Tittle

The Administration of the EIA Process in Tanzania: Lessons for Practice

Author

H. Sosovele

Abstract

This article looks at the administration of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process in Tanzania. It focuses on the actual administration of EIA process on the ground. Although EIA is being accepted, clear guidelines on who and how to manage it are lacking, making the process appear haphazard. The article argues that the current administration of the EIA process reflects the dilemma the government is facing in choosing between sustainable development and the need to attain fast economic growth. In grappling with this dilemma, the government's commitment to EIA tends to be limited. This is seen in terms of the extent to which EIA is used to inform decisions about proposed development as well as the slow process to enact Environmental Legislation. This state of affairs has placed the EIA process in an unclear and uncertain situation. The cost of this uncertainty is reflected in the damage to the social and environmental sectors in terms of increased environmental degradation and social problems. The article prescribes urgent concerted efforts to formalize the application of EIA. Despite its critique, the article concludes with few specific examples of initiatives that support EIA in Tanzania.