

## **Integrating Environmental Safeguards in Roads Sector Development, Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract**

Roads development in Sri Lanka has become a key agenda in national development process, fulfilling needs of infrastructure establishment. Improvements of existing roads have been prioritized instead of new roads construction in rural and urban areas. Roads development in Sri Lanka being administrated in different scales; nationally by Roads Development Authority (11700 km of national highways), provincially by Provincial Roads Development Authorities (15500 km of provincial roads) Locally by Local Authorities (65000 km of local authority roads) and 24000 km of roads owned or controlled by other authorities. Sri Lanka's road network is dense and well laid-out providing connectivity to the country's population, also the network density is among the highest in South Asia. The roads development financial mechanism has been functioned in phases of improvement and operational. Main cost needed for improvement as the implementation, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) being played key role such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank. Even though National Environment Act guided for Environmental considerations, due to mandatory requirement of IFIs Environmental Safeguards has integrated in to a great extent. Under the Environmental Safeguards Policy of IFI, globally Environmental Assessment and Management Framework (EAMF) has been developed as a Project based overall document, to guide the entire project. The EAMF is enriched with environmental impact category and nature of the environmental impact. Possible mitigation measures have been described precisely under the phases of Pre-construction, During-Construction and Post-Construction. According to EAMF the Roads Specific Environmental Assessment has been conducted for each of the roads and the report is prepared to guide the development of Environmental Management Plan and to further develop the Environmental Management Action Plan. Concluding, the Environmental Safeguards system in roads development sector well established for better Environmental Management, by balancing the concept of "development & conservation".

***Key Words:*** Roads, Environmental Safeguards, Environmental Management

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