



POLICY STATEMENT

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

While the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is the State agency with statutory responsibility for protecting and conserving the State's natural environment and air, water and land quality on behalf of the people of Western Australia, protecting and conserving WA's natural environment is everybody's concern.

DEC has a firm commitment to public participation and stakeholder engagement and recognises the need to continue to integrate, in a meaningful way, the knowledge and opinions of others into its decision-making processes. Public participation and stakeholder engagement provides an opportunity for DEC to understand community and stakeholder views and consider these to create better project and policy outcomes.

DEC's public participation and stakeholder engagement policy is:

- to ensure that appropriate opportunities for participation and engagement are provided for individuals, interest groups, peak organisations and communities;
- to undertake public participation and stakeholder engagement processes that are transparent, accessible, accountable, supported by factual information and inclusive of the broad diversity of Western Australia;
- to provide appropriate resources for effective public participation and stakeholder engagement and the timely delivery of desired business outcomes and decisions; and
- to provide opportunities for departmental officers to enrich their knowledge and expertise in public participation and stakeholder engagement.

Commitments

DEC's commitment to public participation and stakeholder engagement will be demonstrated by:

- being responsive to the community – developing and implementing appropriate public participation and engagement opportunities and programs that are integrated within core business activities of the department;
- being innovative, where that is appropriate, and taking advantage of emerging technologies and approaches, such as online discussion forums and social media;
- fostering a long-term view of relationship-building with stakeholders and communities, built on trust, and which benefits all parties;
- making and honoring realistic commitments;

- ensuring appropriate senior level involvement relevant to the project or issue; and
- documenting public participation and stakeholder engagement processes internally to ensure good records that will also enable the learning and sharing of project successes and challenges with other DEC staff.

Application

DEC is guided by best practice approaches and uses the International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Participation (see Attachment 1) to clarify the appropriate level of public impact and influence within the decision-making process for each circumstance.

DEC empowers staff to engage the community through the provision of public participation and stakeholder engagement training programs, planning tools, strategic advice and general support.

DEC also provides resources to assist staff to determine appropriate public participation levels, tools, plans and processes for their projects to ensure that public participation and stakeholder engagement becomes integral to the department's policies, operations, practices and activities. Included in these are a series of fact sheets and resources that are aimed to help staff and industry in planning for public participation and stakeholder engagement within their projects. These can be found on DEC's intranet *the Source* (see Key References).

Custodian

Director, Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs

Support Area

Public Participation Planning Section, Public Affairs Branch, Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs Division

Key References

DEC public participation fact sheets (<http://intranet/sdca/pa/ppp/default.aspx>)
Good Neighbour Policy

Director General Approval

Approved on 4 March 2011

By Keiran McNamara 
 DIRECTOR GENERAL

Attachment 1 – International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Participation

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
<p>Objective To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, and/or solution</p>	<p>Objective To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p>	<p>Objective To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.</p>	<p>Objective To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</p>	<p>Objective To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.</p>
<p>Promise to the public We will provide information (to stakeholders and the community) in an unbiased manner. We will keep you advised of what is happening. This level is appropriate when a decision has already been made and the public cannot have an influence.</p>	<p>Promise to the public We will listen to your concerns and ideas.</p>	<p>Promise to the public We will listen to you, and advise how your views have (or haven't) been incorporated into decisions and why.</p>	<p>Promise to the public We will actively work with you in developing solutions.</p>	<p>Promise to the public We will actively develop mechanisms that will enable you to make decisions. We will implement your decisions.</p>
<p>Example tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fact sheets/brochures ▪ Web sites ▪ Open houses/open days ▪ Displays ▪ Community education campaigns 	<p>Example tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment ▪ Focus groups ▪ Surveys/questionnaires ▪ Public meetings ▪ World Café ▪ Open space technology 	<p>Example tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops ▪ Deliberative polling ▪ 21st Century Dialogue forums 	<p>Example tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen Advisory Committees ▪ Consensus-building ▪ Participatory decision-making 	<p>Example tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decisions ▪ Consensus conferences
<p>DEC example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DEC website - Publications e.g. <i>LANDSCOPE</i> - Advise community members or landowners of small scale developments or initiatives e.g. prescribed burning - Developing community understanding of environment and conservation issues - Keep Australia Beautiful Council initiatives 	<p>DEC example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written consultation on National/Marine Park management plans - planning for visitor facilities and services - Changes to environmental and conservation legislation and regulations - Industry licensing processes 	<p>DEC example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forest management - Marine and terrestrial management planning processes - Industry licensing processes - Waste management - community monitoring and evaluation projects 	<p>DEC example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good Neighbour Policy - Community liaison or advisory groups e.g. Regional Parks Community Advisory Committees; - Partnerships to provide recreational and tourism facilities, services and programs - Partnerships with landowners - Industry partnerships and programs - Joint management of land 	<p>DEC example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some decisions of Natural Resource Management committees - 'Friends of' group activities - Land for Wildlife

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

