



BEYOND COMPLIANCE

Enhancing biodiversity through transformative mitigation strategies in spatial planning related SEAs and EIAs

The global biodiversity crisis demands transformative change in how development impacts are managed. We need SEA and EIA to go beyond harm reduction and actively enhance biodiversity through development projects.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- To explore how SEAs and EIAs in spatial planning and infrastructure projects integrate the **mitigation and enhancement hierarchy**.
- To identify **gaps** and **opportunities** in current practice and suggest how these tools can transition from **compliance-driven to proactive instruments** in environmental governance.

METHODOLOGY

Analysis of **200 SEA and EIA reports** from **Denmark, Spain, Portugal, and Germany** on how mitigation and enhancement measures are applied and where implementation gaps exist.

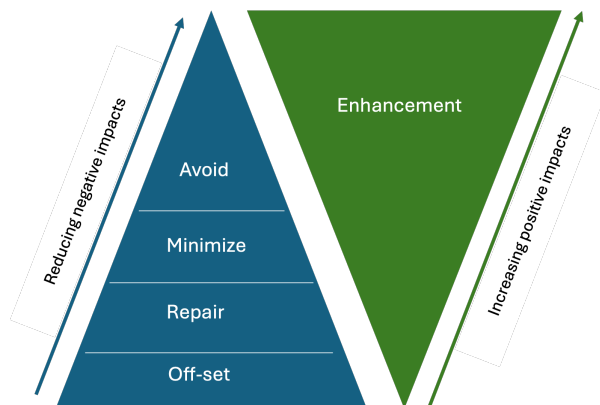


Figure source: Kornov et al. (2025)

- **Significant variability** in the practical application of the mitigation hierarchy across countries.
- Enhancement measures are **inconsistently applied** and often treated as optional.
- **Formal requirements** for enhancement are typically lacking, resulting in **missed opportunities** to create **net-positive impacts**.
- The **'avoidance' step** is crucial yet underutilized in many cases.

KEY FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Embed **enhancement** explicitly into **regulatory frameworks** for SEAs and EIAs.

Encourage integration of **net-positive biodiversity measures** within spatial planning.

Promote **transformative EA** practices by shifting from reactive to **proactive approaches**.

Strengthen the application of the **'avoidance' measures** early in project planning.



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Source for poster:
Kornov, Ravn Boess, Eliassen, Larsen, Locher-Krause, Wittmer, Laporta, Geneletti, Moneteiro & Partidário, (2025). Beyond compliance: Enhancing biodiversity through transformative mitigation strategies in spatial planning related SEAs and EIAs. Environmental Impact Assessment Review. v. 114.



Funded by the European Union



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