

Introduction to Socio-economic Impact Assessment in the Mackenzie Valley

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EA Practitioners' Workshop

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Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board



Photo courtesy of RWED



Photo courtesy of RWED



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Overview

- What is SEIA?
- Why do it in the Mackenzie Valley?
- Conducting SEIA: the 6 Steps
- Raising the Bar: Creating Socio-economic Impact Assessment Guidelines



What SEIA is



- EIA where “people matter”
- Impact = change in conditions **caused or contributed to by a development or a series of developments (cumulative impacts)**
- Looks beyond project **site** at human **situation**
- Impacts may be beneficial or adverse, good, bad, or mixed



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What SEIA Isn't

- A “Blame Game”
- A magic elixir: SEIA cannot fix all social, economic and cultural problems
- A replacement for the Land Use Planning process
- The forum for negotiating Land Claims

Why do SEIA in the Mackenzie Valley?

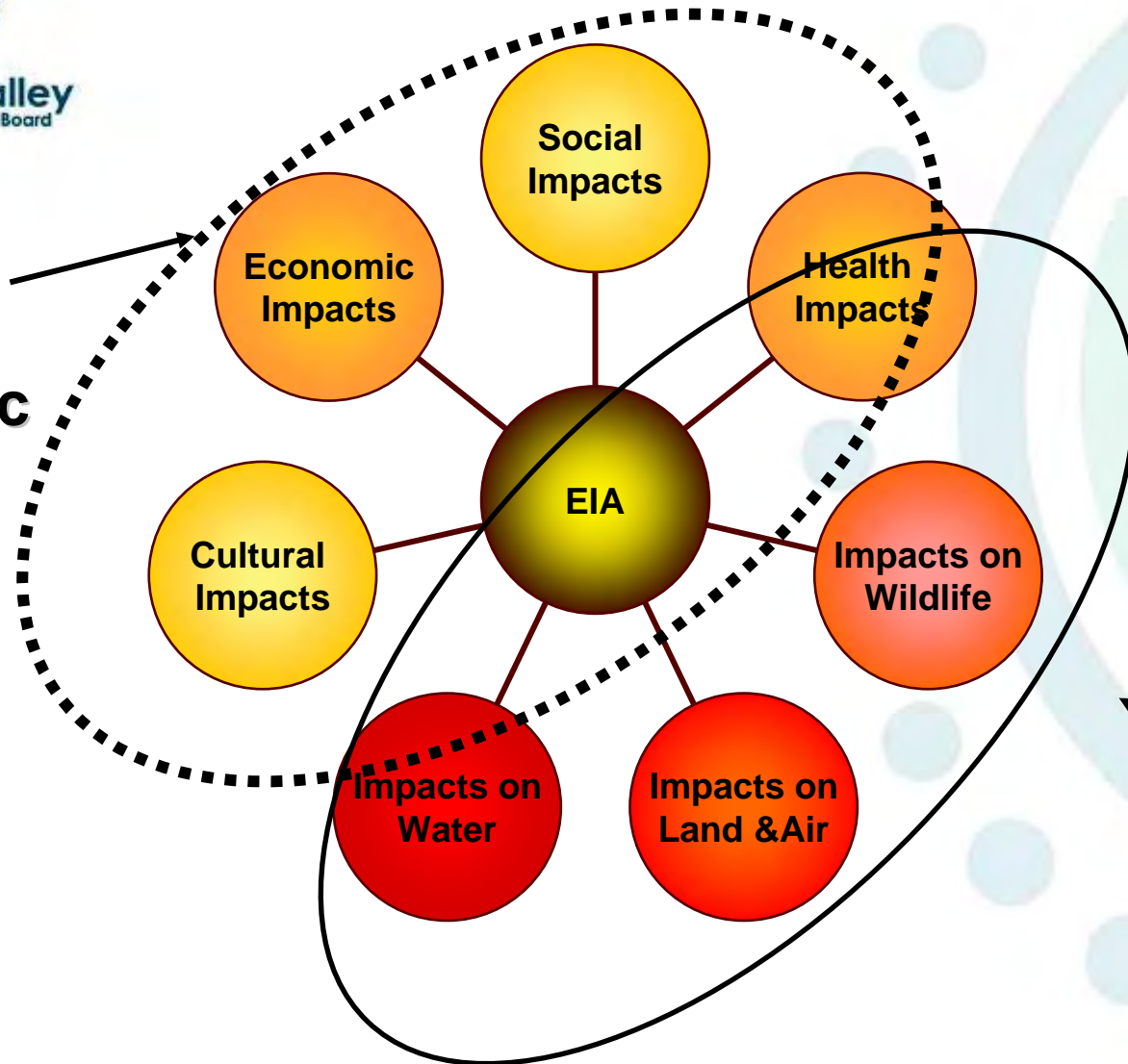




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1. It hasn't been done well in the past

Socio-Economic Impact Realms



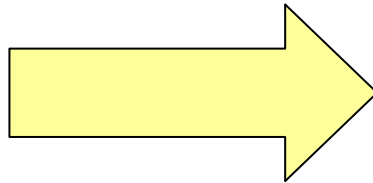
**Past EIA
Priorities =
Biophysical**



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2. It's the Law

One of the Guiding Principles of the Review Board



Regard for

“ . . . the protection of the social, cultural and economic well-being of residents and communities in the Mackenzie Valley”
during Environmental Assessments



3. Social, economic and cultural issues have become important during EAs



Some photos courtesy of Diavik Diamond Mines Ltd.



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What Questions does SEIA ask?

- What are the people affected?
- What are the Valued Components that community members want to protect?
- How will the development likely affect those Valued Components, as measured by Indicators?
- What are the pathways by which the proposed development contributes to or cause these changes?
- What changes to the socio-economic environment or development can mitigate these probable impacts?
- Are the changes likely, adverse and significant?

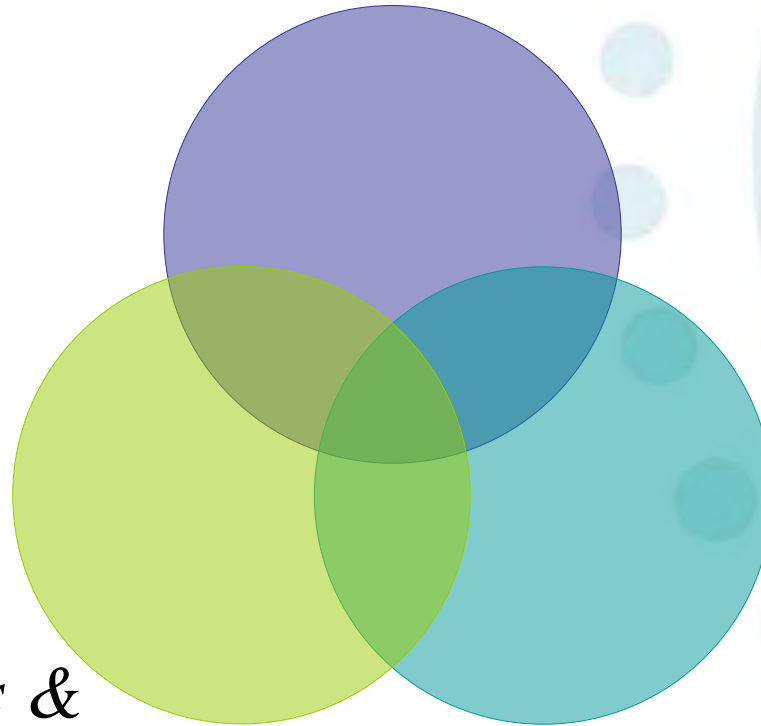
THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE POTENTIAL QUESTIONS.
REMEMBER: IT IS DEVELOPMENT AND CONTEXT SPECIFIC



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SEIA – Sharpening the Focus

Impacts – what is the issue and outcome?



Impact

***Equity – who wins &
who loses?***

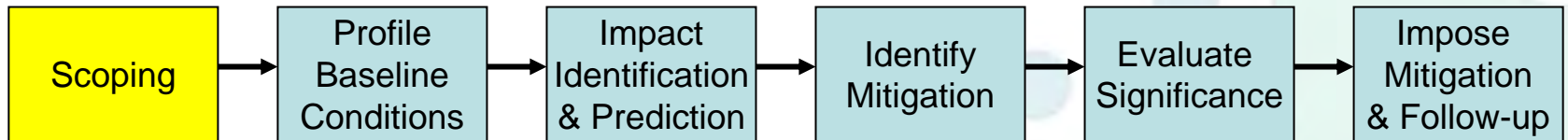
***Geographic
Distribution –
Where is it felt?***



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How is SEIA Done?

- The “Six Steps”





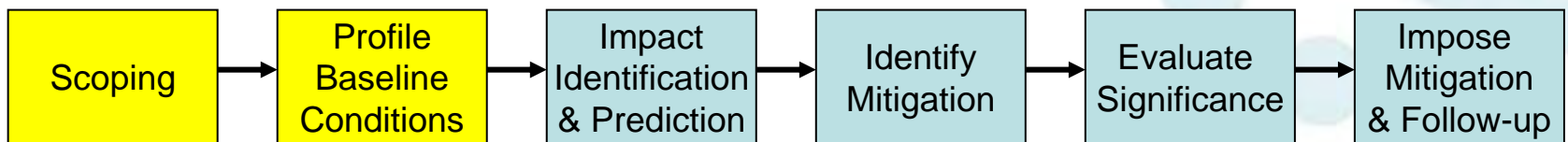
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Scoping & Baseline Info

- Scoping focuses on the most relevant social & economic issues
- Scoping sets appropriate boundaries
- Baseline data provides a starting point for making predictions about change

CHALLENGES:

- **Do we know current trends and conditions?**
- **Is baseline data using appropriate indicators?**

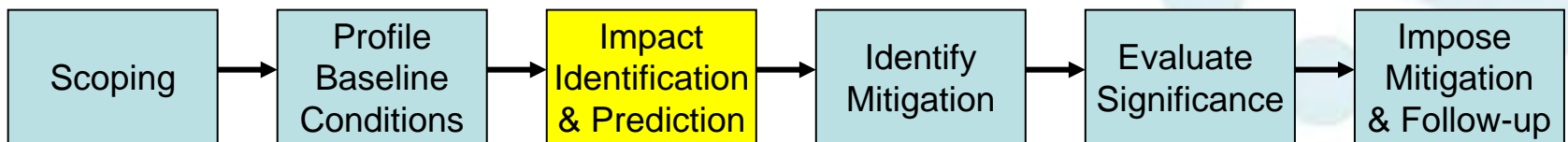




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Impact Identification & Prediction

- What would the future be like without development What would it be like with development?
- The difference between the two futures is the probable impact of the development.
- **CHALLENGES:**
 - **Many social issues have multiple causes (cumulative effects); identifying critical pathways key**
 - **May have to analyze qualitative data**



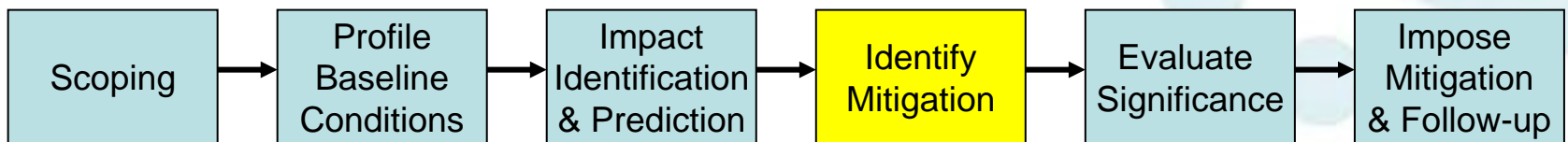


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Mitigation



- Prevent or minimize an impact through
 - Social services support . . .
 - On-the-job- training . . .
 - Education . . .
 - Access and Benefits Agreements, IBAs, SEAs
 - Harvesters' Compensation
- **CHALLENGES:**
 - Finding mitigation that is agreeable to all parties (simple, implementable, enforceable)
 - Regulatory and program limitations

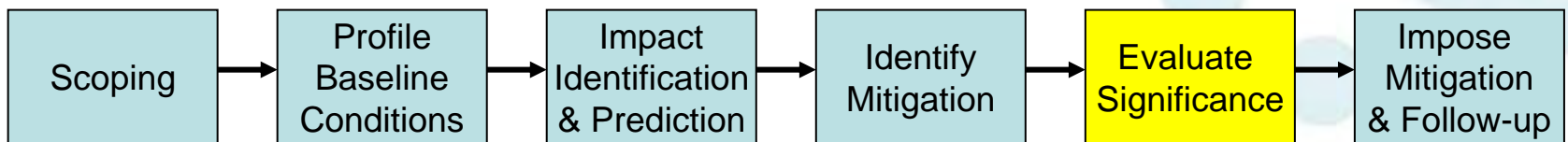




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Significance

- Review Board's final task in EA is to determine significance after mitigation (residual impacts). Examples of parameters to consider:
 - Magnitude
 - Geographical Area
 - Duration and Nature of Impact
 - Probability of Occurrence
- **CHALLENGES:**
 - Subjective interpretation based on individual and group values
 - **NOT related to mitigation capacity!**





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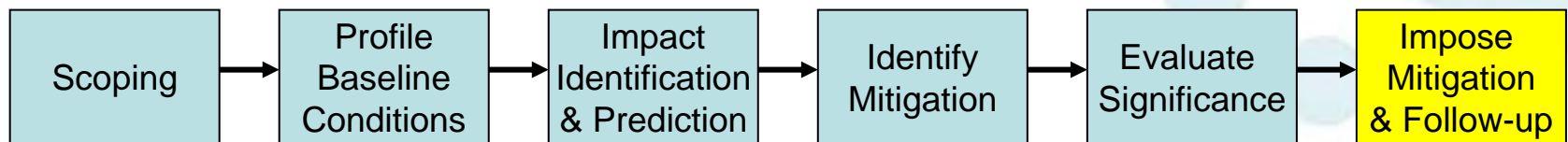
Follow-up & Monitoring

Current the most poorly integrated step:

- Ensuring that mitigation is enforced and works in the way it was intended
- Requires long-term monitoring of impact-mitigation feedback loop
- Adaptive management systems to kick in when levels of acceptable change are breached

• CHALLENGES:

–Lack of monitoring and enforcement capacity in existing systems

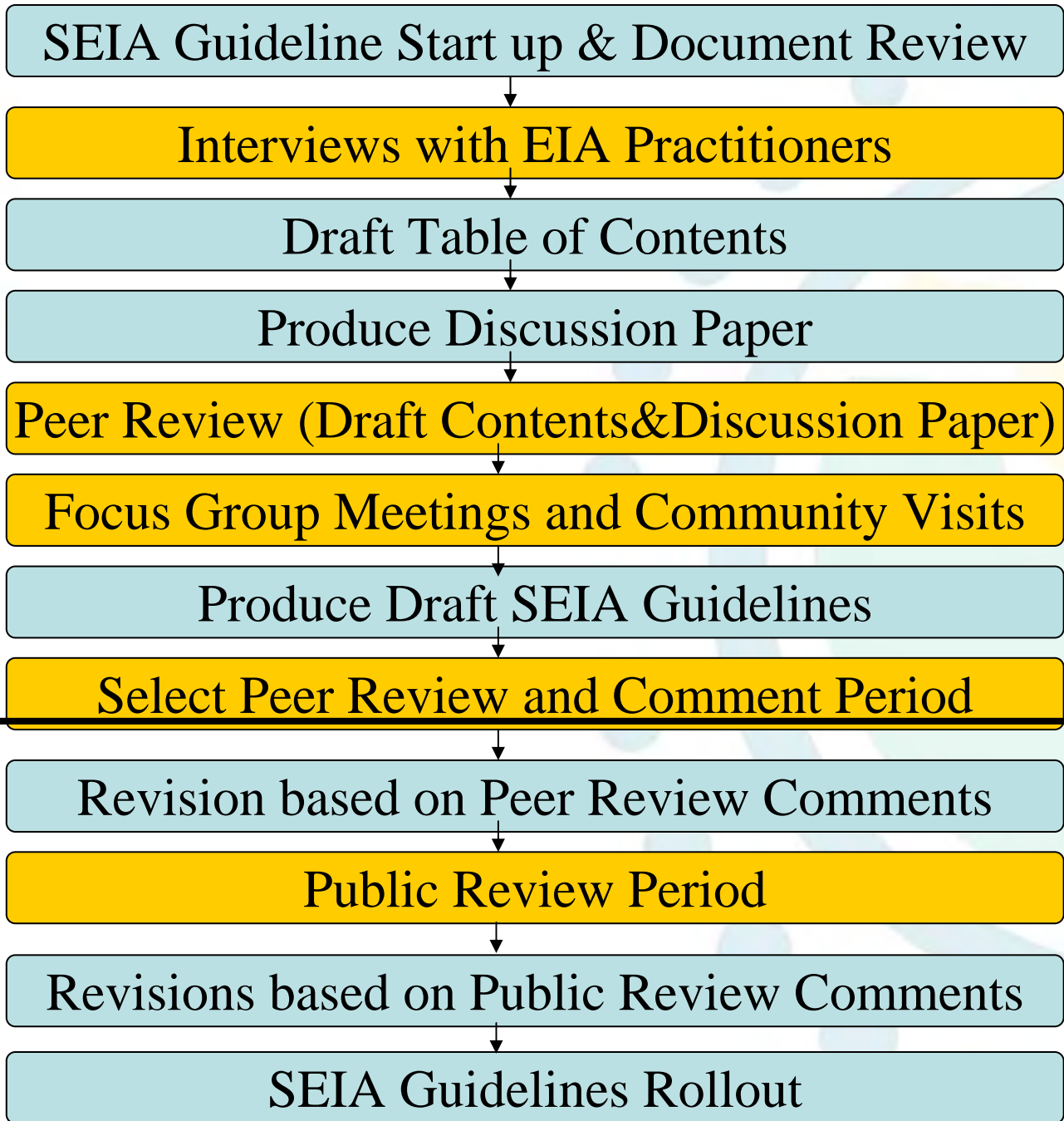
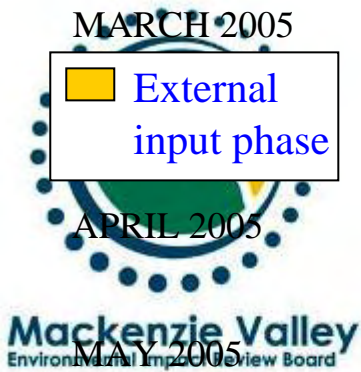




Accepting the Challenge to “Raise the Bar”: SEIA Guidelines

Goal: To properly address social, economic and cultural impacts in Mackenzie Valley EIA

- Geared toward
 - developers and assessors/regulators to conduct more effective social and economic analyses
 - preparing communities and government to more effectively follow and participate in social and economic aspects of EA



JUNE 2005

JULY-NOV 2005

DEC-JAN 2006

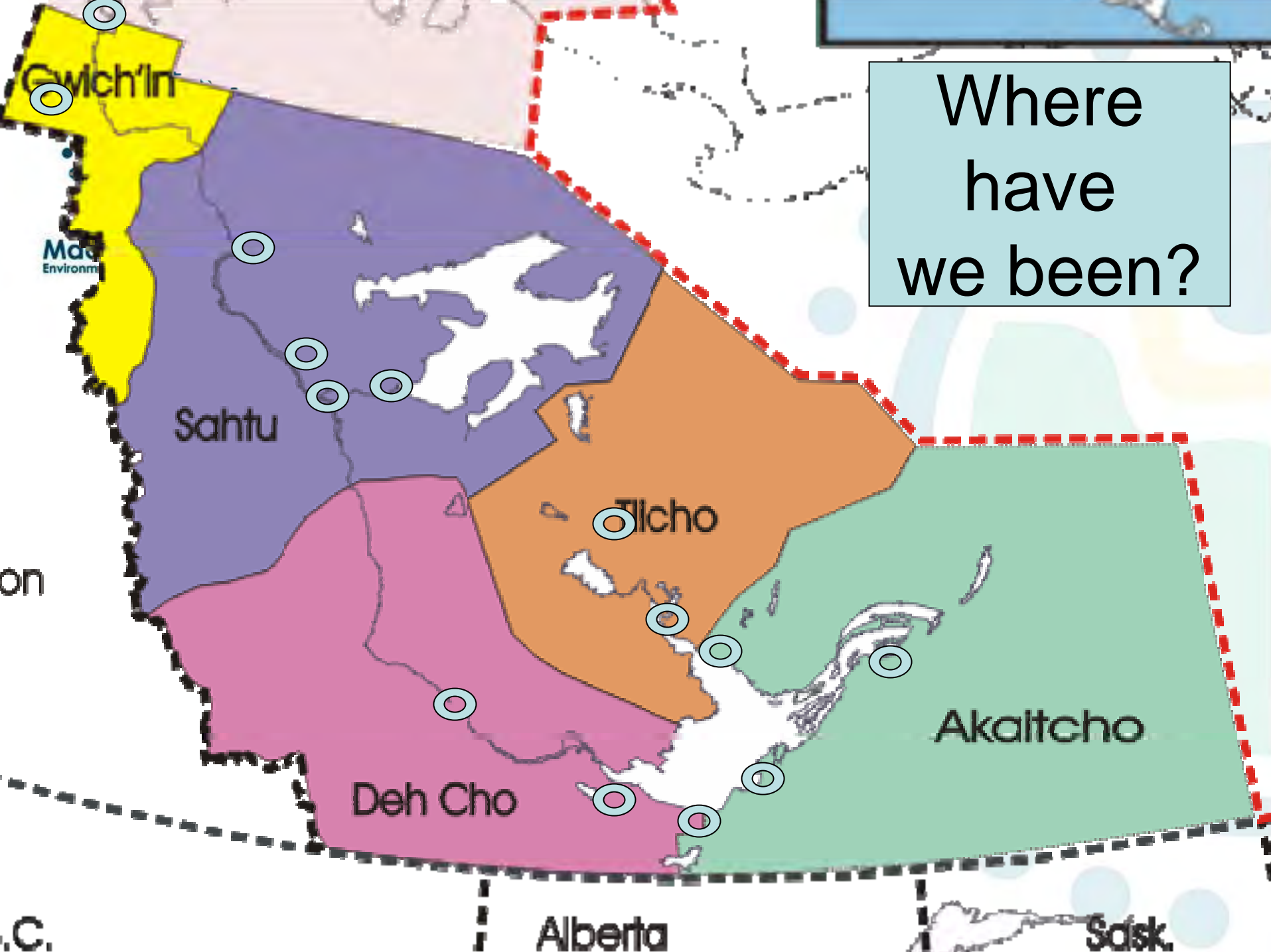
FEB-MAR 2006

APRIL 2006

MAY-JUNE 2006

JULY 2006

AUGUST 2006



Where
have
we been?

Gwich'in

Sahtu

Tlcho

Akaitcho

Deh Cho

Alberta

Sask.

Med
Environm

on

.C.

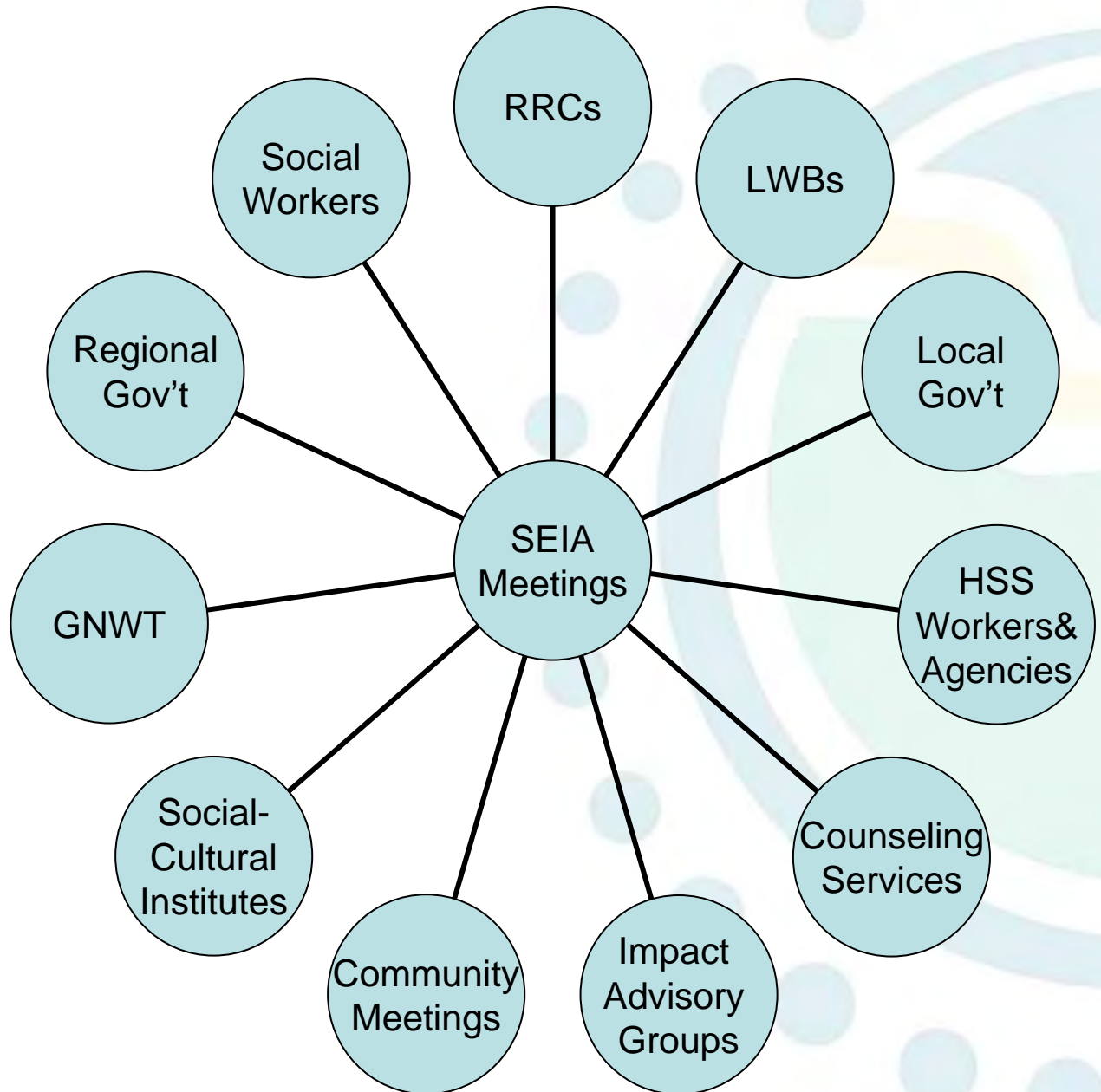


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Who Have we Seen?

During our community visits, we met

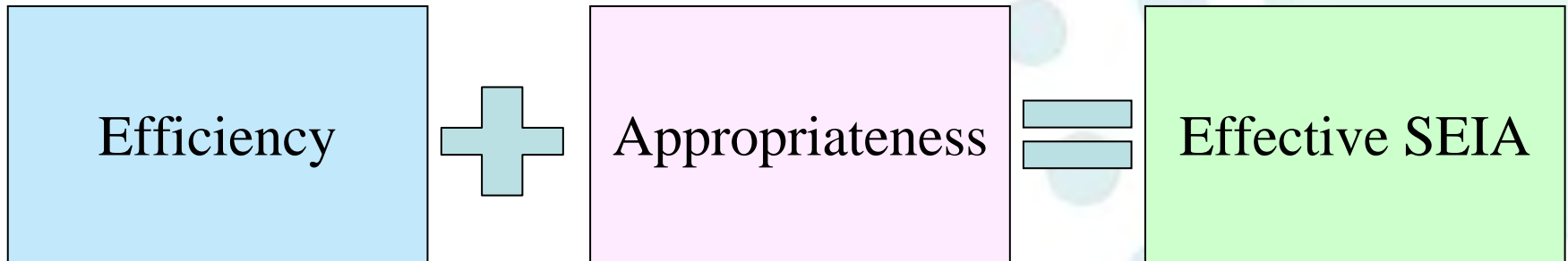
- **Over 550 people in**
- **50 meetings in**
- **14 Communities**
- **Also held focus groups and individual interviews in Yellowknife with government, consultants and industry**





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What did People Tell Us?





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What will the SEIA Guidelines Address?

- MVEIRB principles of Good SEIA
- MVEIRB expectations for
 - Data collected, sources and methods used in SEIA
 - How the 6 steps of SEIA are conducted
 - Greater government and community involvement in assessment
- How to determine the required level of effort for SEIA
- Tips, worksheets, tool, question lists to make SEIA consistent, clear and **effective**
- **Your Chance to have another say:**
 - **Public Review of Draft SEIA Guidelines – end of April, 2006**

Summary

- **SEIA is EIA that recognizes people matter**, and the fact that development occurs not just in a physical site, but a social situation
- **Poorly integrated** into past EIA practice
- **Very important** in the Mackenzie Valley
- Needs to be done rigorously using the same **“Six Steps”** as biophysical EIA
- **Review Board is committed to doing good SEIA** for projects that have potential significant social, economic and/or cultural impacts
- **SEIA Guidelines development** has been a focus of the Review Board for the past year
- **Public Review Period forthcoming**





Mahsi cho!