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# Administrative Streamlining of Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures: Key Changes Introduced by the SEMARNAT Agreement of April 1, 2026

On April 1, 2026, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (*Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales*) (“**SEMARNAT**”) published the Agreement setting out the administrative simplification measures implemented in relation to environmental impact in the Official Journal of the Federation (*Diario Oficial de la Federación*) (“**DOF**”).

The Agreement aims to reorganize and streamline procedural requirements without altering the substantive technical analysis established in the General Law on Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection (*Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente*) (“**LGEEPA**”) and the Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment (*Reglamento en materia de Evaluación de Impacto Ambiental*) (“**REIA**”).

This Legal Briefing provides a summary of the key administrative changes that have been introduced and their practical implications for projects that are subject to a federal Environmental Impact Assessment (“**EIA**”).

## I. Reconfiguration of Environmental Impact Assessment procedures

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### 1.1. Merger of the particular modalities of the Environmental Impact Statement (*Manifestación de Impacto Ambiental*) (“**MIA**”)

The Agreement merges the MIA (Particular without risk) (SEMARNAT-04-002-A) and MIA (Particular with risk) (SEMARNAT-04-002-B) procedures into a single procedure:

SEMARNAT-04-002 — Environmental Impact Assessment (Particular Modality)

The merger comprises:

- A reduction of procedural requirements from 12 to 5 essential components.
- A unified format that covers projects both with and without activities classified as highly risky under the applicable regulations.
- The obligation to attach a Risk Study only when applicable.

## 1.2. Elimination of the unified procedures in the forestry sector

The Agreement repeals the unified procedures for changing the use of land in forested areas, specifically:

- SEMARNAT-09-001-B
- SEMARNAT-03-066

While documentary integration remains possible (i.e., combining the MIA and forest technical documents into one file), the procedural integration has been eliminated. Each procedure will now follow its respective independent legal pathway.

## II. Integration of exemption and no-requirement procedures

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The *Exemption from environmental impact authorization* (SEMARNAT-04-006) and *Determination of no requirement* (SEMARNAT-04-007) procedures have now been merged into a single unified procedure:

SEMARNAT-04-006 — Request for Exemption or Determination of Non-Requirement

Key adjustments include:

- A simplified list of required documents.
- A maximum resolution period of 20 business days, which will be reduced to 10 business days for submissions made through the future Electronic Environmental Window, once it is formally enabled.

## III. Modifications to additional procedures

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### 3.1. Modifications to authorized projects (SEMARNAT-04-008)

The procedure has been simplified by reducing the number of requirements and incorporating a comparative matrix of impacts, which becomes the central analytical tool for assessing proposed changes to a project that has already been authorized.

### 3.2. Transfer of authorization holder (SEMARNAT-04-009)

The procedure now expressly requires that the transferee accept responsibility for existing obligations, including project monitoring and addressing any instances of non-compliance that may arise.

### 3.3. Waiver of authorization (SEMARNAT-04-005)

The previous notice of withdrawal procedure has been replaced by a formal waiver, applicable only when project activities have not yet begun.

## IV. New forms and guidelines for submitting the MIA

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The Agreement issues new formats for:

- SEMARNAT-04-002 - MIA (Particular)

- SEMARNAT-04-003 - MIA (Regional)
- SEMARNAT-04-006 (Exemption / Non-Requirement)

and modifies the formats for the following:

- SEMARNAT-04-001 (Preventive Report)
- SEMARNAT-04-008 (Project Modifications)
- SEMARNAT-04-009 (Transfer of Authorization)
- SEMARNAT-04-005 (Renunciation of Authorization)

Additionally, SEMARNAT issued the Guide for the Preparation and Submission of MIAs, applicable to both Particular and Regional MIAs.

## **V. Progressive repeal of prior systems and procedures**

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The Agreement provides for the following:

- The immediate repeal of the MIA-E electronic system.
- The repeal within 30 business days of the 2010 unified forest–environmental procedure, eliminating the option of submitting a single integrated application for both.

Future electronic submissions will be conducted through the Electronic Environmental Window, which will only become operative upon the publication of a subsequent agreement.

## **VI. Entry into force and transitional application**

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- The Agreement enters into force 15 business days after its publication, i.e., April 24, 2026, in view of the official non-business days of April 2 and 3, 2026.
- Unified forest–environmental procedures are repealed 30 business days after publication, i.e., May 20, 2026.
- Any applications submitted before the date of the Agreement’s entry into force will continue to be processed under the previous regulatory framework.

## **VII. Final considerations**

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The changes introduced by the Agreement represent an administrative restructuring of federal environmental impact procedures, which focus on document simplification, the consolidation of formats, and the reduction of processing times.

These changes do not modify the substantive legal requirements or technical criteria governing federal Environmental Impact Assessments, which remain aligned with the LGEEPA, the REIA, and other applicable environmental provisions.

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