



## THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BOARD

Guyana's landscape is rapidly changing. This is due, in part, to its status as an oil producing nation. The oil and gas sector and other productive sectors of the economy will require support services in the immediate and long term (near and distant) future. These projects will require Environmental Authorisations to ensure that the health of people and the natural environment are protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning (shutting down) phases.

When applications for proposed projects are received by the Agency, they are screened to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required or not. As you may have previously read, an EIA is a study of the potential impacts of a proposed project and the steps that the developer will put in place to ensure that those impacts are either mitigated (reduced) or avoided (do not occur at all). If after screening, it is determined that an EIA is not required, a Public Notice is placed in the newspaper outlining the EPA's decision. This notice allows concerned persons (especially those living near the location of the proposed project who may be affected by the project) the opportunity to raise concerns and objections regarding the EPA's decision not to require an EIA.

Any such appeals against the EPA's decision not to require an EIA must be lodged with the Environmental Assessment Board (EAB). It is important to note that the EAB is a body which is independent of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and designated to conduct public hearings into such appeals to either confirm or set aside the EPA's decision. The EAB also serves as a review body for EIAs in order to make a recommendation on whether a project should be approved or not.

Once the EAB receives an objection within the 30 day period, the body will conduct a public hearing where stakeholders, including the appellants, the EPA and the developer, can share their views and submissions. After the hearing, the EAB takes all arguments into consideration, and renders a decision – this can be to uphold to the EPA's decision not to require an EIA, or to OVERTURN the EPA's decision and request that an EIA be conducted.

The current EAB is composed of three persons who specialize in areas of environment and natural resources management – Mr. Omkar Lochan (Chair), Dr. Garvin Cummings, and Ms. Predepa Bolonauth.

Sources

[https://officialgazette.gov.gy/images/gazette2021/feb/Extra\\_4FEBRUARY2021GovNot.pdf](https://officialgazette.gov.gy/images/gazette2021/feb/Extra_4FEBRUARY2021GovNot.pdf)

<https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/01/24/environmental-authorisation-part-2/>

***You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O ECEA Programme, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at: [eit.epaguyana@gmail.com](mailto:eit.epaguyana@gmail.com). Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.***