

Health Impact Assessment of a Paper Pulp Industry on Atmospheric Pollution

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The environment is one of the major determinants of human health quality. However, over the years, human activities had significant impacts on the environment resulting in negative consequences for the population.

In Portugal, in order to reduce the effects of projects on the environment and in human health, it was introduced the Decree-Law No. 152-B / 2017 of 11 December. This law refers to the impact assessment of a given project on air, water, soil, climate change and other components, and highlight the importance of considering the human health factor.

Health impact assessment (HIA) is a combination of procedures, methods and tools used to evaluate the potential health effects of a policy, programme or project. Using qualitative, quantitative and participatory techniques, HIA aims to produce recommendations that will help decision-makers and other stakeholders make choices about alternatives and improvements to prevent disease/injury and to actively promote health.

The aim of this study is to implement a methodology for Health Impact Assessment, specifically focused on air pollution. The case study concerns the assessment of the activities of a paper pulp industry and its direct and indirect impacts on the health of the surrounding population.

It is also intended to deepen the knowledge in HIA, in Portugal and to expand the application and use of this assessment in decision-making moments of the Environmental Impact Assessment. For the development of this HIA, a review of the relevant scientific literature, the collection and analysis of relevant data, a description of the population and human health elements that could be affected by the industry were carried out.