


Managing C&P in the Review of ADB Policies and Strategies

45. In recent years, ADB has made a greater effort to solicit the views of external experts and stakeholders in the review and revision of major policies and strategies, including Accountability, Anticorruption, Environment, Governance, Public Communications, and Water (in the case of this last policy, the review was of the policy's implementation).

46. Staff instructions¹⁴ state that the active guidance of key stakeholders, both internal and external, as appropriate, should be sought during the processing of a policy or strategy paper. The main objective of the review and consultation process is to obtain and consider the views of these stakeholders and ensure that they have reasonable opportunity to be involved in developing policy and strategy papers. In particular, the external consultation process should be designed to solicit input and advice from a range of stakeholders and experts, as appropriate, so that the paper will be based on the best international practices and adequate engagement of interested parties.

47. External consultation is important for some policy and strategy papers to take into account the concerns of relevant and key stakeholders, benefit from their knowledge and experience, and enhance the paper's ownership by them. External consultation and review involve selected stakeholders who will be affected by the paper and/or are related subject experts. The need for and the nature of the external review will depend on the nature and topic of the paper.

48. For safeguards papers, the staff instructions state that external consultation is essential. External consultation is encouraged for other papers, particularly in sector and thematic areas. On the other hand, a policy or strategy paper on finance and administration and pertaining to ADB's internal workings will not require external consultation. The proposal on the scope and nature of consultation will form part of the concept paper.



The external consultation process should be designed to solicit input and advice from a range of stakeholders and experts, as appropriate, so that the paper will be based on the best international practices and adequate engagement of interested parties

49. Applying C&P in the review of policies (and strategies) produces documents that are technically superior, more relevant to the DMC context, incorporate international good practice, improve understanding of ADB's objectives and operations, take into consideration a broad range of information and perspectives, and enjoy greater support by a wider range of stakeholders. These benefits can also accrue to ADB planning documents and exercises that are developed with C&P methods.

50. Tips for carrying out effective policy/strategy consultations mirror those for CSPs: plan early, develop a thorough stakeholder analysis, design a cost-effective C&P Plan based on that analysis, define a communications strategy, use skilled facilitators, and allow sufficient time for the review and opportunity to stakeholders to meet and discuss the draft document.

51. ADB's experience involves a number of innovative models, from participatory "write shops" to engage internal and external stakeholders in writing draft action plans,¹⁵ to a series of more traditional face-to-face and electronic consultations.

52. Following are steps commonly taken in the review of an ADB policy or strategy that, while for the most part not required, collectively constitute a serious consultative approach:

- Carry out a stakeholder analysis to ascertain what groups and individuals will be invited to contribute to the review process
- Confer with internal and external groups with special knowledge and/or particular interest in the policy/strategy to seek input on the consultation process and goals of the review
- Develop a website for the review process and widely publicize details on how the review will be conducted and how interested persons/organizations can share their views¹⁶

- Make at least two drafts of the proposed policy/strategy available for public comment during the course of the review, allowing sufficient time for stakeholders to comment
- Make known through various channels the beginning of comment periods; do not assume that external audiences will find the invitation to provide comment on ADB's website
- Organize several face-to-face consultations on the draft policy/strategy at the country or subregional level in geographically diverse countries
- Develop invitation lists in collaboration with the resident mission, government, and, in the case of CSOs, the NGO and Civil Society Center as well
- Make available drafts of the proposed new policy/strategy, preferably in the local language, to workshop participants well before the consultation
- Carry out website, electronic and mail consultations in parallel with consultation workshops¹⁷
- Post stakeholder comments received on the review website, together with an explanation of how comments have been taken into consideration in the next iteration of the proposed policy/strategy¹⁸
- Promptly report changes to the review process (e.g. new details on workshop arrangements, extensions of the process, etc.) on the review website

53. Resident mission staff responsible for communications and for NGO/CSO relations can assist in identifying stakeholders, as well as in promoting awareness at the country level of opportunities to contribute to reviewing of ADB policies and strategies.