

EPA Environmental Citizenship Strategy

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY



- **Accessibility, Participation and Responsibility**
- **Environmental Equity and Restorative Action**
- **Environmental Leadership**

“Environmental Citizenship is a new way of thinking about what we do at EPA, who we do it for, who we do it with and how we do it. It positions us as more than a regulator, also as a change maker that will benefit the environment and ensure Victoria remains healthy, liveable and prosperous.

This document sets out what Environmental Citizenship is and what role EPA will play to drive and achieve it.”

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In November 2012 the Victorian Government launched Environmental Partnerships, a pathway for action by government, communities and business in Victorian to maintain a healthy environment. Through strong environmental partnerships the Victorian Government aims to encourage a new sense of environmental citizenship, where communities take a more active and shared responsibility in efforts to support our environment. EPA's Environmental Citizenship Strategy builds on Environmental Partnerships and will inform the broader roll out of environmental citizenship across the Environmental Department and Agencies.

Executive summary

In addition to administering and enforcing the *Environment Protection Act 1970*, EPA wants to become more innovative and adaptive to address our increasingly complex environmental problems. These problems don't have straightforward regulatory solutions and we need to be more creative in the way we use our regulatory tools and influence to help solve them. This Environmental Citizenship Strategy will guide EPA to lead changes in the Victorian Community (community, business and organisations) to protect the environment because they want to, not just because they are pressured or forced to.

Environmental Citizenship is the interdependent relationship between EPA and the Victorian Community and our joint responsibility to protect and improve the environment. It involves us actively encouraging, supporting and empowering the community, business and organisations to create lasting pro-environmental behaviour change driven by:

- accessibility, participation and responsibility
- environmental equity and restorative action
- environmental leadership.

We have developed a framework for Environmental Citizenship targeted at our role as a modern regulator in relation to the Victorian Community (community, business and organisations) which has:

- our strategic approach to environmental citizenship
- what this means for how we do our work - regulation and influence through environmental citizenship
- what this means for the Victorian Community - Environmental Citizen Model for the Victorian Community.

The long-term outcomes of our strategic approach to Environmental Citizenship include measurable improvements in:

- Communities, businesses and other stakeholders report pollution to EPA.
- Communities, businesses and other stakeholders know their environmental rights and responsibilities.
- Communities feel their issues are resolved and are supported to take further responsibility as an environmental citizen.
- Communities feel empowered to work with business, EPA and other stakeholders to resolve the environmental issues that are important to them.
- Compliant businesses operate in Victoria.
- Businesses in Victoria demonstrate environmental citizenship behaviours, eg. environmental leadership.
- EPA takes compliance and enforcement action off the back of surrogate regulator activities, eg. community calibrated noses.
- EPA supports business to comply.

Purpose and target audience

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Define Environmental Citizenship in the EPA context, what an environmental citizen is, and set our commitments to being a leader in Environmental Citizenship.
- Outline the changes EPA wants to see in community, business and other stakeholders which will mean they are being environmental citizens.
- Demonstrate how Environmental Citizenship is integrated into our operating model, strategic priorities and is our next logical step as a modern regulator.
- Set our priorities and key activities to achieve Environmental Citizenship.

This strategy is targeted:

- internally at EPA staff's transformation journey as a modern regulator to also being a leader in Environmental Citizenship and
- externally at the Victorian Community which encompasses all Victorians, including community, businesses in Victoria and organisations (or other EPA stakeholders).

The strategy will also inform the broader roll out of environmental citizenship across the Government's environmental department and agencies. As environmental citizenship is rolled out across the department and agencies, EPA will review and evaluate this strategy.

Implementation

This strategy will be supported by an implementation plan and evaluation framework. EPA will take a targeted and localised approach to implementing this strategy. We will tailor our regulating through Environmental Citizenship to each situation and audience. This involves us understanding and responding to issues and audience needs, such as their resources and capacity to deliver.



What is Environmental Citizenship?



Figure 1. Environmental Citizenship at the core of EPA's operating model.

Environmental Citizenship is the interdependent relationship between Government and the Victorian Community (community, business and organisations), and their joint responsibility to protect and improve the environment.

It is underpinned by strong values and beliefs:

- the integration of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- the fair distribution of a healthy environment
- open, inclusive and participatory government processes for environment protection and improvement
- looking beyond the satisfaction of our immediate interests to the well-being of the wider community and environment and
- protecting the environmental rights and needs of current and future generations. (Dobson, 2010) & (Barnett et al., 2005).

This involves EPA:

- using our regulatory powers, tools and influence more creatively to solve problems
- increasing and better targeting our interventions to drive lasting behaviour change
- empowering the community, business and organisations to share problems and co-create solutions, extending responsibility beyond EPA.

As a modern regulator, EPA maintains the responsibility for administration and enforcement of the *Environment Protection Act 1970*. Environmental Citizenship is moving beyond traditional carrot and stick regulatory approaches to more innovate regulation. Evidence indicates that behaviour change driven by Environmental Citizenship interventions are more likely to last than behaviour driven by financial incentives or enforcement (Dobson, 2005).

EPA's vision for Environmental Citizenship

Communities are actively protecting their local environments across Victoria. In partnership with EPA they report pollution, collect data and evidence, co-create solutions to problems and improve the environment. Businesses in Victoria are compliant and connected with their communities. EPA has more time to solve complex environmental problems.

EPA's aim for Environmental Citizenship

The Victorian Community (community, business and organisations) protect the environment in which they work, live and play because they **want** to, not just because they are pressured or forced to.

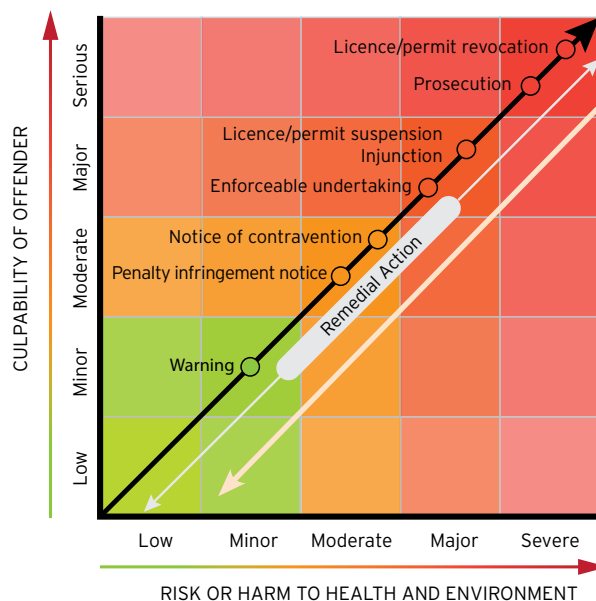


Figure 2. EPA's approach to sanctions from least to most interventionist

Environmental Citizenship drives reduction in risk or harm to the environment, and culpability of offenders.

Interventions will actively encourage, support and empower community, business and other stakeholders to protect the environment.

Why does EPA need Environmental Citizenship?

As the world continues to change and our population grows, our environment, which EPA works to protect, faces increasingly complex problems. Regulation of point source pollution is also no longer enough to keep the environment healthy or for EPA to realise our vision. These problems don't have straightforward regulatory solutions and EPA needs to be more creative in the way we use our regulatory tools and influence to help solve them.

As the environmental regulator, EPA has the responsibility for administration and enforcement of the *Environment Protection Act 1970*. However, we recognise we have finite resources and can't be everywhere all the time. We have to ensure we manage our resources where the biggest difference can be made or where the biggest risks to environment, health and safety or wellbeing can be managed or prevented.

EPA can't protect the environment on its own but can actually do more by working and partnering with others. Environment protection is everyone's responsibility. However, research tells us Victorians find environmental problems challenging and look to leaders to solve the big problems. EPA also experiences community at a neighbourhood level feeling disconnected from and disempowered to solve local problems. As a modern regulator we need to lead community, business and other stakeholders to protect the environment because they want to, not just because they are pressured or forced to.

Environmental Partnerships commits EPA, and the Victorian Government more broadly, to encouraging a new sense of Environmental Citizenship, where businesses and communities work and live in a manner that is not harmful to the environment and are inspired to take proactive environmental action.

In order to be this leader of behaviour change in the Victorian Community, EPA needs to be more innovative in the way we regulate and work with others. EPA needs to engage and empower more Victorians to understand, own and actively fulfil their responsibility to protect and improve the environment. Without all Victorians doing their part, EPA will never be able to meet their aspirations for a healthy, liveable and prosperous Victoria.

This strategy both leads and will inform the consideration of applying Environmental Citizenship more broadly across the Government's environmental department and agencies.



EPA's framework for Environmental Citizenship

EPA's vision is a healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria. The Environmental Citizenship framework provides a cohesive way for EPA to actualise our vision. It demonstrates what role EPA will play to drive and achieve Environmental Citizenship and what we want to see from community, business and other organisations.

EPA's role - regulation and influence through Environmental Citizenship

EPA will apply Environmental Citizenship through our drivers, commitments and interventions

Drivers	Commitments	Interventions	Examples
Accessibility, Participation and Responsibility	EPA encourages participation, and provides reliable information about the environment, roles and responsibilities.	Information and education to empower through encouraging deeper understanding, and to access more people.	Beach Report and air quality information Victorians reporting pollution (environmental, litter and vehicle) to EPA's pollution hotline Targeted education and engagement programs, such as facilitated community forums that seek participation with local key identities and leaders, and help organise fragmented communities.
		Co-creation of processes, policies and strategies to share responsibility and increase ownership of outcomes.	Calibrating community member noses to co-create odour evidence collection EPA working with community, industry and government to co-create a Local Strategic Initiative.
Environmental Equity and Restorative Action	EPA supports the right of all Victorians to experience a healthy environment	Environmental Equity ensuring fairness and inclusiveness in all our regulatory processes.	EPA risk based regulatory approach ensures that we target environmental hotspots where pollution is severely impacting on peoples' livelihood. EPA Engagement Policy assures everyone who is affected by EPA's decisions and services will have access to EPA.
		Restorative processes to empower stakeholders by involving them in sanctions, enforcement and remedies.	Inspiring Environmental Solutions (67AC) community projects Restorative conferencing (or community conferencing).
Environmental Leadership	EPA fosters positive environmental behaviours and leadership in the Victorian Community	Voluntary collaborative activities to empower and encourage leadership.	Licensed Operational Risk Assessment (LORA) enables EPA to champion high performing businesses that demonstrate leadership Voluntary actions across industries such as codes of practice or agreements within an industry. Community and industry collaborating on local environment improvement projects.
		Appropriate recognition and incentives to support and acknowledge leadership, and encourage recognition amongst peers.	Annual recognition event to celebrate community, business and other stakeholders environmental leadership. Incentives and support for local environment improvement projects and related initiatives.

* Restorative conferencing is a way of intervening into offending behaviour by bringing together involved and affected parties to have a mediated discussion to collectively resolve how they will respond to matters arising from the offence. Victims and/or the community take an active role in the process, raising and sharing their issues, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions with the intention this will lead to positive behaviour change. The process may include community projects, a public apology, and helps to build stronger relationships between business and community.

What does EPA want to see from the Victorian Community?

EPA's Environmental Citizen Model for the Victorian Community sets out the categories of increasing levels of environmental citizens.

EPA has defined an Environmental Citizen as being an individual, group, business, organisation or government that is both:

- aware of and fulfils their responsibility to live, work or operate in a manner that is not harmful to the environment or other people and
- demonstrates intentional and meaningful behaviour that protects and improves the environment and prevents harm to the environment and human health.

EPA's Environmental Citizen Model

Awareness and responsibility		Intentional and meaningful environmental behaviours			Environmental Citizen:
Basic awareness and understanding of: EPA's role Business' responsibilities Individuals' responsibilities	Acts in accordance with their responsibilities	Reports to EPA when individuals or businesses don't act in accordance with their responsibilities	Participates in EPA decisions that interest or affect them Participates in Restorative Conferencing or other EC interventions	Increasingly demonstrates pro-environmental behaviours Increasingly demonstrates environmental leadership	



Objectives and Strategic Priorities

OBJECTIVE 1

Build understanding and drive for Environmental Citizenship amongst staff and external stakeholders

Success outcome end of June 2016:

EPA staff and external stakeholders feel engaged with and understand the concept of Environmental Citizenship. They also have passion and drive for Environmental Citizenship being the logical next step and future way for a modern regulator.

Key Activities 2012-13 - 2014-16:

- Develop an implementation plan, refine internal project reference group to guide implementation and recruit senior EPA champion leaders.
- Establish an external project reference group to extend the concept to the Environment Portfolio.
- Implement internal and external engagement activities, working with stakeholders to build a mutual understanding and passion for what Environmental Citizenship means for EPA, the Victorian Community and the commitments that come with it.
- Identify, rebadge and educate EPA and stakeholders on existing EPA projects that demonstrate Environmental Citizenship.

OBJECTIVE 2

Integrate the framework for Environmental Citizenship into EPA's Operating Model and strategic priorities

Success outcome end of June 2016:

EPA staff at all levels own the framework for Environmental Citizenship, understand what it means in the context of their work, and how to apply it to all facets of their work.

Key Activities 2012-13 - 2014-16:

- Develop and implement an evaluation framework and share learning to demonstrate leadership and continuous improvement in Environmental Citizenship.
- Test, refine and finalise the application of EPA's Framework for Environmental Citizenship to corporate and unit planning, operational strategies, local strategic initiatives, other programs and projects from across EPA. Document support tools developed.
- Test and facilitate complex problem solving processes that are inclusive of stakeholders with EPA Regions and Compliance Strategist Staff to develop new regulatory interventions to environmental challenges.
- Outcomes from new regulatory interventions are communicated, and tools and processes are documented and shared for duplication.

OBJECTIVE 3

Scope, pilot and evaluate key Environmental Citizenship projects

Success outcome end of June 2016:

Key Environmental Citizenship projects have been piloted, evaluated and documented for continuation and/or learning.

Key Activities 2012-13 - 2014-16:

- Review commissioned research (evidence) of national and international Environmental Citizenship interventions.
- Pilot Environmental Citizenship interventions in locally contained areas.
- Integrate interventions into the review of the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.
- Develop recognition and incentive program and policy for Environmental Citizens.
- Evaluate and continue Restorative Conferencing trials and document.
- In collaboration with stakeholders scope and develop an EPA Environmental equity policy with evidence base.
- Review Neighbourhood Environment Improvement Plans (NEIPs), and contingent on outcomes identify suitable pilot.
- Work with DSE to capture the learnings from EPA's Strategy to inform broader consideration of environmental citizenship.

Longterm outcomes for Environmental Citizenship

The table below will be integrated into EPA's evaluation framework for this strategy.

Outcome	Audience	Evaluation Tool
Measurable improvements in:		
Communities, businesses and other stakeholders report pollution to EPA	Victorian Community	Pollution reporting data Website usage data
Communities, businesses and other stakeholders know their environmental rights and responsibilities	Victorian Community	Social research
Communities feel their issues are resolved and are supported to take further responsibility as an environmental citizen	Community stakeholders	Social research
Communities feel empowered to work with business, EPA and other stakeholders to resolve the environmental issues that are important to them	Community stakeholders	Social research
Compliant businesses operate in Victoria	Business	Compliance data
Businesses in Victoria demonstrate environmental citizenship behaviours, eg. environmental leadership	Business	Environmental program data
EPA takes compliance and enforcement action off the back of surrogate regulator activities, eg. community calibrated noses	EPA	Compliance and enforcement data
EPA supports business to comply	Business	Support to comply data and social research

Refer to Appendix 1 for a more comprehensive perspective of what successful regulation through Environment Citizenship would look like, including benefits of Environmental Citizenship for EPA and the Victorian Community.

Evidence base for this strategy and its implementation

What is Environmental Citizenship

In June 2012 EPA commissioned Environmental Evidence Australia to conduct a review of case studies on national and international environmental citizenship models to provide evidence on what works well and what can be improved on here and elsewhere. This report with its extensive collection of research papers is available on EPA's website.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - What would successful regulation through Environmental Citizenship look like?

If EPA is a successful modern regulator and leader in Environmental Citizenship, we will progressively broaden our regulatory tool-kit and approaches to engaging with industry, community and organisations by applying Environmental Citizenship interventions. The table below outlines the type of EPA activity we would see across our Operating Model and the outcomes we are already contributing to through implementing our *5 Year Plan*.

Inform and Educate	Set Standards	Support to Comply	Monitor Compliance & Enforce the Law	Encourage Higher Performance
Examples of Activities				
<p>We clearly communicate the decisions we make and why, what we expect of others and what we commit to, and are responsive and honest to enquiries.</p> <p>We have current, accurate, and accessible information, eg. website, bulletins, guidelines, events, training and campaigns.</p> <p>We support new community connection tools eg. utilising social media, building community networks, encouraging, working with schools.</p>	<p>We have multiple pathways to participate in works approval applications and the development of new policies, guideline and programs, eg. not just formal discussion papers, also local engaging workshops and community conferencing models (more identified in <i>EPA's Engagement Policy</i>).</p> <p>We actively seek out a full range of interested and affected stakeholders to engage them in our decisions.</p>	<p>We work in partnership with more stakeholders to influence and support business to comply, e.g. with Landcare, influential individuals, industry groups, local government.</p> <p>We work with government stakeholders to improve process and streamline support and guidance that spreads across multiple jurisdictions.</p>	<p>We collaborate with and train Victorians to be surrogate regulators (eg. calibrated noses, noise monitors, litter enforcement, diffuse pollution such as air and water quality reporting).</p> <p>We increase our public participation activities involving them in sanctions, enforcement and remedies, eg. through restorative conferencing approaches.</p> <p>We support business to safely report on illegal activities.</p>	<p>We provide greater opportunity for grassroots innovation, eg. encouraging public - private partnerships between scientists, business, government and community.</p> <p>We develop partnerships with peak body stakeholders to encourage higher performance from their constituents.</p> <p>We run behaviour change programs for key environmental problems in the low-medium risk space, eg. Yarra Watch, Bay Watch.</p>

Appendix 1 - What would successful regulation through Environmental Citizenship look like? continued

Examples of outcomes and success directly linked to EPA's 5 Year Plan strategic narratives:

Accessibility, Awareness and Responsibility

EPA has built the Victorian Communities' understanding of issues that impact them.

EPA is recognised as an authority and knowledge provider on environmental issues.

Business and individuals are clear on what compliance is and what is required to achieve compliance.

We work with co-regulators to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

The Victorian Community understands and feels empowered to contribute to the development of environmental standards.

The Victorian Community has improved confidence in EPA and has had the opportunity to input into and act on future issues affecting them.

The Victorian Community is aware of contaminated environments, their potential impacts and use limitations.

Environmental Equity and Restorative Action

The Victorian Community is confident that EPA makes decisions using appropriate evidence and knowledge.

EPA is consistent in its use of regulatory powers and the Victorian Community perceive EPA as using their powers in a consistent way.

EPA staff use the most appropriate regulatory tool and actively seek to prevent environmental impacts.

EPA proactively sources evidence and engages with, supports, or influences significant future decisions that affect the quality of Victoria's environment.

Planning will measurably prevent pollution.

EPA will be known as an authority on technical planning issues and will be referred high risk impact planning decisions.

Environmental Leadership

The Victorian Community (including business) are aware of and actively assisting EPA in delivering its mandate.

EPA has in place key strategic partnerships that enable delivery of the 5 Year Plan and 20 Year Environmental Outcomes.

Business and community confidence in our ability to tackle pollution is improved and we are leveraging through better influencing.

Appendix 2 - Examples of EPA's desired behaviours from target audiences

The table below demonstrates EPA's Environmental Citizen Model and provides examples of outcomes EPA would desire from community, business and government categories of Environmental Citizens:

Awareness & responsibility		Intentional & meaningful environmental behaviours		
Basic awareness and understanding of EPA's existence and purpose; and community business's and organisation's legal responsibilities	Act in accordance with their responsibilities	Community individuals and environment groups		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lodge pollution reports from a range of sites and issues of interest through EPA's Customer Service Centre or online. Lodge pollution reports directly with the business that is affecting them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a business's Community Liaison Committee. Participate in local groups that address issues where there is high community concern about ongoing cumulative impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake some of our monitoring, eg. Beach Report, nose calibration. Coordinated practical action by being involved in a Neighbourhood Environment Improvement Plan (NEIPs).
		Business		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business has a complaints handling procedure and encourages affected neighbours to contact them directly and they act to fix the issue promptly. Lodge their own pollution reports and licence breaches through EPA's Customer Service Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide intelligence to EPA about issues on the horizon within their sector that EPA might need a policy/position on. If incidents occur, to participate proactively and honestly in restorative processes with community, eg. restorative conferencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form networks to address issues where there is high community concern about ongoing cumulative impacts and/or to go beyond baseline regulatory requirements. Participate in local environment improvement opportunities, eg. NEIPs.
Government, including co-regulators				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify EPA of pollution events or concerns outside their own geographic or service jurisdiction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to development of policy and strategy. Participate in inter-government environment committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government agencies collaborate to solve issues. Participate in local environment improvement opportunities, eg. NEIPs. 		

Appendix 3 - How will the Framework for Environmental Citizenship apply to EPA's work?

Environmental Citizenship will be a transformative process for EPA. It will involve us progressively broadening our regulatory tool-kit and approaches to engaging with community business and organisations by creating and applying Environmental Citizenship interventions. This will enable us to identify and develop opportunities for higher environmental performance and greater leadership across the Victorian Community.

EPA's framework will be applied to all that we do, to all levels of the organisation and in all that we expect from others:

EPA work examples	Indicative Environmental Citizenship application process - tailor to work, issue, needs:
<p>Corporate level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate planning • Standard setting 	<p>1. Does your work address our drivers and commitments for Environmental Citizenship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you doing to ensure your work provides reliable information about the environment, and the roles and responsibilities of EPA, business, community, government and other organisations? • What are you doing to support the right of all Victorians to experience a healthy environment? • What are you doing to foster positive environmental behaviours and leadership in the Victorian Community?
<p>Unit level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit planning • Service program development or delivery 	<p>2. Identify and understand your stakeholders (refer to EPA's Engagement Policy):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are your stakeholders? Think about impacted and interested business, community and other organisations. Understand their current situation. • Refer to EPA's Environmental Citizen Model to identify how you can increase the level of positive environmental impact and increase empowering your stakeholders by actively encouraging them to be environmental citizens. • What is your call to action? What do you want from your stakeholders? What are the opportunities for them (don't just focus on the problems that need to be resolved)?
<p>Local project level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C&E recommendations • Local Strategic Initiative • Pollution response 	<p>3. Choose your Environmental Citizenship Intervention/s depending on the outcome you are driving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility, awareness and responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information and education - Co-creation of standards, policies and strategies • Environmental equity and restorative action • Environmental leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntary collaborative activities - Appropriate recognition and incentives

Appendix 4 - Environmental Citizenship in the context of the *Environment Protection Act 1970*

Environmental Citizenship is integral to our responsibility to administer and enforce the law under the *Environment Protection Act 1970*. There are strong mutually supportive linkages between the concept of Environmental Citizenship and the principles outlined in the *Environment Protection Act 1970* and EPA's *5 Year Plan*.

All of the principles embodied in these core documents are relevant to Environmental Citizenship, but some of the crucial linkages are listed below.

EPA's Environmental Citizenship Commitments	EPA's Guiding Principles	Principles from the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i> (Section 1)
<p>Accessibility, Participation & Responsibility</p> <p><i>EPA encourages participation and provides reliable information about the environment, roles and responsibilities</i></p> <p><i>Eg. EPA clearly explains its decisions on works approval applications</i></p>	<p>Inclusive</p> <p>Accountable</p> <p>Transparent</p> <p>Targeted</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Authoritative</p>	<p>Shared responsibility</p> <p>Principle of accountability</p> <p>Integrated environmental management</p>
<p>Environmental Equity & Restorative Action</p> <p><i>EPA supports the rights of all Victorians' to experience a healthy environment</i></p> <p><i>Eg. EPA holds restorative conferences</i></p>	<p>Proportionate</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Targeted</p> <p>Consistent</p> <p>Inclusive</p> <p>Authoritative</p>	<p>Shared responsibility</p> <p>Integration of economic, social and environmental considerations</p> <p>Intergenerational equity</p>
<p>Environmental Leadership</p> <p><i>EPA fosters positive environmental behaviours and leadership in the Victorian Community</i></p> <p><i>Eg. Business Reference Group and a Community Reference Group</i></p>	<p>Transparent</p> <p>Inclusive</p> <p>Proportionate</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Authoritative</p>	<p>Shared responsibility</p> <p>Principle of accountability</p> <p>Intergenerational equity</p> <p>Principle of product stewardship</p> <p>Integrated environmental management</p> <p>Precautionary Principle</p> <p>Principle of improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms</p>

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