



Government of **Western Australia**
Conservation and Parks Commission

Position Statement no.16

Measuring the implementation of management plans CALM Act section 19(g) functions

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The Commission’s Position

Under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act), State forest, timber reserves, marine reserves, national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves are vested, solely or jointly with another body, in the Conservation and Parks Commission. These lands and waters are mostly under the management of the Department of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (the Department). The Department prepares proposed management plans for Commission endorsement and subsequent Ministerial approval.

Section 19(1)(g) of the CALM Act establishes that it is the function of the Commission is:

“In relation to management plans for land and waters vested in or under the care, control, and management of the Commission, whether solely or jointly with a joint responsible body:-

- (i) to develop guidelines for monitoring;*
- (ii) to set performance criteria for evaluating; and*
- (iii) to conduct periodic assessments of,*

the implementation of the management plans by those responsible for implementing them, including the CEO and, if the land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Forest Products Commission”.

Measuring the implementation of management plans

These legislative requirements provide key directions for the development, implementation and reporting of management plans. The Commission supports a process of continuous improvement in management planning both for the work undertaken by the Department in developing and implementing management plans and for the Commission’s own functions in the overall planning cycle which are depicted below:

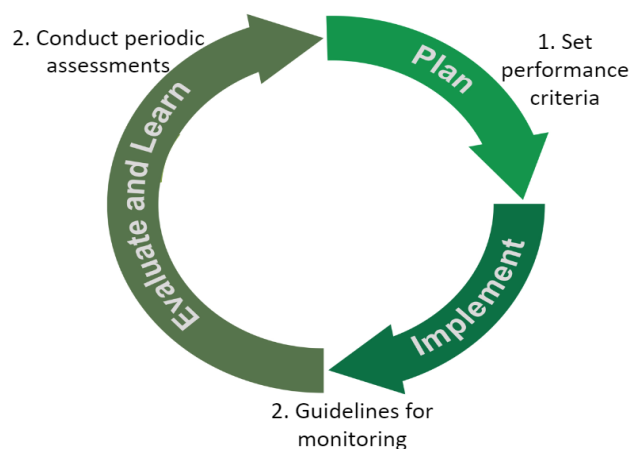


Figure 1: Management plan improvement cycle – Commission functions detailed

1. Setting performance criteria

A key component of the planning phase is detailing the performance criteria for evaluating the achievement of the plan objectives. The Commission's position is that management plan implementation reporting should provide capacity for tracking 'Key Performance Indicators' (KPIs) and 'Management Activities'.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs in management plans should provide a target to inform the extent of progress in a reporting period towards the achievement of management objectives. The following criteria have been identified to provide guidance in developing KPIs for management plans and assist the Commission in undertaking its periodic assessment function under the CALM Act. KPIs in management plans should be:

- directed towards reporting against key values e.g., the condition of biodiversity;
- clearly linked to objectives, management activities and include SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) targets; and
- presented in a consistent style across management plans for vested lands.

It is acknowledged that a one-size-fits all approach may not always be effective particularly in the context of protecting biodiversity and conservation values.

Management Activities

Management activities are the activities that need to be implemented in the planning period to achieve the management objectives. Particularly where there is an observed shortfall in achieving the management objective, evaluating the status of the implementation of management activities can provide key information for integrating continuous improvement in the plan improvement cycle.

2. Guidelines for monitoring

The Commission has a responsibility to develop guidelines for monitoring and assessing the implementation of reserve management plans by the Department. The Commission maintains a '*Guideline for the Periodic Assessment of Management Plans*', which outlines the approach taken by the Commission in relation to the implementation of its monitoring and reporting of management plan implementation.

The Commission supports the enhanced evaluation of management plan implementation by the Department through its adoption of a *Management Effectiveness Policy* and associated procedures as it provides for development of a systematic, documented process that will support the over-arching purpose of the CALM Act and other relevant activities provided for under the Act including supporting the periodic assessment processes of the Commission.

3. Conduct periodic assessments

Periodic assessments are led by the Commission and require the support of those responsible for implementing management plans. The Commission, in consultation with the department, prepares a 'Periodic Assessment Program' (a schedule of periodic assessments). The goals of the Commission's periodic assessment program

are strategically aligned with the Departments corporate strategy and goals. Similar considerations are given to other departments etc, legislation, strategic plans and objectives. Internal and external stakeholder groups (including managers, operational staff and community groups) will be informed about and/or involved in periodic assessment where appropriate to achieve greater acceptance, ownership and commitment to the periodic assessment process.

The Commission will maintain periodic assessment methodologies and processes that:

- involve managers reflecting on the results of the assessment and allowing them to make timely adjustments that are apparent and achievable;
- encourage a process of reflection and questioning of the assessment results into future planning and decision making processes;
- allow for the development of information management systems that make the data readily accessible and building decision support systems that link relevant data sets together to help identify strategies and actions that increase effectiveness;
- are cost effective - running detailed effectiveness evaluations on each single site is unrealistic as well as being expensive and possibly a wasteful exercise.

Periodic assessment reports include recommendations about changes that may be required to the management plan and/or management priorities of the plan to ensure its future effectiveness. The Commission will include opportunities for reflection and evaluation as part of its own continuous improvement cycle.

Reports are published on the Commission's website.