



ZANZIBAR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA)

Procedural Guide to Obtaining an Environmental Permit for Investment and Development Projects in Zanzibar

1. Introduction

The Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) was established under Section 14(1) of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act No. 3 of 2015, as amended in 2023. The Authority serves as the principal Government Agency responsible for all environmental matters under the Act. It is mandated to coordinate, regulate, monitor, and oversee all aspects of environmental management across Zanzibar. The primary objective of establishing ZEMA is to ensure coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness in the enforcement and management of environmental issues throughout the islands.

This procedural guide provides a step-by-step framework for investors and project proponents to obtain the relevant environmental permit, whether it is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Certificate, Environmental Clearance Certificate, Direct Environmental Clearance Certificate, or an Environmental Audit Certificate. It also outlines the roles and responsibilities of the project proponent, selected environmental experts or firms, and ZEMA.

2. Scope of the Guide

This guide covers:

- i. Registration and submission procedures for environmental assessments.
- ii. Selection of authorized environmental experts or firms.
- iii. Steps for preparing and submitting the required reports (ESIA, Environmental Report, or Environmental Audit).
- iv. Review, approval, and issuance of environmental permits.
- v. Compliance monitoring and reporting obligations.
- vi. Applicable fees and timelines for service delivery.

3. Purpose

The guide aims to:

- i. Facilitate a clear understanding of environmental permitting procedures in Zanzibar.
- ii. Promote compliance with environmental laws and regulations.
- iii. Ensure responsible and sustainable development that protects the environment and local communities.
- iv. Provide transparency in the roles of all stakeholders involved in the environmental permitting process.

4. Functions of ZEMA

In accordance with Section 22(1) of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act, the key functions of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) are to:

- i. Enforce the provisions of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act;
- ii. Coordinate Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) and environmental audit processes for all proposed activities and investments;
- iii. Conduct environmental monitoring to support effective environmental management and conservation;
- iv. Issue environmental certificates, permits, and approvals;
- v. Receive, investigate, and address environmental complaints from the public and relevant stakeholders;
- vi. Promote environmental education, awareness, and information dissemination to the public and stakeholders;
- vii. Enforce environmental regulations and ensure compliance with applicable standards, guidelines, and directives;
- viii. Monitor biodiversity, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, coastal zones, waste management systems, and the use of natural resources, as well as oversee other environmental safeguards; and
- ix. Manage and operate the Zanzibar Environmental Information Management System (ZEIMS).

5. Role of ZEMA in Investment & Business Setup in Zanzibar

The Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) plays a fundamental role in facilitating investment and development initiatives in Zanzibar by ensuring that all proposed projects comply with established environmental standards, regulations, and safeguards. As the primary environmental regulatory body, ZEMA is responsible for coordinating environmental and social assessments, as well as monitoring compliance to safeguard both the environment and local communities. Through the issuance of environmental clearances and ongoing compliance oversight, ZEMA supports sustainable investment and promotes responsible development across the islands.

6. Types of Environmental Permits Issued by ZEMA for Investment and Development Projects

The Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) issues four categories of environmental permits to regulate investment and development activities in accordance with the *Zanzibar Environmental Management Act No. 3 of 2015* (as amended in 2023) and the *Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019*. These permits are designed to correspond to the scale, nature, and potential environmental and social impacts of proposed or existing projects, ensuring that development is planned and implemented in a manner that safeguards both the environment and local communities. The permits are outlined as follows:

- i. **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Certificate** - Issued after completion of a comprehensive Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Report, in accordance with Section 39 of the Act and Section 19(1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019. This certificate is required for large-scale, high-risk, or potentially significant projects that may cause major environmental or social impacts. The ESIA process involves screening, scoping, detailed baseline studies, stakeholder engagement, impact analysis, and development of mitigation and management plans.
- ii. **Environmental Clearance Certificate** - Issued after completion of an Environmental Report (ER), in accordance with Section 45 of the Act and Section 24(1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019. This clearance applies to medium-scale or moderate-risk projects that may have identifiable but manageable environmental or social impacts. The ER is a simplified assessment compared to a full ESIA and focuses on identifying impacts and proposing practical mitigation measures.
- iii. **Environmental Audit Certificate** - Issued after completion of an Environmental Audit, in accordance with Section 46 of the Act and the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019. Environmental audits evaluate the ongoing environmental performance of existing projects or facilities. This certificate ensures that operational projects continue to comply with environmental standards, permit conditions, and best environmental practices. Audits may be required periodically or when directed by ZEMA.
- iv. **Direct Clearance Certificate** - Issued under Section 25(1) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019, for activities demonstrated to have insignificant or no environmental or social impacts. This certificate applies to small-scale, low-risk activities that do not require an Environmental Report or ESIA. ZEMA grants this clearance based on a screening decision confirming minimal impact.

7. Procedures for Obtaining Environmental Permits

The procedure for obtaining environmental permits from ZEMA for investment and development projects varies depending on the type of permit and the specific nature of the project. Detailed,

step-by-step procedures for each permit type are included in the attachments to this report for reference and guidance as follows:

Annex 1:	Procedure for Acquiring an Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate
Annex 2:	Procedure for Acquiring an Environmental Clearance Certificate
Annex 3:	Procedure for Acquiring an Environmental Audit Certificate
Annex 4:	Procedure for Acquiring a Direct Clearance Certificate

8. Applicable Fees

The fees required for environmental permits associated with investment and development projects issued by ZEMA are as follows:

No.	Type of Permit	Amount (TZS)
i.	Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate (EIA Certificate)	2,500,000.0
ii.	Environmental Clearance Certificate	1,500,000.0
iii.	Environmental Audit Certificate	2,500,000.0
iv.	Direct Clearance Certificate	1,000,000.0

It should be noted that these fees do not include the costs associated with preparing the required Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Report, Environmental Report, or Environmental Audit Report. The cost of developing these reports is determined through negotiation between the selected EIA firm or expert and the project proponent.

9. Time Required for Service Delivery

The preparation of an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Report, Environmental Report, or Environmental Audit Report follows a globally recognized process, which includes screening, scoping, assessment of environmental and social issues, submission of the report, review, and decision-making for the issuance of the respective certificate. The timeframe for the environmental assessment process is stipulated in the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019, and the timelines for issuing the respective environmental assessment certificates are as follows:

No.	Description of the Process	Time Required for Service Delivery	Reference (Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019)
i.	Issuance of the EIA or Environmental Audit Certificate	Not more than thirty days from the date of submission of the ESIA Report or Audit Report	Regulation 19(8)
ii.	Issuance of the	Not more than ten	Regulation 24(3)

	Environmental Clearance Certificate for the Environmental Report.	working days from the date of submission of the Report	
iii.	Issuance of the Direct Clearance Certificate	Not more than five working days from the date of submission of the application.	Regulation 25(3)

10. Compliance Monitoring

Compliance monitoring is a critical aspect of environmental management, ensuring that approved projects are executed in accordance with the conditions and commitments outlined in their environmental certificates. The primary objective of compliance monitoring is to identify deviations from approved project plans, prevent or mitigate negative environmental and social impacts, and promote continuous improvement in environmental performance.

In this context, the project proponent is required to undertake internal compliance monitoring as stipulated in Section 26 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019:

- (1) The proponent is obliged to carry out annual internal environmental monitoring to assess the performance of the conditions issued with the environmental certificate.
- (2) The proponent shall submit the annual internal environmental monitoring report to the Authority no later than one month after the end of the year.
- (3) The monitoring year for each approved activity shall commence from the first day of construction of the activity.

Furthermore, Section 27 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019 states:

- (1) Notwithstanding Section 26(1), the Authority shall regularly conduct external monitoring of all approved activities to verify environmental compliance.
- (2) Monitoring by the Authority shall aim to:
 - (a) Follow up on the implementation of the environmental and social management and monitoring plan for the approved activity;
 - (b) Verify the environmental compliance of approved activities by their owners or operators;
 - (c) Ensure that all conditions attached to the issued certificates are being implemented and adhered to by owners and operators of approved activities; and
 - (d) Follow up on and investigate any environmental complaints reported to the Authority.

Through both internal and external compliance monitoring, ZEMA ensures that development activities in Zanzibar are conducted responsibly and sustainably, safeguarding the environment and local communities.

11. Conclusion

The Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) plays a vital role in promoting sustainable investment and development across the islands by ensuring that all projects comply with established environmental standards and regulations. Through processes such as Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), Environmental Reports, and Environmental Audits, ZEMA evaluates potential environmental and social impacts, issues the appropriate certificates, and conducts rigorous compliance monitoring.

By adhering to the procedures, timelines, and requirements outlined in the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019, project proponents can ensure responsible project implementation, minimize environmental risks, and contribute to the sustainable development of Zanzibar. Compliance monitoring, both internal by proponents and external by ZEMA, further reinforces accountability, environmental protection, and the well-being of local communities.

In summary, ZEMA provides a structured, transparent, and supportive framework for investors and developers, balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

Annex 1: Procedure for Conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) / Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) in Zanzibar for Acquiring an Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate



ZANZIBAR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA)

Procedure for Conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) / Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) in Zanzibar for Acquiring an Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate

Introduction

This document outlines the standardized procedure for conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) in Zanzibar. The procedure ensures compliance with Zanzibar's regulatory requirements while promoting sustainable development. Upon successful completion, the Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) issues an **Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate** in accordance with Section 39 of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act No. 3 of 2015 and Section 19(1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.

Step-by-Step Procedure for EIA/ESIA

No.	Activities	Responsible Party / Assigned Entity
1.	<p>Fill in the EIA/ESIA registration form and submit it to the ZEMA Office. The registration form is available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ ZEMA and ZIPA (Unguja and Pemba)▪ ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz, and▪ First Schedule of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.	Expert or firm / Proponent 
2.	<p>Select an expert or firm from the list of authorized experts or firms to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the list is maintained by ZEMA and available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ ZEMA and ZIPA (Unguja and Pemba)▪ ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz.	Proponent
3.	Notify ZEMA in writing of the selected expert or firm.	Proponent

4.	<p>Conduct the impact assessment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ collection of baseline information, ▪ site visit at the project site, ▪ consultation of relevant stakeholders ▪ Identify significant impacts, ▪ assess and evaluate their severity [REDACTED] magnitude, and ▪ propose mitigation measures [REDACTED] minimize potential negative impacts and enhance positive benefits. <p>Assessment is conducted based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) approved by ZEMA. General Terms of Reference for conducting EIA/ESIA are available at www.zema.go.tz.</p>	Selected expert or firm
5.	Prepare EIA/ESIA Report to an acceptable standard. The Format of the EIA/ESIA report is described in the Terms of Reference (ToR).	Selected expert or firm
6.	Submit the Draft EIA/ESIA Report to the Proponent for review, approval, and acceptance of the proposed mitigation measures.	Selected expert or firm
7.	Provide inputs and feedback on the Draft EIA/ESIA Report to the selected expert or firm	Proponent
8.	Prepare the Final EIA/ESIA Report incorporating Proponent inputs	Selected expert or firm
9.	Submit 10 original colored hard and soft copies of the Final EIA/ESIA Report, along with a bank payment slip of TZS 2,500,000 to ZEMA.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
10.	Contact ZEMA (physically or via 0773 734 264) to obtain a control number for depositing TZS 2,500,000 for the review process and issuance of the EIA Certificate.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
11.	Circulate the EIA/ESIA Report to relevant stakeholders for comments	ZEMA
12.	Organize transport and conduct stakeholder site verification of the project location.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
13.	Conduct a stakeholder meeting to review the EIA/ESIA Report	ZEMA
14.	Make a decision and issue the EIA Certificate	ZEMA

Annex 2: Procedure for Conducting an Environmental Audit (EA) in Zanzibar for Acquiring an Environmental Audit Certificate



ZANZIBAR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA)

Procedure for Conducting an Environmental Audit (EA) in Zanzibar for Acquiring an Environmental Audit Certificate

Introduction

This document outlines the standardized procedure for conducting an Environmental Audit (EA) in Zanzibar. The procedure ensures compliance with Zanzibar's regulatory requirements while promoting sustainable development. Upon successful completion, the Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) issues an **Environmental Audit Certificate** in accordance with Section 46 of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act No. 3 of 2015 and Section 19(1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.

Step-by-Step Procedure for Environmental Audit:

No.	Activities	Responsible Party / Assigned Entity
15.	Registration – Complete the Environmental Audit (EA) registration form and submit it to the ZEMA office. The form is available at: <ol style="list-style-type: none">ZEMA and ZIPA offices (Unguja and Pemba)The ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tzFirst schedule of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.	Expert or firm / Proponent
16.	Selection of Expert/Firm - Select an expert or firm from the list authorized to conduct environmental assessments in Zanzibar. The list is available at: <ol style="list-style-type: none">ZEMA and ZIPA offices (Unguja and Pemba)The ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz	Proponent
17.	Notification to ZEMA – Notify ZEMA in writing of the selected expert or firm.	Proponent / Expert or firm
18.	Audit Assessment – Conduct an environmental audit assessment, which includes:	Selected Expert or firm

	<p>i. Regulatory Compliance: Whether the project or organization is complying with local, national, and international environmental laws, regulations, and permits. Verification that all required environmental approvals and certificates (EIA, Environmental Clearance, Audit Certificate) are obtained and conditions are being met.</p> <p>ii. Environmental Management Systems (EMS): Effectiveness of policies, procedures, and practices in place to manage environmental impacts. Assessment of planning, monitoring, and reporting systems.</p> <p>iii. Resource Use and Efficiency: Consumption of water, energy, and raw materials. Efficiency measures and conservation practices.</p> <p>iv. Waste Management: Handling, storage, treatment, and disposal of solid, liquid, and hazardous wastes. Minimization, recycling, and compliance with waste regulations.</p> <p>v. Pollution Control: Emissions to air, water, and soil. Noise, vibration, and other forms of environmental pollution. Effectiveness of mitigation measures and pollution control equipment.</p> <p>vi. Environmental and Social Impacts: Assessment of adverse impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, and local communities. Review of social safeguards and mitigation measures implemented.</p> <p>vii. Occupational Health and Safety (Environmental Aspect): Evaluation of how environmental practices protect worker safety and health.</p> <p>viii. Corrective and Preventive Actions: Identification of non-compliance, risks, and environmental incidents. Recommendations for corrective measures and improvement plans.</p> <p>ix. Documentation and Reporting: Accuracy, completeness, and transparency of environmental reports, monitoring data, and records.</p> <p>The assessment is conducted based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) approved and issued by ZEMA. The General ToR for conducting an Environmental Audit is available at www.zema.go.tz.</p>	
19.	Report Preparation – Prepare the Environmental Audit report following the required standards. The report format is outlined in the approved ToR.	Selected expert or firm

20.	Proponent Review – Submit the draft EA report to the proponent for review and acceptance of the proposed mitigation measures. These measures aim to avoid, reduce, prevent, and remedy significant adverse impacts while enhancing environmental and social benefits.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
21.	Expert/Firm Review – Submit the draft Environmental Audit Report, incorporating the proponent's inputs, to the selected expert or firm for further review.	Proponent / Selected expert or firm
22.	Prepare Final Audit Report – Prepare the final Environmental Audit Report by incorporating all inputs from the proponent. Ensure all feedback and suggestions are addressed before final submission	Selected expert or firm
23.	Submission of Final Report – Submit 10 original colored hard and soft copies of the final Environmental Audit Report, along with the bank payment slip of TZS 2,500,000.00 to ZEMA.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
24.	Payment for Review Process – Contact ZEMA physically or through 0772 479 980 / 0777 483 604 to obtain the control number to deposit TZS 2,500,000 for the review process and issuance of the Environmental Audit Certificate.	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
25.	Circulation for Stakeholder Feedback – Circulate the final Environmental Audit Report to relevant stakeholders for their comments and feedback.	ZEMA
26.	Stakeholder Site Verification – Organize transport and conduct a stakeholder site verification of the project	Selected expert or firm / Proponent
27.	Stakeholder Meeting – Conduct a stakeholder meeting to review the Environmental Audit Report	ZEMA
28.	Decision and Certificate Issuance – Make a decision based on the review and issue the Environmental Audit Certificate	ZEMA

Annex 3: Procedure for Preparing an Environmental Report for Acquiring an Environmental Clearance Certificate.



ZANZIBAR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA)

Procedure for Preparing an Environmental Report for Acquiring an Environmental Clearance Certificate

Introduction

The preparation of an Environmental Report (ER) is a key step in obtaining an Environmental Clearance Certificate for development projects in Zanzibar. Upon successful completion, the Zanzibar Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) issues an **Environmental Audit Certificate** in accordance with Section 45 of the Zanzibar Environmental Management Act No. 3 of 2015 and Section 24(1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.

Step-by-Step Procedure for Environmental Report:

No.	Activities	Responsible Party / Assigned Entity
1.	Project Registration – Complete and submit the Environmental Report registration form to ZEMA. The form is available at: i. ZEMA and ZIPA offices (Unguja and Pemba) ii. ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz iii. iv. First schedule of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019	Project Proponent / Selected Expert or Firm
2.	Selection of Expert/Firm – Choose a qualified expert or firm authorized to prepare Environmental Reports in Zanzibar. The list is available at: i. ZEMA and ZIPA offices (Unguja and Pemba) ii. ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz	Project Proponent
3.	Notification to ZEMA – Notify ZEMA in writing of the selected expert or firm	Project Proponent / Expert or Firm
4.	Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures – Analyze potential impacts of the proposed project and propose mitigation measures to	Selected Expert or

	prevent, minimize, or manage negative effects while enhancing positive benefits	Firm
5.	Draft Environmental Report Preparation – Prepare the draft Environmental Report according to the required format and standards outlined in the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019	Selected Expert or Firm
6.	Proponent Review – Submit the draft Environmental Report to the project proponent for review and acceptance of the proposed mitigation measures	Selected Expert or Firm / Proponent
7.	Finalize Environmental Report – Incorporate the proponent's feedback and finalize the Environmental Report, ensuring all issues, suggestions, and mitigation measures are properly addressed	Selected Expert or Firm
8.	Submission of Final Environmental Report – Submit the final Environmental Report to ZEMA along with the required application fee of TZS 1,500,000.00. Submission should include both hard and soft copies as required by ZEMA	Project Proponent / Selected Expert or Firm
9.	Stakeholder Review and Verification – ZEMA may circulate the report to relevant stakeholders for comments and may conduct site verification to ensure project impacts and proposed mitigation measures are appropriately addressed	ZEMA
10.	Decision and Issuance of Environmental Clearance Certificate – Based on the review of the report and stakeholder feedback, ZEMA makes a decision and issues the Environmental Clearance Certificate if the project complies with environmental requirements	ZEMA

Notes:

- The Environmental Report is a simplified environmental assessment for projects with moderate or minor environmental impacts.
- All assessments, mitigation measures, and monitoring plans must comply with the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2019.
- The timelines for review and issuance of the Environmental Clearance Certificate are generally **not more than ten working days** from the submission of the report.

Annex 4: Procedure for Acquiring a Direct Clearance Certificate (DECC)



ZANZIBAR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (ZEMA)

Procedure for Acquiring a Direct Clearance Certificate (DECC)

Introduction

A Direct Clearance Certificate is issued for projects or activities that are considered low-risk and unlikely to have significant environmental or social impacts. The procedure for obtaining a DECC is simplified compared to full Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or Environmental Reports.

Step-by-Step Procedure for Environmental Report:

No.	Activities	Responsible Party / Assigned Entity
1.	Project Registration – Complete the Direct Clearance Certificate application form and submit it to ZEMA. The form is available at: i. ZEMA and ZIPA offices (Unguja and Pemba) ii. ZEMA website: www.zema.go.tz	Project Proponent
2.	Submission of Required Documents – Attach all necessary project information, including: i. Project description and location ii. Project activities and anticipated impacts (if any) iii. Evidence of compliance with relevant laws and regulations	Project Proponent
3.	Payment of Application Fee – Pay the prescribed fee of TZS 1,000,000.00. Obtain a control number from ZEMA for the deposit process if required.	Project Proponent
4.	Initial Review by ZEMA – ZEMA reviews the submitted application to confirm the project qualifies for direct clearance and that all required information is complete.	ZEMA

5.	Site Verification (if necessary) – ZEMA may conduct a site visit to verify the project location and ensure that it is low-risk and environmentally safe	ZEMA
6.	Decision on Clearance – Based on the review and any site verification, ZEMA decides whether to issue the Direct Clearance Certificate (DCC).	ZEMA
7.	Issuance of Certificate – If the project meets all requirements, ZEMA issues the Direct Clearance Certificate to the proponent with conditions. This certificate allows the project to proceed without undergoing a full Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Report	ZEMA
8.	Compliance Requirements – Even for DCC projects, the proponent is expected to comply with environmental regulations, implement mitigation measures as needed, and report any environmental incidents to ZEMA	Project Proponent / ZEMA

Notes:

- DECC is intended for projects with minimal environmental and social impact.
- The issuance process is typically **not more than five working days** from submission of the application.
- Projects that later show potential environmental risks may be required to undergo a full Environmental Report or EIA process.