

# 1. The EIA System in Japan

In Japan, a system on EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) was first introduced in 1972 for public works. The systems relating to port and harbor planning, reclamation, power plants and the Shinkansen bullet (super-express) train were established later around 1980. In the course of implementing EIA under these systems, the need for an integrated system/standardized rule was recognized. Therefore the environmental impact assessment bill was proposed to the Diet in 1981 but failed to pass in 1983.

After the bill became void, a standardized rule of "Implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment" was set up through a Cabinet decision in 1984. Furthermore, local governments also promoted the establishment of their own ordinances and guidelines on EIA.

Later, a review of the system began when promotion of EIA was stipulated in the "Basic Environment Law" enacted in 1993. As a result, corresponding to the framework of the new environmental policy as well as referring to EIA systems in other countries, the "Environmental Impact Assessment Act" was enacted in June 1997. Since the enactment, in accordance with the EIA Act, a total of 142 projects in the sector of road, power plant and other field projects have been completed the EIA procedures so far.

As 10 years had passed since the complete enforcement of the EIA Act in 1999, reviews were carried out with a view to revising the law. In April 2011, the Revised EIA Act was enacted in which an EIA procedure at the planning stage (Primary Environmental Impact Consideration) and a procedure for reporting and announcing results of the measures for protecting the environment (Impact Mitigation Reporting) were incorporated. This was completely enforced in April 2013.

## (Year) Process of establishing the Environmental Impact Assessment Act

1972	Approval of "On the Environmental Conservation Measures Relating to Public Works" by the Cabinet	Introduction of EIA system for public works
1981	Submission of "Environmental Impact Assessment Bill" to the Diet (void in 1983)	
1984	Decision on the "Implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment" by the Cabinet	Institutionalization of the system by administrative guidance instead of law
1993	Enactment of the "Basic Environment Law"	Legal recognition of EIA
1997	Enactment of the "Environmental Impact Assessment Act"	Legislation on EIA
1999	Enforcement of "Environmental Impact Assessment Act"	
2011	Revision of the "Environmental Impact Assessment Act"	Primary Environmental Impact Consideration , Impact Mitigation Reporting
2013	Complete enforcement of the Revised "Environmental Impact Assessment Act"	

## Implementation Status of the Legal EIA Procedures in Japan (as of 31st March 2023)

	Road	River	Railway	Airport	Power plant	Waste disposal site	Landfill and reclamation	Land readjustment	Total*
Total	96	11	19	16	659	7	20	22	850
>On-going	13	1	2	4	420	1	3	2	446
>Completed	72	9	15	11	183	6	15	15	326
>Aborted	11	1	2	1	56	0	2	5	78
Opinions of the Minister of the Environment	84	10	17	16	678	1	4	17	827

\* : Total number excludes the number of landfill and reclamations implemented in projects classified in the category of other.