



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

CONSULTATION GUIDELINES

QN1213

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Principles

Open to new ideas

The department will:

- be prepared to take new ideas on board.
 - respect the diverse range of interests and opinions.
 - maintain its independence and avoid appearing to be 'captured' by any particular group.
-

Run an efficient consultation process

For each consultation exercise, the department will:

- define the scope of each consultation and manage the process so the community and tangata whenua understand what decisions or components of decisions they are able to influence;
 - use the most appropriate consultation methods;
 - plan carefully, and resource the process with staff time and money;
 - identify and manage risks;
 - meet legislative requirements;
 - coordinate with other consultation exercises being run by the department and other agencies.
-

Get the best information from the community

To get the best information from the community and tangata whenua, the department will:

- encourage input from the public, tangata whenua and staff;
 - be clear about what the issue is;
 - provide good information about the issues and options;
 - provide enough time for communities to respond.
-

Consult with tangata whenua

The department will undertake consultation with tangata whenua and act in accordance with its responsibility to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, to:

- act reasonably and in good faith;
 - make informed decisions;
 - consider whether active steps are needed to protect maori interests;
 - avoid actions which would prevent redress of claims;
 - recognise that the government must be able to govern;
 - acknowledge special relationships that have been defined through Treaty settlements.
-

Complete the consultation process

The department will:

- provide participants with information on the final decisions reached;
- evaluate the process to ensure the consultation was:
 - ◇ effective (an implementable decision was reached)
 - ◇ efficient (see 'Run an efficient process', above.)

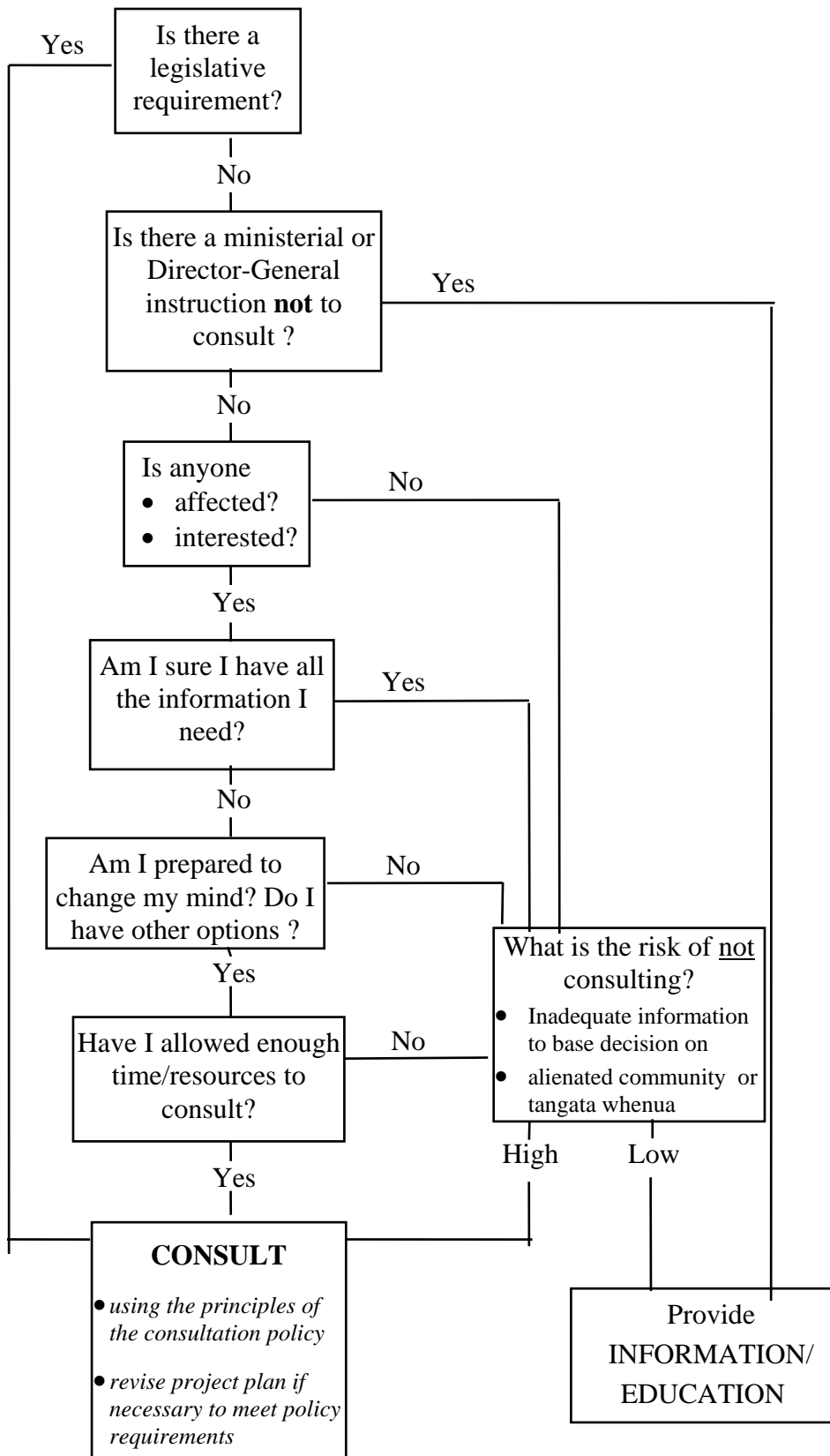
Consultation Goals and Outcomes

- Consultation Policy Goals**
1. To gain useful information to contribute to decision-making process.
 2. To ensure statutory consultation requirements are met.
 3. To improve/increase efficiency of consultation carried out by the Department of Conservation.
 4. To improve community relations.
-

Consultation Policy Outcomes

Gaining useful information	Statutory requirements	Efficiency	Community relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information is provided to tangata whenua and the community to enable their contribution • enough time is allowed for tangata whenua and the community input • tangata whenua and the community are encouraged to make their views known to the department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislative procedures are followed for concessions, conservation management strategies and other statutory processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scope of each consultation is defined • appropriate methods are chosen • staff and money are budgeted for • risks are identified and managed • consultation is co-ordinated with other consultation processes • skilled staff are used • process is evaluated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methods are selected to meet the needs of the community/tangata whenua • feedback is provided to those consulted with

When Do I Consult ?



How Much Do I Need to Consult to be able to make a decision?

Judging how much consultation is necessary

Getting the right amount of consultation - enough to meet the requirements of the consultation policy, but not so much that a project is paralysed, is a matter of judgement.

A major, or national complex policy issue will require more extensive consultation than that required for a small, uncontroversial operation.

If the department's options for action are severely limited by legislation or resources, then it can choose to make a decision without consulting the community. The risks associated with this need to be managed carefully.

During consultation, it is important to monitor whether the process is going to help the department reach the decisions it needs to make. Consultation is a means to help the decision-making process, not an end in itself.

Deciding the scope of the consultation required

There is a range of tools you can use in consulting with the community and tangata whenua. These are presented page 14. Choose the method(s) most appropriate for the issue, its scope and complexity.

The following questions will help you decide the extent of the consultation you will need to undertake:

- What is the scale of the project (national/regional/local)?
- How many people are affected?
 - how much are they likely to be affected?
 - what are likely to be the issues for them?
- How many people are interested in the issue?
- Can the community/tangata whenua provide more useful information ?

You may also want to:

- informally check with some key associates about the level of consultation they would expect on such an issue;
 - check with your peers to see what they did for similar issues - what worked, what didn't, and what they would do if they could do it again.
-

Being Open to New Ideas

Guiding rule Consultation, by definition, requires the department to keep an open mind - being willing and able to change its suggested actions.

Respecting diversity In undertaking consultation, a set of realistic options that meet the department's objectives can be presented to the community and tangata whenua as a basis for discussion.

To respect the diversity of views and opinions, the department needs to

- plan consultation to seek the full diversity of community and tangata whenua views;
 - take care in how it analyses submissions to ensure the views of participants are represented fairly.
-

Maintaining independence Staff must exercise their professionalism to maintain the department's independence by avoiding taking sides or appearing to be captured by a particular group.

On occasion, a working group chaired by an independent facilitator may be required.

Managing staff conflicts of interest Refer to section 2.4 of the Department of Conservation's Code of Conduct (December 1998) for guidance on how to handle conflict of interest.

Running An Efficient Consultation Process

Planning consultation

This table provides a series of questions which should be answered before any consultation is carried out.

Note: Planning for consultation should occur at the same time as planning for the technical requirements of the project.

Table 1 : Preparing a Consultation Brief

Step	Questions
1	WHO is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affected • interested
2	WHAT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is/is not open for discussion? • are the risks/is needed to manage risks? • resources are required? • are legislative requirements?
3	HOW do you plan to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate before, during and after? • use which consultation techniques? • analyse submissions?
4	WHEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how much time is needed? (Check with tangata whenua and other groups about what a realistic timeframe is for them.) • what other consultation is the department or other central or local government agency planning with this community?
5	WHO will run the consultation process?

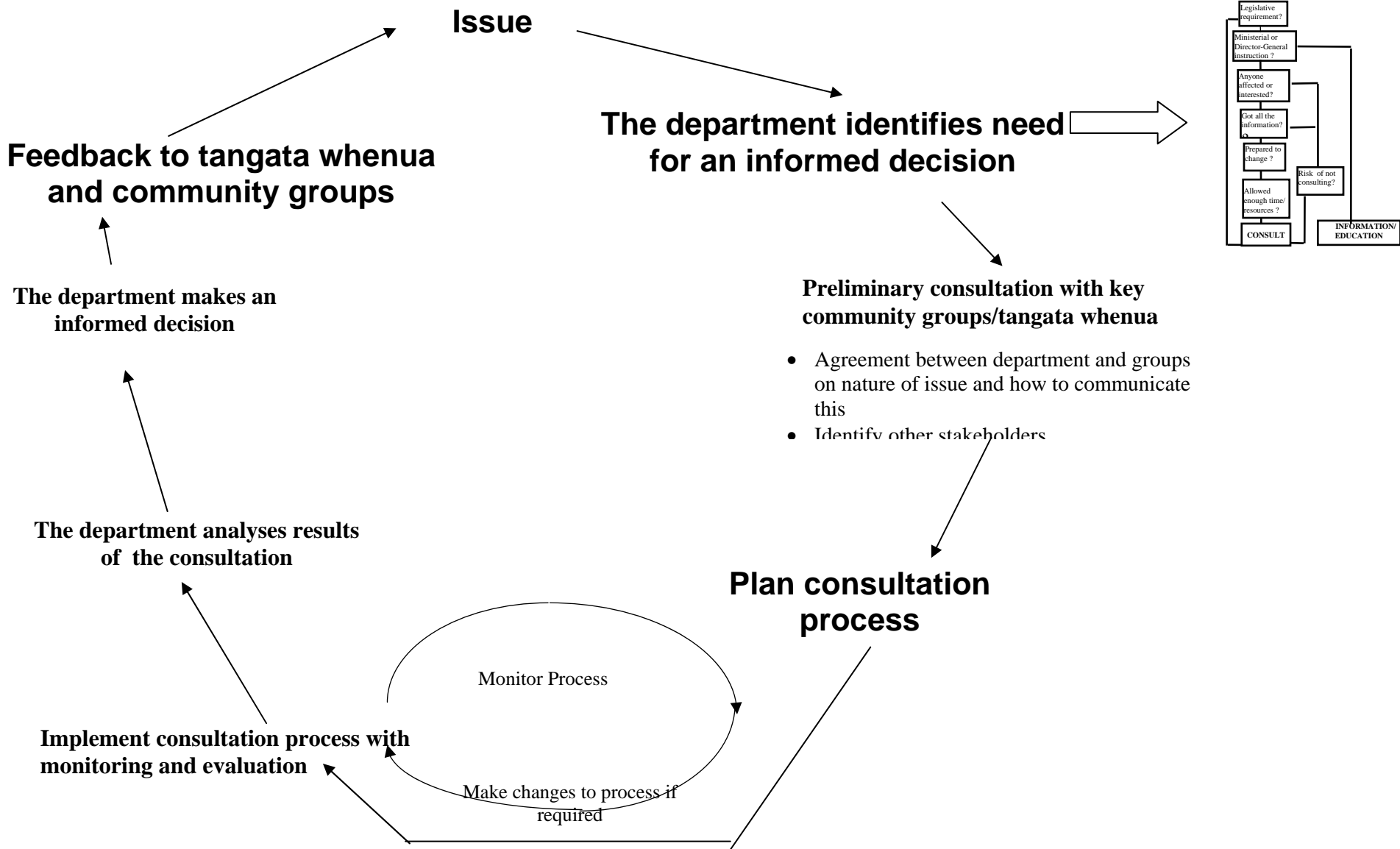
Keeping records

Keep good written records of planning, implementation, analysis and evaluation of the consultation.

An ideal consultation process

Figure 3 (next page) illustrates an ideal consultation process. Note that in this process, the consultation brief developed at business planning time may be modified by the involvement of tangata whenua and key community groups, when detailed planning takes place.

Figure 3: The ideal consultation process



Getting the Best Information From the Public

- Getting the best information** To enable the public to have their say, the department needs to:
- notify planned consultation in advance;
 - provide accurate, complete and easy to understand information about the issues and options so the issues are clearly stated and readily understood;
 - start information exchange with community and tangata whenua as early as possible so that information is flowing freely by the time the formal consultation process begins;
 - allow enough time for communities to respond;
 - outline the rights and responsibilities of consulting, and communicate these to those being consulted.
-

- Information for national groups** Advising tangata whenua and organisations of the department's priorities for the coming year will assist consultation by:
- allowing organisations time in their own business plans to meet the department's information needs, and
 - giving them the opportunity to tell us what issues they would like to be involved in and to what depth.

This table specifies the actions required to use the Strategic Directions Document for Business Planning to inform national organisations recognising that this sometimes contains confidential, budget sensitive information that should be removed..

What	Who	When
Provide public version of the Strategic Directions Document for Business Planning to External Relations Division	Business Planning Manager	November
Send the Strategic Directions Document to national community groups/associates	General Manager, External Relations	December

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Getting the Best Information From the Public, Continued

Consultation calendar

This table describes the steps conservancies and regions need to follow to advise local and regional groups of the department's annual consultation programme. Conservancies can also use this communication opportunity to identify to communities how conservation management strategy objectives are being progressed.

The process of identifying consultation in advance will help scheduling, especially where issues concern more than one conservancy.

Note that this calendar does not include concession consultation.

What	Who	When
Identify programmes where consultation is involved Identify how conservation management strategy objectives are being progressed	Conservancy	Jan / Feb
Collate programmes requiring consultation and approximate timing	Regional Office.	March / April
Send regional consultation calendar to associates and tangata whenua	Conservancy/ Areas	May / June
List major consultations in DOC Gazette	Regional Office / Head Office	On-going
Supply regional calendar to national associates if requested	External Relations Division	May / June

Allow sufficient time

The time required for different consultation techniques is covered in the 'Consultation Techniques' Section on page 15.

Allow enough time to give you flexibility to debate and investigate any unexpected and important issues that arise during the consultation process.

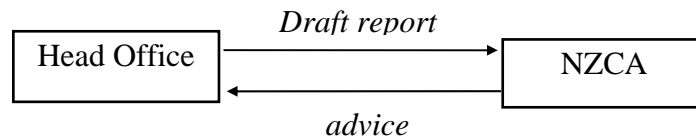
A general rule is to avoid the summer holidays. If you can't, then allow extra time.

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Consulting the NZCA on draft discussion papers

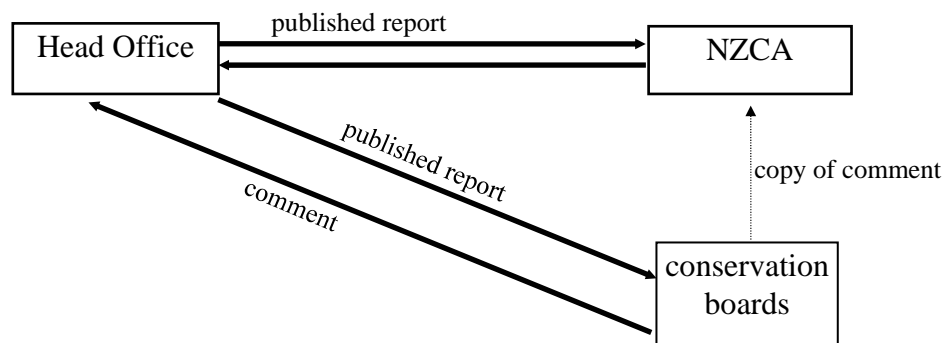
The NZCA should be consulted during the drafting of a discussion paper on national policy which is to be published by the department. The NZCA is expected to meet the time-lines of the department.



The NZCA will also be asked to comment on the published report.

Consulting the NZCA and boards on published reports

This diagram shows how the NZCA and conservation boards are to be consulted after a discussion document has been published.



Written Communication

Writing documents

In preparing the material to enable the public to make informed submissions, keep in mind the following points:

- keep it simple but accurate;
 - your audience;
 - avoid jargon (and provide translations of technical terms);
 - ask the questions you want answered - be specific;
 - if the document is getting long, put as much technical background as possible in appendices and/or ask yourself ‘how much detail does the public really need?’;
 - write a good summary and an equally good succinct introduction;
 - keep presentation humble - a discussion or draft document must not look like “the finished product”;
 - do you need to use te reo ?
-

Fact sheets

Fact sheets are useful tools to communicate to a wide audience the essence of an issue and the main questions the department is trying to answer.

If the issues are complex, or there are different audiences with interests in distinct areas, consider preparing several fact sheets.

Web site

Use the Department of Conservation website (www.doc.govt.nz).

- Load in fact sheets, news releases, the whole document (where appropriate). Add the website name to publications.
 - Liaise with the Public Awareness Unit in head office in arranging this.
-

Updating information

If new material comes to hand, or if, as a result of submissions, the department wishes to ask more questions, use fact sheets to provide the community and tangata whenua with the latest information.

Media

Talk with the conservancy journalist about the best ways to use the media to:

- publicise the forthcoming consultation,
 - provide background information,
 - determine whether general publicity is warranted or whether information should be given just to specific interest groups.
-

Mailing lists

- Prepare comprehensive national/conservancy mailing lists.
- Make sure you have identified the right people to talk to.
- Keep the mailing lists up-to-date

Consultation Rights and Responsibilities

Introduction This page should assist the Department of Conservation, the community and tangata whenua through the consultation process by setting out clear ground rules which should be accepted by all parties.

Tangata whenua and the community have the right to ...	The Department of Conservation has the responsibility to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be given adequate timeframes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow sufficient time for the consultation process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know what the department intends to do with their views (is this just testing the water, or will this affect a decision) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide the community with clear information about what will be done with their views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide their views in a manner most suited to their members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a range of mechanisms for receiving views (submissions, meetings, hui etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain ownership of cultural and intellectual property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish and explain the ‘givens’ of the consultation process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know the outcome of the consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform participants of the outcome of the consultation • be willing to explain how decisions were made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appoint their own spokesperson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the designated spokesperson

The Department of Conservation has the right to ...	Tangata whenua and the community have a responsibility to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine why the consultation is happening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect the constraints placed by the department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impose, if necessary, a timetable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet appropriate deadlines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publish submissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specify if they wish any part of their submission to be kept confidential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine what parts of a policy, plan or strategy are subject to consultation and what are givens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept that the issues being consulted on are bounded by legislative requirements and resourcing constraints and accept the givens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make final decisions/make final recommendations to the Minister 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept that the department has the right to make this final decision, even if the decision does not reflect the position of the community or tangata whenua.

Consultation Techniques

Introduction

Table 2 provides a summary of different consultation techniques, the time and resources required, and advantages and disadvantages of each. Choose the method (or combination of methods) most appropriate for the participants, the issue, its scope and complexity. Consult with key organisations and change the proposed methods if necessary.

Appendix 1 provides a more detailed explanation of how to use each method.

Sensitive or controversial issues

If the issue is highly sensitive or politically controversial, keep in mind the following points:

- acknowledge the different values and bottom lines held by each group
 - consider using an independent facilitator
 - try to build a common understanding of what the problem is
 - focus on the issues, not the debate
 - recognise tikanga, kawa and protocol
 - allow plenty of time for:
 - submissions to be solicited
 - processing and analysing submissions
 - allow adequate resources for processing and analysing submissions
 - support staff who are involved in such consultation
 - sort out differences of opinion among staff before the staff attend public meetings - a consistent message from the department is important
 - keep the Minister informed
-

No response

“No responses” need to be acknowledged in submission analyses.

If groups have unexpectedly not responded, this should also be followed up to ensure, for example, the invitation to participate went to the right person.

If tangata whenua have not responded, this should be followed up by the conservator, area manager, Kaupapa Atawhai manager, or community relations manager to check why there was no response.

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Consultation Techniques, Continued

Table 2 : Summary of Techniques

Type of consultation	Lead-in time	Tasks	Resources required	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>On-going liaison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal meetings (e.g. 'cups of tea') • Meetings between community groups and 'specialist' DOC staff • Regular discussions between DOC and adjacent landowners • Regular meetings with associates at regional and local levels • On-site visits • Phone calls 	<p>As the need arises – therefore can be little lead time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive lists of associates, past consultation participants, neighbours, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff with good communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to good community relations • Can be initiated by communities/interests • Provides opportunity to seek community input into ongoing conservation activities • Cost-effective for community and tangata whenua 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could intrude on staff time - detract from conservation activities
<p>Written and oral submissions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For discretionary consultation, allow a minimum of 3 months for the public to make their submissions. • As well as this is the time required to prepare a written report presenting issues and options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify information needed, from whom and how it will be analysed • Develop comprehensive list of affected and interested parties • Assign roles and accountabilities to DOC staff • Prepare and distribute material for public comment, invite comment, analyse submissions, make decision/s • Feedback findings and basis for decision/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate technical staff or contractors • Key community groups (e.g. to help develop mailing list) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows potential for wide public involvement • Manageable • Relatively time efficient • Submitters have a permanent record of their submission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-way flow of information • Lacks cross-submission stage • Unlikely to get the best result from tangata whenua

Table 2 : Summary of Techniques, Continued

Type of consultation	Lead-in time	Tasks	Resources required	Advantages	Disadvantages
Working groups/workshop/forum/hui	Minimum 1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what information is needed and how it will be analysed • Identify key community groups • Invite community groups to participate and provide background information • Feedback findings and basis for decision/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key community groups to help develop list of participants • Technical staff • Independent facilitator (if required) • Maori speaker should be present at hui to record both the words and the wairua so that the views of Maori are accurately represented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive • Development of knowledge and understanding for DOC and participants • Outputs may include recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May shift focus from information collection to solutions • May require outside resources • Take time to organise • Time required may be a problem for community or tangata whenua • Can be unbalanced by a particular interest group
Focus groups	Minimum 1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify information needed and how it will be analysed • Identify key community groups • Invite participants and provide them with background information • Feedback findings and basis for decision/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key community groups to help develop list of participants • Technical staff • Trained staff (to facilitate focus groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive • Development of DOC's knowledge and understanding • Encourages participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted numbers involved in each group • Take time to organise • Mandate/representation issues for tangata whenua
Interviews (structured and semi-structured)	Minimum 1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify information needed and how it will be analysed • Identify who needs to be interviewed e.g. key community groups, interested and affected groups, technical people • Develop interview /topic schedule • Identify most appropriate interview technique e.g. telephone, face-to-face • Feedback of results and basis for decision/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained staff • Time to interview and analyse results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth information gathered • Easy to participate • Can be non-threatening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Can be difficult to analyse • Mandate/representation issues for tangata whenua

Table 2 : **Summary of Techniques**, continued

Type of consultation	Lead-in time	Tasks	Resources required	Advantages	Disadvantages
Surveys	Minimum of 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify information needed and how it will be analysed • Identify who needs to be surveyed e.g. interested and affected communities • Develop questionnaire • Identify most appropriate survey technique e.g. telephone, postal • Feedback of results and basis for decision/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical advice and assistance • Database hardware and software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide coverage • Quantitative data • Supports other ways of getting community input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires technical input • If badly designed, can provide misleading information • On its own, a survey does not provide in-depth information • Can be expensive and time-consuming • Mandate/representation issues for tangata whenua

Consulting Tangata Whenua

Introduction Many of the general guidelines provided in this section are good practice when consulting with any community group.

Who do we consult ? The department consults with:

- iwi/hapu/whanau;
- Maori authorities, Maori trust boards, runanga, Maori incorporations;
- Marae committees, Maori executives, whanau trusts;
- Individual Maori landowners.

Protocols of access

1. Kaupapa Atawhai manager, area staff, project managers discuss target groups for consultation.
2. Refer to Kaupapa Atawhai manager-prepared iwi/hapu/whanau registers for contact people.
3. Identify key contact people for iwi/hapu/whanau:
 - make initial communication through letter or personal contact;
 - identify the issue(s) for consultation and seek advice as to how best to consult; venue, time/date, perceived problems with consultation, e.g., tight timeframes, availability of people and venue;
 - inform iwi/hapu/whanau of department spokespersons for the kaupapa.
- * Iwi/hapu/whanau are given the opportunity to:
 - discuss the need for hui, the issues;
 - respond to request for advice on venue, time and dates, availability of people.
4. When a response is received from iwi/hapu/whanau, the department needs to respond as soon as possible:
 - if there is support for consultation hui, arrange the meeting;
 - if response is negative to a meeting, record that response for file;
 - a realistic timeframe for the consultation process needs to be agreed upon.

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Consulting Tangata Whenua, Continued

Protocols for delivery of kaupapa

When meeting with tangata whenua:

- Expect to hear:
 - Te Reo Maori and observance of Tikanga Maori;
 - the English language in use within the forum.
- Anticipate being asked to address the meeting to present your kaupapa.
- Endeavour to have the author of the kaupapa present where possible. Kanohi kitea - the face that is seen.
- Ensure that the Kaupapa Atawhai manager is available to give translations from Maori to English for staff, also clarify points from English into Maori for tangata whenua if required.

If the meeting is on a marae follow the protocols or kawa of the marae or tangata whenua.

If the meeting is at another venue, the meeting may still be conducted according to local kawa.

A koha is made as a contribution towards hui costs.

Delivery of kaupapa

- Target your presentation to the audience, be listener-friendly, jargon free.
 - Balance audio-visual and oral delivery of kaupapa.
 - Use Te Reo Maori and English in the forum.
 - Questions need to be clear and easily understood.
 - If unable to answer questions from iwi/hapu/whanau, offer to ask other people and report back at a later time.
-

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Consulting Tangata Whenua, Continued

Feedback

It is imperative to have a fluent Maori speaker (Kaupapa Atawhai managers) to capture the essence of the Maori spoken word to ensure the depth of meaning is understood by departmental staff.

In providing support to staff, the Kaupapa Atawhai manager will be able to 'read the mood' and 'interpret the message' of non-responses, e.g., reading body language, understanding korero in the background.

Understand the iwi/hapu dynamics and politics which could impact on the subject matter, e.g. past grievances.

Allow time for tangata whenua to come back with a decision/submission to present at another hui.

At the conclusion of the consultation process, ensure you provide iwi/hapu/whanau of decision/resolution/outcome of the consultation at conservancy/regional/national level.

The importance of ongoing relationships in assisting consultation

An on-going working relationship developed between the department and iwi/hapu/whanau is a key factor in assisting the consultation process. It allows for the trust and respect that has been developed in projects and field operations to continue within the consultation forum.

Keeping iwi/hapu/whanau up-to-date with projects through newsletters, talks, marae visits and 'kapu ti' sessions is invaluable in keeping the relationship genuine.

Completing Consultation

Recording and acknowledging submissions

The department will :

- set up good systems for recording each submission (written or oral, comments and other statements);
 - acknowledge each submission.
-

Analysing submissions

Use this table to decide if you need to contract out submission analysis

If...	Then ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• small number of submissions, and• staff time has been allocated for analysis, and• staff have skills in analysis	analyse submissions in-house
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• large number of submissions, or• absolute impartiality is critical, or• staff do not have analysis skills	contract out analysis, but ensure that all submissions are read by staff.

Handling staff submissions

Staff should NOT make submissions into public processes which the department is running, but should be provided with the opportunity (through the line) to make personal views known to those developing the plan or policy.

Any private submissions identifiable from staff must

- be extracted from the public process
- excluded from the analysis of public submissions
- placed with the internal comment so that views and ideas are not lost.
- Staff should be informed if this happens.

The report on internal views should be made available to staff.

Continued on next page

Completing Consultation, Continued

Feedback

All participants will receive a letter or fact sheet from the department informing them of the final decision that has been made. This information should acknowledge that their views were considered when the decision was being made. Where possible, the reasons for not accepting views should be explained.

Some groups will also wish to see submissions or the submission analysis.

If the process has more than one round, changes between draft reports should be clearly shown.

Evaluation

Evaluate the process to ensure the consultation was :

- effective (an decision able to be implemented was reached; community and tangata whenua satisfied with the consultation process)
 - efficient (time, resources, techniques used, co-ordinated, risks managed)
-

Sensitive information

In some instances you will not be able to fully disclose details about an issue because it is of a personal nature. Under the terms of the Official Information Act there has to be good reason to withhold information.

Appendix 1 : Consultation Techniques

These notes have been provided by Julie Warren, author of the 1998 Review of the Department of Conservation's Community Consultation Approaches and Processes (Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment)

Techniques suggested by associates

Associates would like the department to extend its range of consultation techniques to include more hui and public meetings, telephone discussions and interviews, and informal occasions such as:

- *'cups of tea'* between associates and staff
- meetings between community groups and *'specialist'* staff (e.g. native tree expert)
- regular discussions between the department and adjacent landowners, particularly farmers, over issues such as fencing, testing and possum control
- on-site visits, e.g. taking people in a helicopter over possum-damaged areas so affected parties and the department can discuss all the issues
- regular discussions and contact between associates and the department on matters of mutual interest
- more face-to-face meetings with the department generally.

People also suggested that the department use a wider range of formal consultation techniques that allow them to have direct, rather than indirect, input from the public. These suggestions include:

- community meetings and hui involving affected parties
- mixing written submissions with telephone interviews and discussions.

Written and oral submissions

Changes to legislation, policy, guidelines or major project proposals often result in the publication of discussion documents or drafts for public submission. The public require information about the process and how their views will be recorded, analysed and accommodated. People invest considerable time and energy in preparing submissions and there needs to be effective feedback, reflecting the value the department places on their contribution.

The advantages of submissions are that they:

- are a way of collecting information and views from a large number of people
- allow important issues to be discussed publicly

The disadvantages of submissions are that they:

- are not interactive
- are costly and time-consuming.

Working groups/workshops/forums/hui

Working groups/workshops and forums are useful ways of exploring issues and proposed projects and for groups to make recommendations. Complex ideas can be explored in depth, people can meet, conflict can be expressed, discussed and managed. Often outside facilitators are used in these situations.

Working groups/workshops/forums can be used to assist you to:

- familiarise yourself with a topic
- explore sensitive issues with others
- discuss a proposed project in depth with interested parties
- invite recommendations on an issue or proposed project
- gain support for an issue or proposed project

Focus groups

Focus groups are basically group interviews on topics or questions provided by you as the information seeker. The focus group is a useful method for exploring ideas and issues among groups of people who share common experiences, for example, conservation-minded people, resource users. Focus groups may also be selected on the basis of demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity.

Focus groups can be used to assist you to:

- familiarise yourself with a topic
- develop or test a survey questionnaire
- explore sensitive issues
- check out and verify results from other information collection techniques, particularly surveys.

Prior to holding a focus group you will need to develop the themes or topics you want to cover in the group discussion. A questionnaire can also be used to guide the discussion. It is important that the person running the focus group has good facilitation skills to ensure that:

- all participants are given the opportunity, and encouragement, to express their opinions and ideas
- more outspoken and articulate participants do not dominate the discussion.

To keep the focus group manageable it is advisable to keep the focus group small - six to eight people maximum. Restricting the size of the group will also help to make recording the information gathered easier.

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviewing is a special type of unstructured interview in which questions are based around selected interest areas rather than on set questions such as those used in the survey

method (see below for further information). The in-depth interview method provides the interviewer considerable flexibility in that there is the opportunity to follow up on any particularly fruitful lines of discussion which occur during the course of an interview. The advantage of the in-depth interview is that it allows the interviewer to explore the context and gain insight into why people think the way they do.

In-depth interviewing requires considerable skill and practice to establish good rapport with the people being interviewed and to put them at ease. In unskilled hands, the technique has definite drawbacks in that:

- you may forget to cover all the issues and all questions to which you require answers;
- it may not work well with shy or inarticulate people;
- it can be difficult to keep the person being interviewed 'on track' and stop them being 'long-winded' in the responses they give you;
- it is more difficult to record the information gathered (if the person is happy, you could use a tape recorder or have another person recording responses);
- the data are more difficult to interpret and analyse.

Surveys

Surveys are one of the more popular and widely used methods to collect new information. The survey method is a very practical way of systematically gathering the same types of information from a large number of people. Surveys involve using a questionnaire where the questions are structured, that is:

- worked out prior to interviewing;
- asked in a set order;
- asked in a particular way.

A survey questionnaire can be either interviewer-administered (either face-to-face or by telephone) or self-completed - where the questionnaire is either mailed out or directly handed out to the people from whom you are wanting information.

The advantage of the survey method is that it:

- provides consistency when interviewing large numbers of people about the same subject;
- is a relatively quick and efficient way to collect new information from a large number of people;
- is particularly efficient for getting fast feedback from 'captive audiences', for example, getting participants' views on the usefulness of a training seminar;
- is relatively economical because it does not require the physical presence of an interviewer to ask the questions and record the answers.

It is often tempting to carry out a survey because the method seems relatively straightforward. However, before deciding to use the survey method you should first ask yourself:

- Do I really need to do a survey?
- Is the information available elsewhere?
- Is there time to do a survey?
- How would the information collected through the survey be collated or analysed?

For more information about designing questionnaires, should you decide to use a survey in your evaluation, we suggest you seek out a copy of Statistics New Zealand's (1995) *A Guide to Good Survey Design*. Note: National surveys require input from Statistics New Zealand.

Appendix 2 : Organisation Checklist

Do I need to consult any of these groups ? Use this checklist to remind you which organisations/type of people should be consulted because they could be either affected or interested. Note that the list is not mutually exclusive. The examples are indicative, not exhaustive

Organisation type	Affected	Interested
Tangata whenua and Maori organisations e.g. NZ Maori Council, hapu, trust boards		
Conservation boards, NZCA		
Historic Places Trust		
Local government		
Regional government		
Central government departments		
Crown agencies e.g. Animal health board, museum of nz		
State owned enterprises		
Affected businesses		
Concessionaires		
Farmers, landowners, neighbours		
Conservation groups e.g. Forest and Bird, Fish and Game Council		
Recreation groups e.g. Federated Mountain Clubs, Deerstalkers Association		
Other groups e.g. National Council of Women, SPCA		
Universities/education groups/outdoor education		
Scientific groups e.g. Royal Society, Ornithological Society		
Research organisations e.g. Crown Research Institutes, Cawthron Institute		
Technical or professional experts e.g. IPENZ, Geological Association		
Sector groups (tourism, forestry, fishing etc.) e.g. Bus and Coach Association, Fishing Industry Board,		
Conservation Volunteers		
local community groups e.g. Ratepayers and Residents Associations, Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, organisations running Conservation Corps		