

Basin Community Committee - Principles to improve transparency

October 2021

- 1. Communities see engagement as a key tool to achieve transparency, and there should be opportunities to involve communities in discussing issues and solutions before a decision is made.** This should include opportunities across all levels of decision making. Governments should make sure the process for decision-making is clear, and the right information and adequate time is provided to allow communities and stakeholders to participate.
- 2. Communication and engagement on Basin issues should be coordinated and consistent.** Basin governments should, where possible, present consistent information on cross-jurisdictional issues, and where possible, should communicate and engage on these matters in a joint manner.
- 3. Communities should be provided with better information on decision making.** This should include detail on what decisions were made and the reasons why, the information/data used, and how community input was considered. This could be done by using communiques more effectively for governance committees, and open data and modelling.
- 4. Purpose and outcomes of engagement and consultation should be made clear to stakeholders, respecting their different interests and viewpoints.** Governments should be explicit on what the purpose of the engagement is, what is/can't be influenced and close the loop on how input from stakeholders impacted decisions, if relevant.
- 5. Information should be developed and presented to meet the needs of Basin stakeholders.** This includes providing stakeholders with both foundational and technical information to build capability to navigate the complex water management system and contribute effectively when consultation opportunities arise. This also includes providing information in formats and/or at different scales that meet user needs, considering multiple stakeholders with differing levels of involvement, interest, and access to technology.
- 6. Information should be provided on progress and outcomes of policy and management actions.** This should consider how to share information in a timely way throughout the lifecycle of major policy or operational changes, not just at the end. Information on progress and outcomes should be open and honest and include recognition and accountability of all outcomes - both positive and negative.
- 7. Communities seek a commitment from Basin governments to continuously improve their efforts to increase transparency.**