



POLICY ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. WWF considers that recognizing the customary rights to lands, territories and resources provides a foundation for more effective outcomes and has a long history of working with communities to achieve sustainable outcomes. This policy articulates WWF-Australia's support for community participation in its aid and development programs.
- 1.2. This policy articulates how WWF-Australia will address environmental impact on the environment, species and resultant impacts on communities where it implements aid and development programs.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Community participation in the development and implementation of programs, either through groups of individuals or the organisations that represent them, optimises the benefits of policies and programs, adds value to them and results in a stronger and more effective response.
- 2.2. Developing trust with communities in which programs are being implemented can be used to ensure that solutions will be workable, accepted by, appropriate to the needs of local communities, and can be effectively implemented.
- 2.3. Community participation builds community education where those involved will be informed about policy, programs and projects. Concerns of the community are then more likely to be incorporated.
- 2.4. A clear commitment to and understanding of the necessity of community participation will increase the willingness of partners to contribute their time and efforts. Developing processes that are responsive and effective for incorporating input from the community into policy and programs will result in a wider range of perspectives being heard.
- 2.5. Community participation further increases accountability as it is in the community's interest to ensure that work is being carried out responsibly and effectively.
- 2.6. Community participation is grounded in fundamental principles such as the right to participation¹, and principles of inclusion and plurality.
- 2.7. WWF-Australia is a signatory to ACFID's Code of Conduct. The code of conduct addresses community participation in the following ways:
 - 2.7.1. Its values commit signatories to:
 - 2.7.1.1. Building creative and trusting relationships with the communities in which they work:
 - 2.7.1.1.1. Based on an understanding of their history and culture.
 - 2.7.1.1.2. Giving priority to their interests.

¹ The right to participation is guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and is an essential aspect of the human rights framework and a critical component for ensuring government accountability.



- 2.7.1.1.3. Involving them to the maximum extent possible in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs, encouraging self-reliance.
- 2.7.1.1.4. Valuing men and women, boys and girls in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person.
- 2.7.1.2. Strengthening civil society in Australia and the countries where they work.
- 2.7.2. Its program principles commit signatory organisations to:
 - 2.7.2.1. Ensure that their purpose and processes are shaped by stakeholders and that their work is open to review and comment by partners and participants alike. In all instances, those directly affected by aid and development activities are considered the primary stakeholders and their views afforded the highest priority.
 - 2.7.2.2. Proactively make available information to stakeholders which is accurate, accessible and timely, be clear about what information they will and will not provide to stakeholders.
- 2.8. As an organisation with missions and goals for biodiversity and environmental conservation, environmental issues are at the core of WWF-Australia's work. This is reflected in our guiding principles and our organisational policies, both at the global and national levels.
- 2.9. WWF-Australia recognises that aid and development programs have the potential to have a negative effect on the environment if they are not designed, managed and evaluated with consideration of environmental dimensions. Negative environmental consequences harm not only the physical environment but have negative consequences for communities who are dependent on and interact with the environment.
- 2.10. Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 created the legal obligation to ensure that Australian aid and development programs are not causing, or likely to cause, a significant negative impact on the environment.
- 2.11. To apply best practice and ensure that environment considerations are integrated into the aid program, AusAID's Environment Management Guide for Australia's Aid Program 2012, outlines steps for development partners to help the Australian Government meet its legal and policy obligations, continually improve environment performance in aid activities, manage environment risks, ensure aid money is not used in a way that harms the environment and implement best environment management practices.
- 2.12. As a signatory to ACFID's Code of Conduct, WWF-Australia is committed to:
 - 2.12.1. Environmental sustainability in the conduct of aid and development activities and the operation of domestic operations.
 - 2.12.2. Informing aid and development activity and its implementation with an understanding of the environmental impact of our activities.

3. POLICY

3.1. To facilitate community participation, WWF-Australia will:

- 3.1.1. Prioritise accountability to local people and those directly affected by our aid and development programs, prioritising their needs and rights with specific reference to gender, age, disability and other identified vulnerabilities.



- 3.1.2. Seek the genuine, informed, consensual participation of local people and their representatives in our aid and development programs, ensuring that they have the opportunity to authentically contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities and recognising that community participation in decision-making should be an ongoing process.
 - 3.1.3. Analyse the needs and expectations of key stakeholders in our aid and development programs, pursuing informed and balanced accountability to each.
 - 3.1.4. Develop processes and mechanisms to effectively facilitate and encourage community participation, including through information-sharing, recognising that community groups and individuals must be provided with sufficient information to enable meaningful participation.
- 3.2. To minimise environmental impact, WWF-Australia will:
- 3.2.1. Assess the environmental impact including whether further work is required.
 - 3.2.2. Promote environmentally sustainable development including activities that use sound environmental and ecological practices and do not produce adverse environmental impacts.

4. SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

4.1. International

- *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992)*
- *World Commission on Environment and Development's Our Common Future (1987)*

4.2. Federal

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) 1999*

4.3. AusAID

- *The Environment Management Guide for Australia's Aid Program 2012*
- *AusAID NGO Accreditation Guidance Manual v2*

4.4. Australian Council for International Development

- *ACFID Code of Conduct*

4.5. Other Resources

In Australia, there is a range of articles, writing and resources on community participation from different fields: community (also referred to or grouped with 'consumer') participation in governance, healthcare and planning. Examples:

- State Government of Victoria: 'Doing it with us, not for us – Participation in your health service system 2006–09: Victorian consumers, carers and the community'
- Local Government Association of South Australia: 'Community Participation checklist'
- Australian Green Party: 'Policy on Community Participation'

Internationally, work in other development sectors speaks of the importance of community participation. In the AIDS response, working with civil society is a key component of success, and included in discussions on 'community engagement' and 'the involvement of affected



communities'.²

4.6. WWF

- 4.6.1.1. Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Free Workplace Policy
- 4.6.1.2. Policy on Disability
- 4.6.1.3. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- 4.6.1.4. Policy on Gender
- 4.6.1.5. Policy on HIV/AIDS
- 4.6.1.6. WWF Guiding Principles

5. SCOPE

- 5.1. This policy applies to all WWF-Australia board members, staff, volunteers and contractors.
- 5.2. This policy applies to all Partner Organisations and their board members, staff, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development activities funded by, or through, WWF-Australia.

6. DEFINITIONS

Community	'Community' itself can be a difficult word to define, and is used in many different ways; one academic noted that it is "one of the most complex and imprecise in the vocabulary of social science." ³ However, in most aid and development work, community is loosely defined as a group of people who share a common characteristic. This can be a narrowly defined community, for example, women who make their livelihoods from fishing, or it could encompass broader constituencies, for example, all fishermen in one village or area, or all the people who live in one geographical area. However, the concept of community can be used to mobilise people for a cause by bringing them together and working towards common aims.
Environmentally sustainable development	The 1987 report, 'Our Common Future' defines environmentally sustainable development as 'Development that meets the needs of the present generation without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
Partner Organisations:	Organisations implementing aid and development programs funded by, or through, WWF-Australia.

²See UNAIDS's homepage on Civil Society for example, at <http://www.unaids.org/en/ourwork/managementandgovernance/partnershipsdepartment/civilsocietyandprivatesectordivision/>

³ Altman, Dennis (1994) Power and Community: Organisational and Cultural Responses to AIDS. London: Taylor and Francis. P. 7



7. RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. **Executive Management** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that WWF-Australia and all staff members, volunteers and contractors comply with all relevant legislation and WWF-Australia policies (including this one).
- Ensuring that all Partner Organisations and their board members, staff members, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development programs funded by, or through, WWF-Australia, comply with all relevant legislation and WWF-Australia policies (including this one).

7.2. **People & Organisation Development** are responsible for:

- Assisting managers and supervisors with the construction of appropriate training and development programs, designed to aid compliance with this policy.
- Providing managers and supervisors and other staff members with support and assistance during any complaint or dismissal process.

7.3. **Managers and supervisors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they comply with all relevant legislation and WWF-Australia policies.
- Communicating this Policy to all Partner Organisations, and ensuring that Partner Organisations communicate this Policy to their board members, staff, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development activities funded by, or through, WWF-Australia.
- Approving activities and/or funding only when the requirements of this Policy have been met.
- Providing the CEO and People & Organisation Development Director with all information that relates to breaches or potential breaches of this policy.
- Seeking support and assistance from People & Organisation Development as required.

7.4. **All employees and volunteers** are responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy, as required by the following procedures.

8. PROCEDURES

- 8.1. This Policy will be included in all contracts and memorandums of understanding with Partner Organisations.
- 8.2. No later than November of each financial year, WWF-Australia will organise an induction/workshop – which may be held either face-to-face or by Skype or phone conference – at which this Policy, its importance and consequences of non-compliance, will be presented to the Partner Organisation's executive and relevant staff, volunteers and contractors.



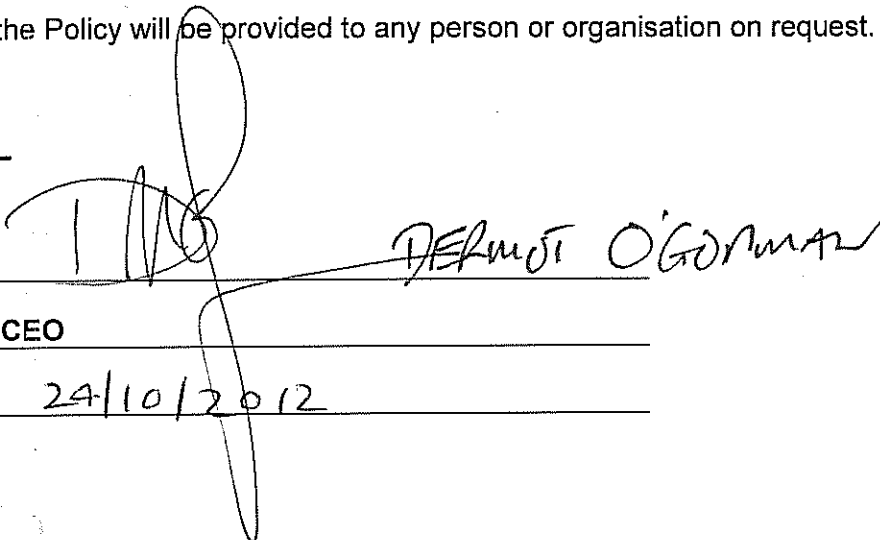
- 8.3. All aid and development programs funded by or through WWF-Australia and Partner Organisations and relevant staff, volunteers and contractors will be monitored to ensure they are not in breach of this Policy. Monitoring will be proportionate to the amount of funding and the risk of breach (as a result of the funded activities, organisation or skills and experience of board and staff) and will be recorded in the program/project file and signed by the relevant program/project manager. Monitoring will include at least one country visit annually at which this Policy will be made the subject of special presentation.
- 8.4. Applying this Policy may be difficult in some situations and sound judgement will be necessary. The Policy cannot provide a specific response for every circumstance. WWF will apply the spirit and intent of this clause in the conduct of aid and development programs.
- 8.5. If this Policy does not provide a clear answer on how to comply in a particular circumstance, WWF will document clearly the decisions made and the reasons behind them and make them available to both recipients and donors.
- 8.6. Feedback is important to WWF and our Partner Organisations as it helps develop and improve. Therefore all feedback is welcomed. Feedback will be directed to the relevant department of WWF-Australia for action. A complainant regarding an alleged breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct can be made directly to ACFID.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

- 9.1. This Policy is available on Wiki Habitat for all employees.
- 9.2. A copy of the Policy will be provided to any person or organisation on request.

10. APPROVAL

Name:


DERMOT O'GORMAN

Title:

CEO

Date of Issue:

24/10/2012