

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

Our Commitment

The Department of Conservation & Land Management (CALM) is the State agency with statutory responsibility for the implementation of Government policy on the conservation of Western Australia's biodiversity, and the management of lands and waters entrusted to the Department for the appreciation and benefit of present and future generations.

CALM has a firm commitment to public participation and recognises the right of members of the public to have a meaningful role in conserving Western Australia's natural environment to ensure healthy ecosystems, social and economic well-being and conservation of biological diversity for present and future generations. CALM has prepared this Policy as part of an integrated Manual on Public Participation, in order to achieve its goal of improving public participation.

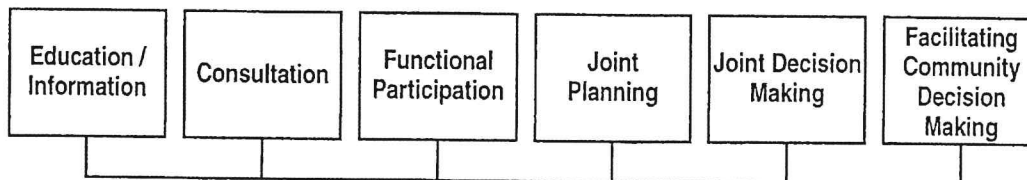
It is CALM's policy to ensure that appropriate opportunities for participation are provided for individuals, interest groups and communities.

What is Public Participation?

Public participation is an ongoing process which can involve communication, interaction and joint decision making between different stakeholders. Through public participation, all parties become better informed about the range of views on proposals and issues. Most importantly, a good public participation process will result in better decisions that are more sensitive and responsive to public concerns and values.

It is widely acknowledged that public participation processes should vary according to the size, complexity and level of interest in any one issue, policy or plan. Accordingly, CALM recognises that there are different forms of public participation and that these are appropriate in different circumstances.

Forms of Public Participation



It is important that the right form of participation is chosen for each issue, policy or plan and that CALM constantly aims for best practice implementation in every situation. The Public Participation Strategy provides guidance for adopting best practice approaches.

Principles for Public Participation

To establish a sound basis for CALM's public participation practices, the policy promotes ten central principles:

1. Public participation processes will have a clearly stated purpose and clearly identified boundaries.
2. Public participation will be based on a shared understanding (with stakeholders) of principles, objectives, responsibilities, behavior, assessment criteria and expected outcomes.
3. Participation will provide opportunities for input, representation and joint learning from all relevant stakeholders.
4. The participatory process will be objective, open, fair and carried out in a responsible and accountable manner.
5. Public participation processes will emphasise the sharing of information, joint learning and understanding.
6. Data and information used in the decision making process will be available to stakeholders.
7. Consensus will be emphasised with provision for dissenting views to be documented.
8. Appropriate staff, information and time will be allocated to ensure that the participatory process can be undertaken in a comprehensive manner.
9. The outcomes of public participation will form part of the decision making process.
10. Participants will be informed as to how their involvement affected CALM's or Government's decisions.

CALM has a responsibility to ensure that resources are used effectively in implementing these principles.