



B U S I N E S S P L A N · I N D I A

Environmental Consultancy

EIA studies, clearance and consent advisory, compliance monitoring and ESG reporting

ENVIRONMENT

AISEVAK.IN · BY ABL DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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This document is confidential and prepared for planning purposes. All financial figures are illustrative model assumptions for an Indian MSME context and must be validated against live quotes, local rates and professional advice before any investment or borrowing decision.

1. Executive Summary

This plan sets out an **Environmental Consultancy** in India — preparing **Environmental Impact Assessments and Environmental Clearance applications**, handling **consent and authorisation filings**, conducting **environmental monitoring, compliance reporting, audits and due diligence**, and delivering **ESG and BRSR sustainability reporting** for industrial, infrastructure, mining and real-estate clients.

Every project above defined thresholds requires prior Environmental Clearance, every operating facility requires consents and periodic compliance reporting, and listed companies now face sustainability disclosure obligations. The work is statutory, recurring and cannot be done in-house by most clients.

The structural fact that shapes this business: the licence to practise is embodied in individuals who can resign.

EIA reports for regulated categories must be prepared by consultants **accredited by NABET under the Quality Council of India**, and that accreditation is *sector-specific* and rests on having qualified **Functional Area Experts** on the organisation's rolls. **Lose the FAEs and the accreditation follows them out of the door** — the firm can still consult, but it cannot sign the EIA reports that constitute its largest revenue line. This makes expert retention a strategic and financial matter rather than an HR one, and it is the single most important risk a lender or promoter should understand about this business.

And the integrity tension that defines the profession, stated plainly: the client wants a clearance, not an assessment. A project proponent commissioning an EIA is not seeking to discover that their project is unviable — they are seeking Environmental Clearance. **A consultancy whose studies invariably conclude that impacts are insignificant is commercially popular and professionally worthless**, and accreditation bodies have withdrawn recognition from consultants for poor-quality, copied or unsupportable reports. The commercial argument for rigour is concrete rather than moral: **a report that an appraisal committee rejects costs the client another season of baseline data and another year of delay**, so a consultant known for reports that survive scrutiny is worth more, not less. This plan models a consultancy requiring **₹85 lakh** (₹40 lakh promoter + ₹15 lakh term loan + ₹30 lakh working-capital finance), moving from **₹3.2 crore revenue and a ₹14 lakh loss** in Year 1 to **₹7.65 crore revenue and ₹74 lakh profit** by Year 3. *(Environmental consultancy; experts × utilisation × fee, accreditation- & credibility-gated — figures illustrative.)*

2. Business Description, Vision & Legal Structure

Concept: An environmental consultancy - EIA studies and EC application support, consent and authorisation filings, baseline and compliance monitoring, environmental audits and due diligence, and ESG/BRSR reporting.

Vision: To write assessments that hold up - before the committee, before the public, and afterwards.

Mission: Measure honestly, model transparently, state what the data shows, and tell clients early when a project needs changing rather than defending.

Legal structure options

- **Private Limited** — recommended: NABET accreditation is held by the organisation, and corporate and infrastructure clients contract with entities carrying professional-indemnity cover.
- **LLP** — workable and common in consulting practice, though accreditation and large-client procurement often favour a company.

Regulatory anchor — accreditation is the gate, and it is sector-specific. Under the **EIA Notification**, assessments for regulated categories must be prepared by **NABET/QCI-accredited consultant organisations**, accredited separately for each sector — mining, thermal power, building and construction, chemicals, infrastructure and so on — with the scope of practice limited to accredited sectors. Accreditation requires **Functional Area Experts** in prescribed disciplines (air, water, ecology, socio-economic, noise, land use, risk assessment) on the organisation's rolls, and is subject to periodic assessment and quality review. Laboratory analysis supporting the study must come from **NABL-accredited or MoEFCC-recognised laboratories**. The process itself involves **Terms of Reference from the appraisal committee, one full season of baseline monitoring, public hearing where applicable, and appraisal by the EAC or SEAC**. Post-clearance obligations generate recurring work: **half-yearly compliance reports**, monitoring against EC conditions, and consent renewals. ESG work adds SEBI's **BRSR** framework for listed entities. Professional-indemnity insurance is appropriate given the reliance placed on these reports.

3. Promoter & Ownership

Led by a promoter with environmental engineering, ecology or regulatory-consulting background — frequently themselves a Functional Area Expert. Two competences determine outcomes: *technical credibility across disciplines*, since an EIA spans air modelling, hydrology, ecology and socio-economics, and *regulatory process fluency*, because much of the value delivered is knowing how the appraisal process actually works and what a committee will question. The team is expert-heavy and its composition is the accreditation. Accreditation scope, report quality, appraisal success & expert retention are the differentiators. Ownership, equity & any partner are editable inputs.

4. Market Analysis — India

Demand is driven by industrial and infrastructure investment requiring clearance, tightening compliance enforcement generating recurring reporting work, expanding ESG disclosure obligations, and lender and investor environmental due diligence. Demand is investment-cycle-, enforcement- & disclosure-driven. The market rewards accreditation scope, appraisal track record & report defensibility; it is **accreditation-gated, cyclical on the project side and steady on the compliance side**.

Demand drivers

- **Industrial and infrastructure investment** — every regulated project needs clearance before it can begin.
- **Compliance enforcement** generating consent renewals, monitoring and half-yearly reporting as steady recurring work.
- **ESG and BRSR disclosure** obligations on listed companies, extending into their supply chains.
- **Lender and investor due diligence** — environmental assessment as a condition of finance and of transactions.
- **Expansion and modernisation** projects requiring fresh or amended clearances.

Market sizing (illustrative framing)

Layer	Definition	Indicative scale
TAM	Indian environmental consultancy, assessment & compliance services	Large, growing
SAM	Accredited sectors & regional client base	Limited by accreditation scope
SOM (Yr 1–3)	Studies delivered & compliance clients retained	Scaling with expert capacity

Target segments

- Industrial projects requiring EC — chemicals, pharmaceuticals, metals, cement, food processing.
- Infrastructure and real-estate developers requiring building/construction clearances.
- Mining and quarrying projects.
- Operating facilities requiring consents, monitoring and compliance reporting.
- Listed companies and their suppliers for ESG/BRSR reporting; lenders and funds for environmental due diligence.

5. Competition & Competitive Advantage

Landscape: a limited number of NABET-accredited consultant organisations (accreditation itself restricts entry), large engineering and consulting firms with environmental practices, and numerous unaccredited advisers handling consents and compliance work that does not require accreditation. **The accredited segment is genuinely gated; the compliance segment is not**, which is why the two behave like different markets.

The business's edge

- **Accreditation scope** — the sectors a firm can practise in directly determine the addressable market, making scope expansion a strategic investment.
- **Appraisal track record** — a history of studies clearing committee scrutiny without repeated queries is the credential clients actually assess.
- **Report defensibility** — data that is genuinely collected, models that are transparent, and conclusions that follow from evidence; the difference becomes visible under committee questioning.
- **Process fluency** — knowing what the ToR will require, what the committee will probe, and how to prepare a proponent for a public hearing.
- **Compliance annuity** — retained monitoring and reporting clients who provide steady revenue between project cycles.

6. Services & Revenue Model

Service	Model	Basis
EIA studies & EC application support	Per project, milestone-billed	Core (~40%), long-cycle
Consent, authorisation & statutory applications	Per application	Volume, faster cycle
Environmental monitoring & compliance reporting	Annual retainer / periodic	Recurring annuity (~19%)
Environmental audits, due diligence & EMP support	Per engagement	Transaction-linked
ESG / BRSR & sustainability reporting	Per report / annual retainer	Growth adjacency

Revenue is **experts × utilisation × fee**, but the two halves of the business have very different rhythms. **EIA work is long-cycle and lumpy** — a study runs twelve to eighteen months and bills against milestones — while **compliance monitoring and reporting recur predictably**. Growing the recurring share from 17% to 19% matters disproportionately, because it funds the expert team through the gaps between project awards. **An EIA practice with no compliance annuity carries specialists through dry quarters out of capital**, and those specialists are exactly the people whose departure would cost the accreditation.

7. Go-to-Market — Clients & Accreditation Scope

- **Sector-focused positioning** aligned to accreditation scope, since a firm can only bid EIA work in accredited sectors.
- **Consultant and EPC relationships** — project engineers and design consultants who encounter clearance requirements early.
- **Compliance-first entry** — winning consent and monitoring work, then converting to EIA mandates when the client expands.
- **Lender and investor panels** for environmental due diligence.
- **Industry association presence** in the sectors of accreditation.

Sales approach

Build depth in two or three accredited sectors rather than claiming breadth → enter clients through compliance and consent work, which is faster to win and demonstrates competence → convert to EIA mandates when projects arise → grow the compliance retainer base deliberately as ballast → add ESG/BRSR to existing relationships, where the client already trusts the firm with environmental data. **The commercial discipline that matters is scoping the timeline honestly at the proposal stage.** A proponent asking for clearance in six months is asking for something the baseline requirement alone makes impossible, and a consultant who agrees in order to win the work has guaranteed a disappointed client and a difficult project.

8. Operations Plan (assessment, monitoring, reporting)

- **Scoping & ToR:** project characterisation, screening against notification categories, preparation of the ToR application and support through its grant.
- **Baseline monitoring:** ambient air, water, noise, soil, ecology and socio-economic surveys across the study area — **one full season, which cannot be compressed.**
- **Impact prediction:** air dispersion modelling, water quality and hydrology assessment, ecological impact, noise propagation, socio-economic assessment, cumulative and risk analysis.
- **EMP preparation:** mitigation measures, monitoring programme, budgetary provision, and — where relevant — disaster management planning.
- **Public hearing support:** documentation, presentation, and preparing the proponent for genuine community questions rather than scripted ones.
- **Appraisal support & post-clearance:** responses to committee queries, and thereafter half-yearly compliance reports and monitoring against EC conditions.

Study cycle

Stage	Typical duration	Metric
Scoping & ToR	2-4 months	ToR granted without major revision
Baseline monitoring	One full season — irreducible	Data completeness & lab validity
Assessment & modelling	2-3 months	Model transparency / peer review
Draft EIA & public hearing	2-3 months	Hearing conducted without adjournment
Appraisal & queries	2-6 months	Queries per submission
Post-clearance compliance	Ongoing	Retainer conversion

The baseline season is the fact that governs every EIA engagement, and it is routinely wished away in proposals. A full season of ambient monitoring cannot be shortened, purchased or modelled around — it takes the time it takes, and it must be collected in the right season for the data to be accepted. This has three consequences that a plan must budget for. **An EIA project has an irreducible twelve-to-eighteen-month cycle**, so revenue from a mandate won today arrives largely next year. **The consultant carries the expert team through that period**, which is why the compliance annuity matters. And **missing a season costs a year**, not a few weeks — a study that starts too late for the monsoon window waits for the next one, which is the most expensive planning error available in this profession.

9. Regulatory, Licences & Compliance (India)

- **NABET/QCI accreditation** as an EIA consultant organisation — **sector-specific**, dependent on **Functional Area Experts on the rolls**, and subject to periodic assessment and quality review; practice is limited to accredited sectors.
- **EIA Notification process**: screening and categorisation, Terms of Reference, **one full season of baseline data**, public hearing where applicable, appraisal by EAC/SEAC, and EC conditions.
- **Laboratory**: analysis from **NABL-accredited or MoEFCC-recognised laboratories**; sampling protocols and chain of custody for defensible data.
- **Post-clearance: half-yearly compliance reports**, monitoring against EC conditions, consent renewals, and amendments where project parameters change.
- **Adjacent frameworks**: forest and wildlife clearance processes, CRZ where applicable, and **SEBI BRSR** for listed-company sustainability reporting.
- **Professional conduct**: reports must reflect data actually collected; **accreditation has been withdrawn for copied, fabricated or unsupportable submissions**, and professional-indemnity cover is appropriate given the reliance placed on these documents.

10. Organisation & Manpower Plan

Role	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Promoter / practice head	1	1	2
Environmental consultants & analysts	12	20	28
Functional Area Experts (FAEs)	8	13	18
Monitoring & field team	8	13	18
GIS, modelling & technical support	3	5	7
Report writing & documentation	3	5	7
Admin, accounts & credit	3	5	6
Business development	2	4	5
Total	40	66	91

The Functional Area Experts are the accreditation. Their qualifications and continued employment are what NABET assesses, which means retention is not a personnel matter but the preservation of the licence to practise. A firm that loses experts in a sector loses the ability to bid in that sector until they are replaced and the accreditation updated.

11. Implementation Timeline & Milestones

Phase	Timeline	Milestone
Setup & accreditation	Month 0-8	FAE onboarding & NABET accreditation in target sectors , monitoring equipment, lab tie-ups
Ramp	Month 6-12+	Compliance and consent work, first EIA mandates; ₹3.2cr revenue, ₹14L loss
Grow	Year 2	EIA studies mature to billing, retainer base builds; ₹5.25cr, ₹25L profit
Scale	Year 3	₹7.65cr revenue, ₹74L profit; recurring work at 19%

12. Financial Plan (Illustrative)

All figures are illustrative model assumptions for an Indian context, shown so the promoter can replace them with live rates. They are not projections of guaranteed results. Expert headcount, utilisation, fee realisation, accreditation scope & recurring share are the levers.

12.1 Project cost & means of finance

Capital requirement	₹
Working capital (salaries runway & receivables)	38,00,000
Environmental monitoring & sampling equipment	18,00,000
Laboratory tie-up / basic testing setup	10,00,000
Office, IT, GIS & modelling software	9,00,000
NABET accreditation, certifications & FAE onboarding	7,00,000
Brand, technical library & launch	3,00,000
Total project cost	85,00,000
Promoter contribution	40,00,000
Working-capital finance	30,00,000
Term loan	15,00,000

12.2 Projected Profit & Loss (3 years)

Particulars	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
EIA studies & EC application support	1,30,00,000	2,10,00,000	2,95,00,000
Consent, authorisation & statutory applications	65,00,000	1,00,00,000	1,40,00,000
Environmental monitoring & compliance reporting	55,00,000	95,00,000	1,45,00,000
Environmental audits, due diligence & EMP support	40,00,000	65,00,000	95,00,000
ESG / BRSR & sustainability reporting	30,00,000	55,00,000	90,00,000

Total revenue	3,20,00,000	5,25,00,000	7,65,00,000
Salaries (FAEs, consultants, analysts, admin)	1,82,00,000	2,86,00,000	4,05,00,000
Baseline monitoring, sampling & laboratory costs	38,00,000	56,00,000	76,00,000
Travel, site work & public-hearing support	30,00,000	44,00,000	60,00,000
Office, overheads, insurance & selling	24,00,000	32,00,000	42,00,000
Subcontracted specialists & associate experts	22,00,000	32,00,000	44,00,000
Software, subscriptions, accreditation & training	16,00,000	21,00,000	27,00,000
Bad debts & credit losses	12,00,000	17,00,000	23,00,000
Depreciation, interest & other	10,00,000	12,00,000	14,00,000
Total expenses	3,34,00,000	5,00,00,000	6,91,00,000
Net profit / (loss) before tax	(14,00,000)	25,00,000	74,00,000
Net margin	(4.4%)	4.8%	9.7%
Salaries as % of revenue	56.9%	54.5%	53.0%
Recurring compliance share of revenue	17.2%	18.1%	19.0%

12.3 Unit economics & break-even

- **Utilisation and salaries govern everything:** salaries are 53–57% of revenue and largely fixed, since FAEs cannot be hired and released with project flow. Raising billable utilisation is the primary margin lever, and it is achieved by holding compliance work that fills the gaps rather than by raising fees.
- **The EIA revenue lag must be financed:** a study won today bills across twelve to eighteen months, with the baseline season consuming much of it. Year-1's loss is largely this lag combined with an expert team assembled for accreditation before it is fully utilised.
- **Accreditation scope caps the addressable market** more directly than sales effort does. Adding a sector is a deliberate investment in experts and assessment, and it should be evaluated like a capital project with an expected return.
- **Compliance and ESG work is the ballast:** at 19% of revenue and rising, it recurs annually, requires no repeated pitching, and keeps specialists engaged between mandates.
- **Break-even:** reached in Year 2 as EIA mandates mature into billing and the recurring base builds. Margins expand with utilisation and recurring share rather than with fee inflation.

12.4 Projected Cash Flow — Year 1 (quarterly, illustrative)

Particulars (₹)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Opening balance	38,00,000	24,00,000	14,00,000	8,00,000
Collections	68,00,000	74,00,000	78,00,000	82,00,000
Salaries, monitoring, travel, associates & overheads	82,00,000	84,00,000	84,00,000	78,00,000
Closing balance	24,00,000	14,00,000	8,00,000	12,00,000

The single most important contractual point in this business concerns what payment is tied to. Clients frequently propose that final payment falls due *on grant of Environmental Clearance* — and that is a term no consultant should accept, because **clearance is decided by an appraisal committee, not by the consultant**. A study can be technically sound and still face deferral for reasons entirely outside the consultant's control: committee scheduling, policy shifts, project-design issues that are the proponent's to resolve, or objections raised at public hearing. **Tying the fee to clearance transfers regulatory risk to the party least able to manage it** — the same error the fire-safety plan identifies when payment is tied to NOC receipt rather than commissioning. **Bill against deliverable milestones instead:** ToR obtained, baseline complete, draft EIA submitted, public hearing supported, final submission made. Beyond that, salaries run monthly against clients paying in 60–90 days, so the working-capital line should be sized against payroll rather than revenue.

12.5 Key Performance Indicators to Monitor

- **Practice economics: billable utilisation by expert;** revenue per FAE; realisation against proposal; associate-vs-in-house delivery mix.
- **Quality: queries raised per submission;** ToR granted without major revision; hearings conducted without adjournment; studies cleared without resubmission.
- **Accreditation:** sectors accredited; **FAE retention;** accreditation assessment outcomes; scope-expansion pipeline.
- **Finance:** recurring share of revenue; milestone billing adherence; **proportion of contracts with fees tied to clearance outcome** (target zero); collection days.

13. Funding Requirement & Bankability

Total ask: **₹30 lakh working-capital finance plus ₹15 lakh term loan** against ₹40 lakh promoter contribution. This is a light-capital professional practice with monitoring equipment as its only substantial asset, so a lender should read the *accreditation scope, mandate pipeline and recurring compliance base* as the substance; MSME and CGTMSE routes suit the ticket. Three points deserve stating. **The accreditation is the business and it rests on named individuals** — FAE retention is therefore a credit-relevant fact, since losing experts in a sector removes the ability to bid there until they are replaced. **The working-capital requirement is a payroll float across a long revenue cycle:** EIA mandates bill over twelve to eighteen months while salaries run monthly, so the facility should be sized to payroll and the recurring compliance base treated as the stabilising revenue. And **Year 1's ₹14 lakh loss is a structural lag**, not weak demand — an expert team must exist before accreditation, and accreditation must exist before mandates, so cost precedes revenue by design.

13.1 Funding utilisation

Use of funds	₹	% of total
Working capital (salaries runway & receivables)	38,00,000	44.7%
Environmental monitoring & sampling equipment	18,00,000	21.2%
Laboratory tie-up / basic testing setup	10,00,000	11.8%
Office, IT, GIS & modelling software	9,00,000	10.6%
NABET accreditation, certifications & FAE onboarding	7,00,000	8.2%
Brand, technical library & launch	3,00,000	3.5%
Total	85,00,000	100%

14. Risk Analysis & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Loss of Functional Area Experts and with them the accreditation	Retention as strategy — role quality, progression, equity participation for senior experts; depth of more than one expert per critical function; documented methodology so knowledge is institutional; maintain a bench through associate relationships
Fee tied to clearance outcome	Bill against deliverable milestones — ToR, baseline, draft EIA, hearing, submission; never accept payment contingent on a committee decision the consultant does not control
Pressure to produce a favourable conclusion	Report what the data shows; raise project-design concerns early when they can still be addressed; decline mandates where the proponent expects a predetermined outcome — a study that fails appraisal costs the client a year and the consultant its reputation
Missing the baseline season	Plan mandate acceptance against the monitoring calendar; state the irreducible timeline in the proposal; decline promises that require compressing a season
Accreditation assessment or quality review adverse finding	Maintain report quality standards, original data and traceable analysis; internal peer review before submission; retain sampling records and lab certificates
Long revenue cycle straining cash	Milestone billing with advances; recurring compliance base as ballast; WC sized to payroll; avoid concentrating too many mandates at the same stage
Public-hearing controversy and reputational exposure	Genuine socio-economic assessment, honest disclosure of impacts, proponent preparation for real questions, professional conduct at hearings regardless of pressure
Project cycle downturn reducing EIA mandates	Grow compliance, audit, due-diligence and ESG work, which is independent of new-project investment
Client insolvency mid-study	Advances and milestone billing so exposure never exceeds work delivered; credit assessment of proponents; stop-work provisions
Professional liability on a relied-upon report	Documented methodology and scope limitations, clear statements of assumptions and data sources, professional-indemnity cover

15. SWOT Analysis

Strengths Accreditation is a genuine barrier to entry; statutory demand independent of client preference; compliance work provides recurring revenue; light capital requirement; ESG adjacency extends existing relationships; reputation for defensible reports compounds through committee track record.	Weaknesses Accreditation rests on individuals who can leave; long revenue cycle with irreducible baseline season; salaries fixed against lumpy project flow; scope limited to accredited sectors; exposed to project-investment cycles; integrity pressure from clients seeking outcomes.
Opportunities ESG and BRSR disclosure expanding rapidly; lender and investor environmental due diligence; compliance-reporting annuity growth; accreditation scope expansion into new sectors; climate and biodiversity assessment as emerging requirements; supply-chain sustainability work for listed clients.	Threats Expert poaching by competitors and clients; regulatory process changes altering demand; project-cycle downturns; price competition from firms willing to compromise on rigour; accreditation withdrawal following a quality review; large consulting firms entering the space.

16. Recommended AiSevak Tools for This Business

This environmental consultancy would use AiSevak's Environment vertical tools in operations:

- **Practice economics: billable utilisation by expert**, revenue per FAE, realisation vs. proposal, associate-mix tracking.
- **Study management: baseline-season calendar & milestone tracker**, queries-per-submission logging, ToR and hearing status.
- **Accreditation: FAE roster & retention monitoring**, sector-scope register, assessment-readiness checklist, sampling and lab-certificate records.
- **Finance & contracts: milestone-billing adherence, flagging of contracts with fees tied to clearance outcome**, collection-days tracking (with Finance and Legal verticals).
- **Practice: Business Plan, break-even and consultancy-economics tools** to model the firm.

17. Key Assumptions & Notes

- Environmental consultancy: EIA studies & EC application support, consent/authorisation filings, monitoring & compliance reporting, audits & due diligence, ESG/BRSR reporting; revenue = experts × utilisation × fee.
- **THE LICENCE TO PRACTISE IS EMBODIED IN INDIVIDUALS WHO CAN RESIGN.** EIA reports for regulated categories must come from **NABET/QCI-accredited organisations**, accreditation is **SECTOR-SPECIFIC**, and it rests on **Functional Area Experts on the rolls — lose the FAEs and the accreditation follows them out of the door**; the firm can still consult but cannot sign the EIA reports that are its largest revenue line. Expert retention is therefore a **STRATEGIC** and **FINANCIAL** matter, not an HR one, and the single most important risk for a promoter or lender to understand.
- **THE INTEGRITY TENSION: the client wants a CLEARANCE, not an ASSESSMENT.** A proponent commissioning an EIA is not seeking to discover their project is unviable. **A consultancy whose studies invariably conclude impacts are insignificant is commercially popular and professionally worthless**, and accreditation has been withdrawn for copied/fabricated/unsupportable reports. **The commercial argument for rigour is concrete rather than moral: a report an appraisal committee rejects costs the client ANOTHER SEASON of baseline data and another year of delay — so a consultant whose reports survive scrutiny is worth MORE, not less.**
- **THE BASELINE SEASON GOVERNS EVERY ENGAGEMENT AND IS ROUTINELY WISHED AWAY IN PROPOSALS —** one full season of ambient monitoring cannot be shortened, purchased or modelled around, and must be collected in the right season to be accepted. Three consequences: **an EIA has an irreducible 12-18 month cycle** so revenue from a mandate won today arrives largely next year; **the consultant carries the expert team through it** (hence the compliance annuity matters); and **missing a season costs A YEAR, not weeks** — the most expensive planning error in the profession. A proponent asking for clearance in six months is asking for something the baseline alone makes impossible, and agreeing to win the work guarantees a disappointed client.
- **THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT CONTRACTUAL POINT: never tie fees to GRANT OF CLEARANCE.** Clearance is decided by an appraisal committee, not the consultant, and a technically sound study can still be deferred for committee scheduling, policy shifts, proponent-side design issues or hearing objections. **Tying the fee to clearance transfers regulatory risk to the party least able to manage it** — the same error as fire-safety's "payment on NOC receipt". **Bill against DELIVERABLE milestones: ToR obtained, baseline complete, draft EIA, hearing supported, final submission.**
- Two halves with different rhythms: **EIA is long-cycle and lumpy; compliance monitoring/reporting RECURS predictably** — growing recurring share 17%→19% matters disproportionately because **an EIA practice with no compliance annuity carries specialists through dry quarters out of capital, and those specialists are exactly**

the people whose departure would cost the accreditation. Salaries 53-57% and largely fixed (FAEs can't be hired and released with project flow) → utilisation is the primary margin lever.

- **Accreditation SCOPE caps the addressable market more directly than sales effort does** — adding a sector is a deliberate investment in experts and assessment, evaluated like a capital project. Lab analysis must come from NABL-accredited or MoEFCC-recognised labs. Post-clearance half-yearly compliance reports generate the annuity. ESG/BRSR is a genuine growth adjacency into existing relationships. Y1 ₹14L loss is a structural lag — the expert team must exist before accreditation, and accreditation before mandates, so cost precedes revenue by design. ₹85L, rev 3.2→7.65cr. Figures illustrative, exclude GST.

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