

Planning updates

Stephen Barry
Director Resources Policy



A big year.....

- **Hunter Regional Plan 2036**
- **Draft Social Impact Assessment Guidelines**
- **Economic Assessment Guidelines – technical notes**
- **Environmental Impact Assessment Improvement Project**
- **Community Consultative Committee Guidelines**
- Legislative updates
- Improving Voluntary Planning Agreements (on exhibition until 27/01/2017)
- Compliance and enforcement improvements
- And more.....



Hunter Regional Plan 2036

Hunter Regional Plan 2036

- Blueprint to guide planning priorities and land use decisions over the next two decades.
- Final plan released 16 October 2016.
- Plan focuses on four goals:
 - A leading regional economy;
 - A biodiversity-rich natural environment;
 - Thriving communities; and
 - Greater housing choice and jobs.
- More than 100 actions to deliver on these goals.
- Hunter Development Corporation will oversee the delivery of the plan, including the preparation of a Metropolitan Plan for Greater Newcastle.

Figure 3: Hunter 2036

-  Strategic Centre
-  Centre
-  Indicative Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area
-  Newcastle Airport - Global Gateway
-  Port of Newcastle - Global Gateway
-  Railway
-  Inter-regional Road
-  Major Road
-  Inter-regional Connection
-  Growth Area
-  Biodiversity Corridor
-  National Park and Reserve / State Forest
-  Residential and Employment Land
-  Waterway



Direction 5: Transform the productivity of the Upper Hunter

ACTIONS

- Prepare for the diversification and innovation of the economy.
- Identify land and infrastructure requirements to develop the Hunter's coal and alternative energy resources.
- Protect the availability and quality of resources to sustain agricultural industries.
- Improve land use certainty and enable innovation by reviewing and amending planning frameworks.
- Plan for water security.
- Develop the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Project report.
- Review the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan.

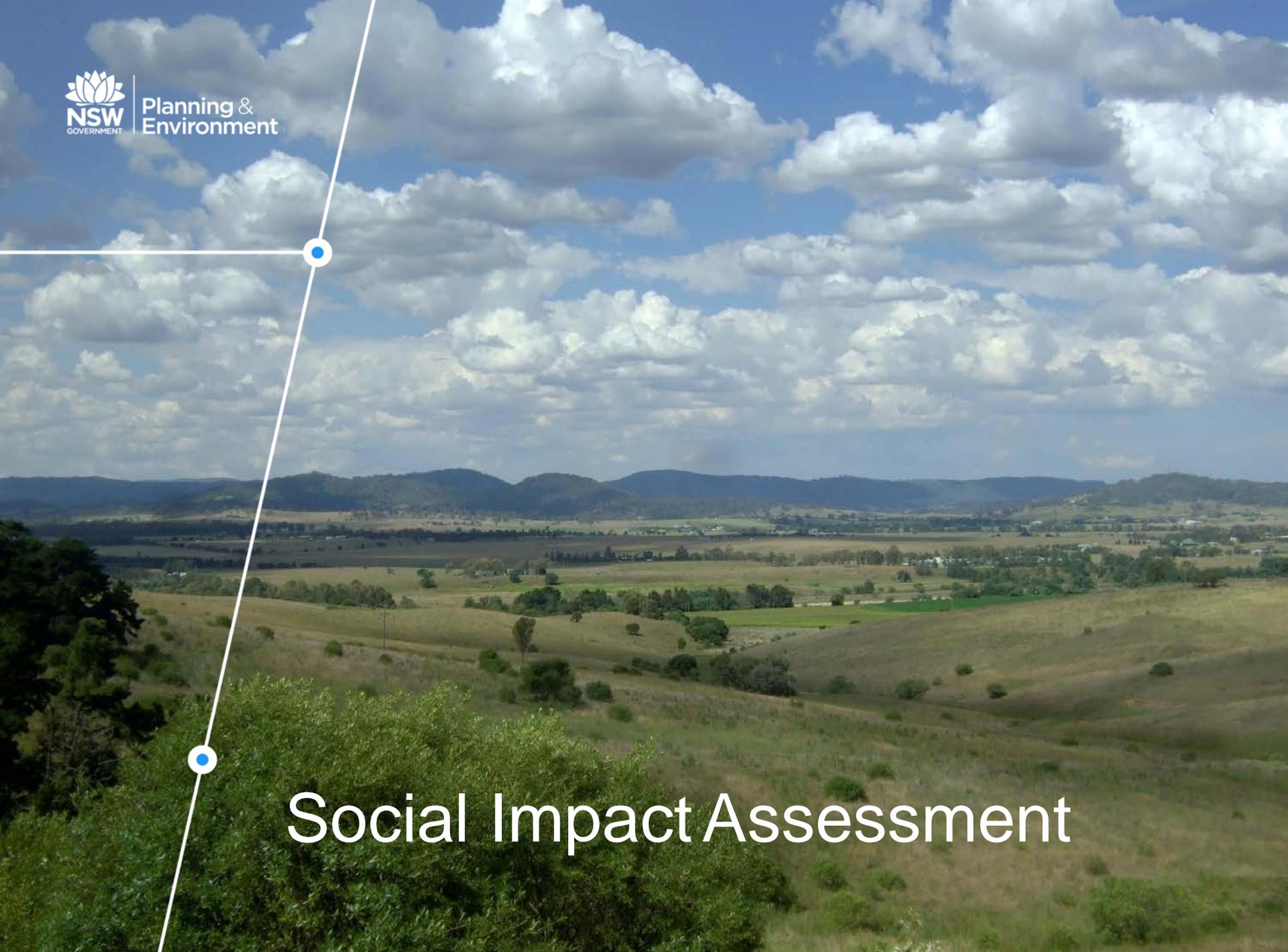
Direction 11: Manage the ongoing use of natural resources

ACTIONS

- Manage the ongoing use of mineral resources and provide access to up-to-date information.
- Work with stakeholders to prepare land use plans that respond to the lifecycle of resource activity for active and emerging mining areas.
- Implement the cumulative impact assessment methodology when planning for important agricultural land and water resources.
- Review the *Synoptic Plan: Integrated landscapes for coal mine rehabilitation in the Hunter Valley* (1999).

Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution

- Proposed Special Infrastructure Contribution to help deliver the Hunter Regional Plan 2036.
- This is a financial contribution that new development would make towards the cost of infrastructure for the region.
- Seeking feedback on:
 - cost-sharing approach,
 - the scope of infrastructure that could be included, and
 - the implementation of the Special Infrastructure Contribution Plan.
- Feedback is open on the *Discussion Paper: Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution Plan*, until 16 December 2016.
- Anticipate that a draft Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution Plan will be released for public consultation in early 2017.



Social Impact Assessment

Strengthening social impact assessment

Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry developments

- Intended to give communities a stronger voice throughout the assessment process and support better decision-making.
- Provide for greater accountability for monitoring and managing of social impacts and mitigation strategies over the life of a project.
- To be released for consultation soon.

What should be considered as part of the social impact assessment?

- A social impact is something that is experienced by people as a consequence of a project.
- Social impacts can be a change to:
 - someone's way of life;
 - culture;
 - community;
 - political systems;
 - environment;
 - health and wellbeing; or
 - personal and property rights.
- Can be tangible or intangible, and be direct, indirect, interdependent or cumulative.
- Can be experienced differently within a community, and at the local, regional, State or national levels.
- Respectful and meaningful engagement with the community is a critical part of the social impact assessment process.



Principles

- Action-oriented
- Adaptive
- Equity-sensitive
- Impartial
- Inclusive
- Integrated
- Life-cycle focus
- Material
- Precautionary
- Proportionate
- Rigorous
- Transparent

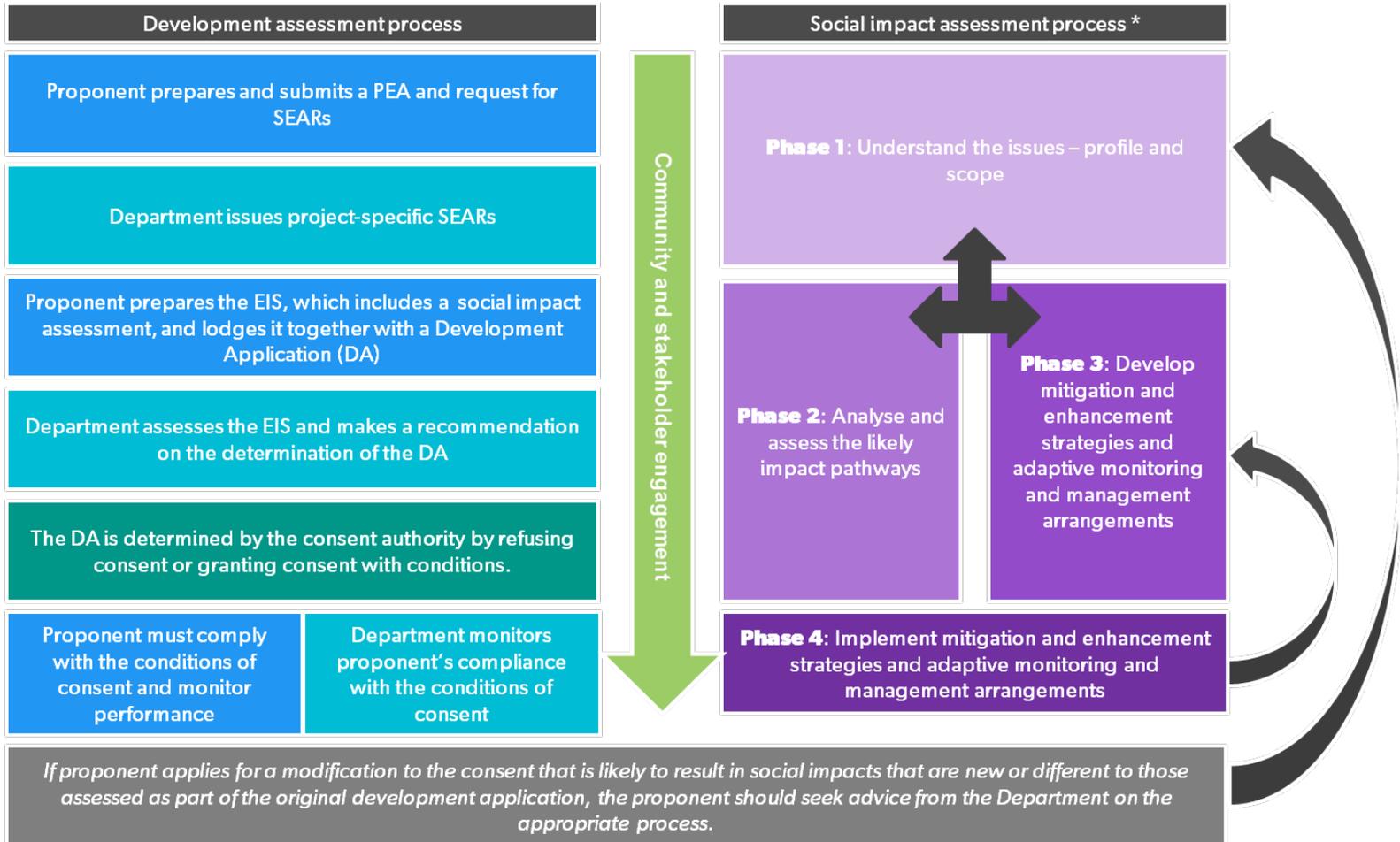


Determining significance

The draft guidelines:

- set out processes to help determine what social impacts are likely to matter the most.
- set out specific performance objectives.
- identify impact characteristics that should be considered when determining if a potential social impact is likely to be significant in the context of the project:
 - likelihood;
 - duration;
 - extent;
 - sensitivity; and
 - severity.
- consideration also needs to be given to whether the social impact is of high concern to the community.

Process



* Based on Vanclay F et al (2015). *Social impact assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects*. Fargo ND: International Association of Impact Assessment.

Safeguards to ensure social impact assessments are impartial

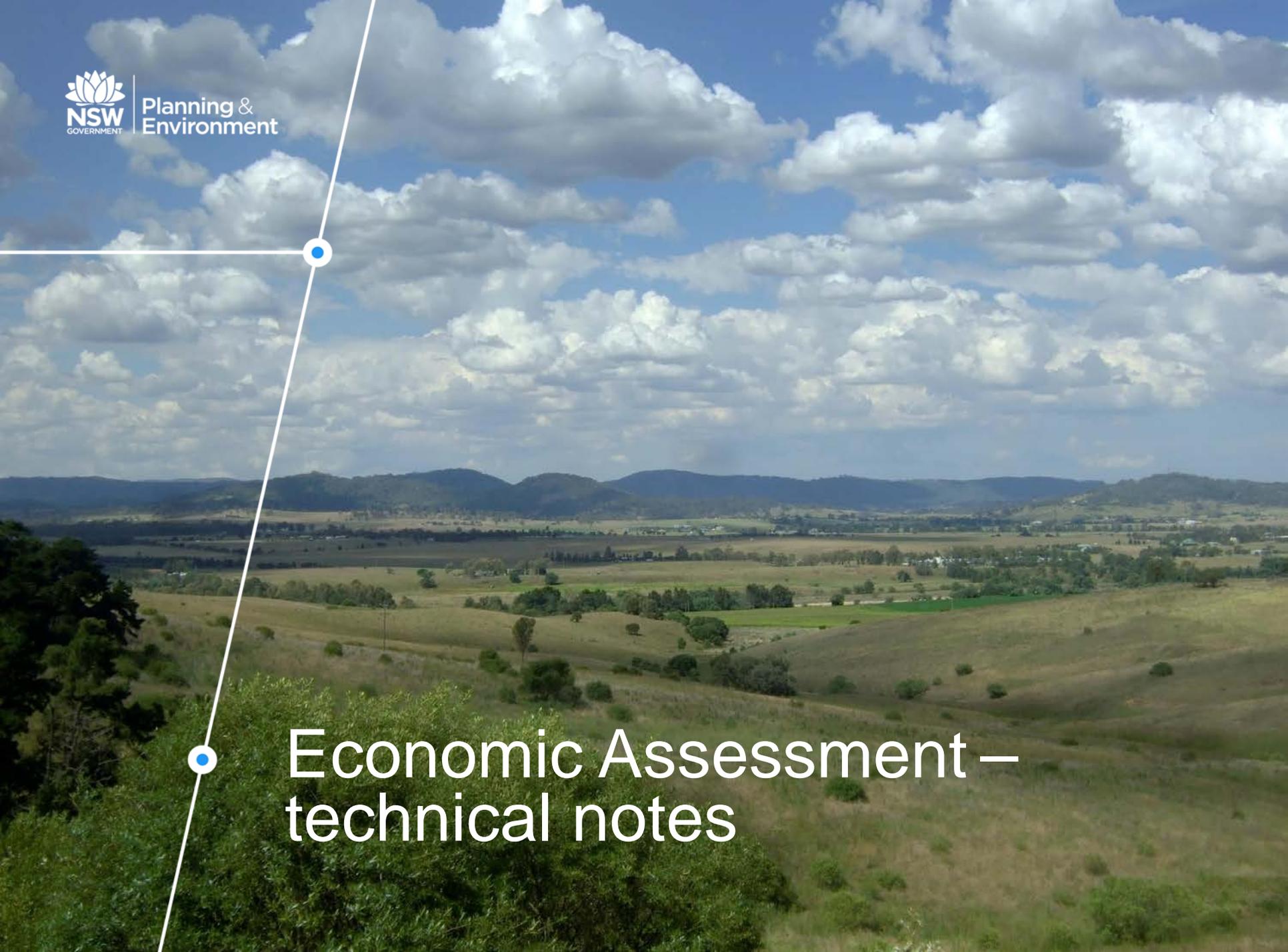
- Draft guidelines include measures to support impartiality and accountability:
 - make impartiality one of the key guiding principles;
 - require name, qualifications and social impact assessment experience;
 - require ethical considerations that apply to research involving humans to be observed;
 - require potential conflicts of interest to be avoided or effectively managed; and
 - require certification that the assessment does not contain false or misleading information.
- The concurrent EIA Improvement Project is investigating options to improve the accountability of all impact assessment professionals.

How are proponents expected to respond to significant impacts?

- A good social impact assessment will be action oriented and identify practical, effective strategies to address impacts and promote better social outcomes.
- The views and needs of the community should be considered and factored in.
- For positive social impacts, any steps that need to be taken before they can be realised should be clearly explained.
- Consideration should also be given to strategies to further enhance positive social impacts, particularly in the local community and surrounding region where the project is located, and ensure benefits are distributed as equitably as possible.

Accountability

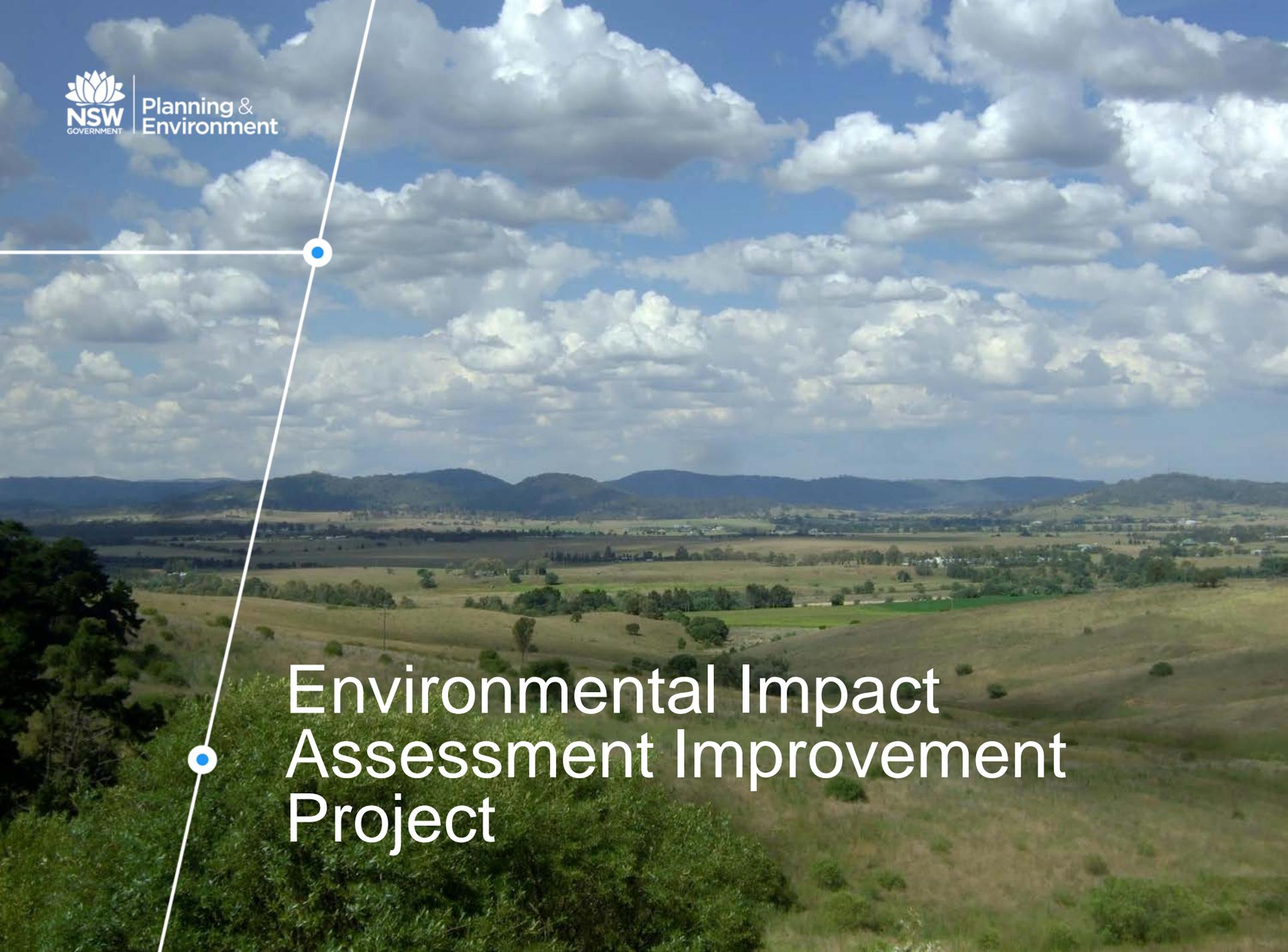
- The draft guidelines require an ongoing monitoring and management framework to be put in place that includes:
 - monitoring of predicted impacts;
 - processes for responding to unforeseen impacts;
 - monitoring the effectiveness of mitigation and enhancement strategies;
 - research to reduce key uncertainties;
 - periodic evaluation and review;
 - an effective compliance management system; and
 - periodic public reporting of results.
- The Department will follow up reported breaches and conduct regular compliance checks.



Economic Assessment – technical notes

Economic Assessment Guidelines – technical notes

- Define the requirements for a robust cost benefit analysis of proposed mining and coal seam gas projects on NSW.
- Split into two parts in response to stakeholder feedback during the exhibition process:
 - Guidelines - outline the approach to cost-benefit analysis and local effects analysis; and
 - Supplementary Technical Notes.
- The Guidelines were released in late 2015.
- The Technical Notes provide additional information on options and approaches relevant to a range of environmental, social and transport related impacts.
- To be released for public consultation soon.



Environmental Impact Assessment Improvement Project

Potential improvements

- Discussion paper put forward options including:
 - driving earlier and better engagement with affected communities
 - focusing assessment on the most important issues
 - improving the quality and consistency of EIA documents
 - developing a standard approach for applying conditions to projects
 - providing greater certainty and efficiency around decision-making, including assessment timeframes
 - strengthening monitoring and reporting on project compliance
 - improving accountability of EIA professionals
- Initial consultation closed on 27 November 2016
- Draft guidelines will be released for consultation in 2017.



Community Consultative Committee Guidelines

Community Consultative Committee Guidelines

- New guidelines clarify CCC roles and responsibilities.
- Changes include:
 - CCCs can now be established for any State significant project;
 - Independent Chairs appointed by the Department, without recommendations from project proponents;
 - Maximum number of community members increased from 5 to 7;
 - Independent Chairs required to prepare an annual report, to be published on the Department's website; and
 - CCCs can be established at any stage during the assessment process to give local communities a greater say
- Exhibited from February to April 2016 - more than 100 submissions.
- Implemented 15 November 2016.

