WORKING DRAFT

Australian Government
Land & Water Australia
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Stakeholder Profile

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Description

A stakeholder profile describes in detail the characteristics of a stakeholder group or organisation. It is a useful reference for staff to draw on when planning for a program or project.

The characteristics included will depend on the type of stakeholder but may include:

- Demographic or socio-economic information (if the group is a sector of the community)
- Structure (eg, if the group is an organisation)
- Major sub groups
- Key functions and responsibilities, priorities, key issues or concerns
- Your relationship with them - why they are important to you, how they may be currently involved, any formal agreements that may be in place, and who in your organisation may have an existing relationship
- The relationships between this group and others - for example who is a key influence on their action or behaviours, and what groups or sectors they may influence
- Description of any drivers or barriers for change.

Benefits

A key benefit of the stakeholder profile is that they document staff knowledge and experience in a manner that is readily utilised by other staff. It is a reference that can be used to inform the development of programs and projects. In addition, in preparing the profiles, gaps in knowledge about a particular stakeholder group or organisation may be identified, and steps taken to improve understanding of the stakeholder.

Limitations

If prepared robustly, profiles can take considerable time to compile, particularly if information about a stakeholder is scarce or your experience with them in the past has been limited.

A key challenge in preparing the profile is to avoid immediately jumping to an assumption about the stakeholder group or organisation. When populating the profile, critically assess the information that you have: is it supported by others? What is the basis for your thoughts? This will ensure that the profile is balanced and robust, and not just a continuation of a long held perspective or view that has limited basis.

Engagement & Planning Tool

When to use

In the early stages of a planning cycle and as a reference source during implementation and evaluation.

Other tools for similar situations

Stakeholder Attitude & Influence Analysis

Companion Tools

Stakeholder identification & Segmentation
Socio-economic profile

What is required?

	Skills ✓ TO SET UP ✓ TO CONDUCT ✓✓ TO ANALYSE	Desktop research skills. Skills in conducting key informant interviews, surveys or focus groups may also be required to gather information that is not documented.
✓✓	**Resources**	Staff time to develop profiles. Additional staff time to fill identified gaps by conducting activities such as key informant interviews or focus groups. The template attached to this fact sheet is a useful framework.
✓✓	**Information**	Background information on stakeholders is required. This may be sourced from internal knowledge, documented sources (eg organisation plans, websites) and socio-economic information such as ABS data. A socio-economic profile will provide useful information.

✓ = LOW LEVEL ✓✓ = MEDIUM LEVEL ✓✓✓ = HIGH LEVEL

How to develop a Stakeholder Profile

Stakeholder profiles that are developed utilising the knowledge and experience of a cross section of staff and board members can ensure that the information is comprehensive. A detailed step by step guide is provided below.

Stakeholders might be organisations (eg Government departments, industry organisations or non-government organisations) or sub-sectors of the community (eg rural residential landholders, dairy farmers). It may be that, during the development of the profiles, it is realised that there are major sub-groups or perhaps different roles or relationships of a stakeholder. If this is the case, it is recommended that additional profiles be developed for each sub-group, so that the information is comprehensive.

It may be that insufficient information is available to complete the profile. Additional sources of information may be obtained through desktop reviews (eg websites, published documents or statements, socio-economic data), holding discussions (eg key informant interviews) with the stakeholder (or a third party), or conducting surveys or focus groups to ascertain information.

Steps in developing a Stakeholder Profile

1 **Provide a brief description of the group, organisation or sub-sector.** For an organisation, you may be able to source this from organisational websites. Also include a generalised descriptor (eg State Government department, local government, statutory authority, state owned corporation, non government organisation, community group, industry organisation, research & development corporation). If the group is a sub-sector of the community and a socio -economic profile has been prepared (See companion Fact Sheets), this may provide some useful information.

Alternatively, you may have information about the area of land that they manage or the types of activities they conduct.

2 **Background demographic or socio-economic information** (relevant if the stakeholder is a sub-sector of the community) describes the characteristics of the group (eg age, structure, income, employment, farm size, farm income). This data can be sourced from a socio-economic profile or a range of resources. For further information and lists of resources see project website.

3 **Structure** (relevant only if the stakeholder is an organisation) is a description of the organisational structure. For a non government organisation or industry organisation, this may include a description of their board.

4 **Major sub-groups**. If the stakeholder is a sub-sector of the community, there may be identifiable sub-groupings. For example, if the sub-sector is 'farmers', sub-groupings might be based on different commodities or differing ownership arrangements (owner, sharefarmer, lessee). If the sub-sector is a Government department, there may be different relationships (eg in different circumstances DPI may be a collaborator, a land manager, a policy influencer, or a regulator). It may be that individual profiles are developed for each of the major sub-groups so that detailed information is gathered and documented.

5 **Key Functions or Responsibilities**. In this section, list the key functions and responsibilities. These might be described by legislative or statutory instruments, or formalised arrangements (eg funding agreements). Also describe key land management responsibilities including the area of land owned / managed. This information could be obtained from the stakeholder, their website (eg, if it is a government agency) or by utilising GIS and analysing cadastre layers.

6 **Identified priorities**. Describe the priorities that the stakeholder has identified. For example, for an organisation this may come from their website, strategic plan or operating plan. It may be that these priorities are not documented, and that this information could be ascertained by other means (eg by speaking to the stakeholder, holding focus groups or conducting surveys, or through discussions with other third parties).

7 **Key issues or concerns**. In this section, describe the key issues or concerns that the stakeholder has identified. For an organisation, this may come from their website or other documents (eg submissions or correspondence

you may have received in the past, or publicly available documents such as parliamentary inquiries or press releases). It may be that these issues or concerns are not documented, and you may choose to ascertain this information by other means (eg by speaking to the stakeholder, holding focus groups or conducting surveys, or through discussions with other third parties).

8 **Key influencers**. Describe the key people, groups or organisations that influence the thinking, attitude or action of the stakeholder. This might be representative organisations, publications or professional advisers.

9 **Major groups influenced by**. In this section describe the key people / groups / organisations that this stakeholder influences and how they influence. For example, an industry organisation may have influence over its members, the priorities for investment in R&D, and Government policy.

10 **Identified barriers for practice change**. Describe the known barriers for practice change for this stakeholder.

11 **Identified drivers for practice change**. Describe the known drivers for practice change for this stakeholder.

12 **Describe why the stakeholder is important** for your organisation (examples of this may be that the stakeholder manages significant tracts of land, has statutory responsibility for approving plans, is an investor in the organisation, or a key partner in delivering programs).

13 **List the current level of involvement** that the stakeholder has in your projects, programs or themes.

14 **List any formal agreements or arrangements** that you may have with the stakeholder (eg project contracts, MoUs).

15 **List the key contact details**, where available, of the stakeholder, including name, position and contact details, and list the names of your staff / board members that have existing relationships with the key contacts. For sub-sectors of the community, while there may not be a specific key contact, it may be that there are staff or board members that have particular experience or strong networks within that sub-sector.

For further information

This fact sheet is one of a series prepared for the Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change project.

For further fact sheets and information visit the NRM Practice Change website:

www.hassall.com.au/australian_division

REFERENCES & LINKS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- "The process for developing an institutional profile in an investigation about the linkages between individuals, organisations and institutions " http://www.fao.org/Participation/tools/ Local_institutions.html

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