

# Impact Assessment for Corridors: *From Infrastructure to Development Corridors*

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**A new publication that calls for the better application of environmental planning and management tools for development corridors**

It includes:

- *Over 20 papers that critically review diverse corridor developments and recommend how they can better align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals*
- *A review of the effectiveness of traditional EIA and SEA application to corridor developments, with specific attention to tools such as scenario planning, cumulative effects assessment, transboundary impact assessment, the mitigation hierarchy, sensitivity mapping, etc.*
- *The integration of social and human rights issues into corridor assessments, along with the importance of building in climate change resilience*

Linear infrastructure is traditionally developed as single purpose, utility projects. However, it is increasingly being recognised that aggregating these within corridors provides a platform for multiplying development opportunities. Transitioning single infrastructure entities into comprehensive ‘development corridors’ can be systematically planned to maximise and diversify development opportunities. This requires thinking far beyond what any single infrastructure project can deliver. Ultimately, development corridors can transform the character of communities, livelihoods and ecosystems.

Development corridors are important ways of addressing the infrastructure deficit - especially evident in developing countries - where the lack of it puts the brakes on economic development and poverty reduction. Successfully addressing this deficit can deliver major economic and social benefits, but these will only be sustainable if done with effective environmental and social safeguards.

Today, these infrastructure projects are escalating, traversing many landscapes over hundreds of kilometres, and sometimes crossing international borders and penetrating remote and relatively pristine areas previously unaffected by industrialisation. There is also a surge of interest in infrastructure projects as a means of driving post-pandemic economic recovery, and there are already indications that the urgency of the economic recovery will be accompanied by a relaxation of necessary environmental and social safeguards. If infrastructure projects are poorly planned and implemented, they will risk significant environmental and social costs and undermine long term development successes.

**There is an urgency to address the need for better planning of corridors.**



The evidence provided in this publication indicates that existing tools to assess and plan development corridors exist, but they are rarely used effectively and often fail to sufficiently influence decision makers. This results in corridors failing to achieve development objectives while potentially undermining ecological integrity.

The publication has brought together international experts to provide insights and recommendations based on reviews of diverse case studies from Asia, Africa and South America. The publication was coordinated by The Development Corridors Partnership (DCP) - a project led by UNEP -WCMC and funded by the UK Research and Innovation's Global Challenges Research Fund. The DCP brings together partners from Tanzania, Kenya, China and the UK to conduct research and build capacity to improve development corridor decision-making, planning and management.

For the purposes of this publication, the partnership has been further extended to include expertise and in-sights from India, Mongolia, Mozambique, Australia, USA, Canada, the Netherlands, South Africa, Brazil and Bolivia.

The case studies considered include the Belt and Road Initiative, Tanzania's Mtwara and Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway and East Africa's ambitious Lamu Port South Sudan and Ethiopia (LAPSSET) project. Addressing the need to mitigate the negative impacts of established corridors on wildlife is discussed with examples from South Africa and India and the impacts of corridor developments in Mongolia, the Mekong, Brazil and Bolivia are also included.

With capacity development in mind, the unifying theme of this publication is recognition of the need to improve the quality of corridor policies, plans, programmes and projects by ensuring that they include the necessary environmental and social scrutiny based on the evidence provided by rigorous research.

DCP Partners:



Other Contributing Experts

