

Panel 5:

Community Involvement

Any process for understanding community-based values needs to be flexible and responsive to the communities involved. Different methods (e.g. small group discussions, written surveys, interviews, information displays, community workshops) may be appropriate for different communities. Most importantly, people want to be clear about what is expected of them, how they can be involved and what they are able to influence.

The National Assessment Framework provided through this project will need to be transparent about these issues and provide a clear set of principles that inform consultation activities at each step of assessment. The principles will also form the benchmark against which any consultation exercise can be held accountable. Agreement to these principles by all interests will support confidence in the role and conduct of community consultation and engagement through this Framework at the local and national level.

The Australian Wind Energy Association recently reviewed and updated Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Farm Developments and incorporated a framework for community and stakeholder engagement. The framework proposes a set of principles to be applied to all consultation:

- Clarity of purpose
- Supporting inclusion
- Responsive & transparent
- Open exchange of information
- Timely feedback & evaluation

Any consultation activity will need to be designed with these principles in mind and relate clearly to the consultation objectives proposed in the National Assessment Framework (please refer to the draft summary of the National Assessment Framework).

What has been your experience of community involvement in wind farm development?

What are the hallmarks or characteristics of a successful process of community involvement, in your opinion?

