



Good Practice Note: Environment Protection

Principle 3: Disclose information transparently

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Version	1.2
For help, contact	environment@dfat.gov.au

This Good Practice Note is for DFAT staff, delivery partners and environment specialists involved in delivering Australia's aid program. It is one of a series of notes which explains the principles of the aid program's [Environment Protection Policy](#) and how they should be addressed. The notes complement the [Operational Procedures of the Environment Protection Policy](#).

3 How to be transparent about environmental risks and their management

3.1 Why is disclosing information important?

Disclosing information about the environmental risks of development investments is accepted good practice and is a common requirement of environmental law. Disclosure is important to effective consultation with people who might be affected by an investment and helps to protect their rights. It also enables affected people to provide information that can help activity managers plan for, avoid and manage risks.

3.2 What are our obligations?

Partner country environmental laws generally include provisions for the public disclosure of information about the risks and assessment of proposed development investments. You should seek guidance on the specific requirements (refer to *Good Practice Note: Environment Protection Principle 5: Comply with partner government laws*).

The Australian Government is committed to high standards of transparency and accountability in the management of Australia's aid program. Under the Government's development policy, [Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability](#), the Government has made undertakings to fully participate in the *International Aid Transparency Initiative* (IATI).

An aid project that is referred under the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (EPBC Act), may require a formal environmental assessment. Referral and assessment processes under the EPBC Act provide for public disclosure and consultation processes.

3.3 You are following good practice if you:

Make information accessible to all affected groups – ensure that information is provided about investments including environmental assessments in an accessible place and in a language and form that are understandable to affected communities and other stakeholders - e.g. local environmental agencies. Ensure that the time and resources are available for communities to consider the information (see also *Good Practice Note: Environment Protection Principle 4: Consult stakeholders*).

Provide summary material on proposals and assessments in a form, location and language that are accessible to stakeholders and affected communities.

Provide important documents on the DFAT website including the final analysis of environmental risks and environmental management plans for **medium to high risk** aid investments.

Provide a contact point for comments, consultation and grievance redress.