recommendations on Ways and Means to Improve SEA

- SEA Guideline being prepared in HK to provide a concise framework for proponents/consultants to follow
- SEA examples and past SEA reports available and easily accessible by public, proponents, consultants
- Strategic follow-up and monitoring framework as a key feature of SEA
- Knowledge and experiences sharing across the globe
- More practical pragmatic research towards efficient, effective processes