

United States

Public and stakeholder participation in environmental reviews



TYPE OF TOOL
*Methodology/
Guidelines/
Requirements*



MAIN SECTORS
All sectors



THEME
Green



INFRASTRUCTURE GOVERNANCE PILLARS
*Transparent, systematic and effective
stakeholder participation*

In a nutshell



OBJECTIVE: Guidance on public and stakeholder participation is aimed at helping the public and stakeholders effectively participate in Federal agencies' environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).



Agency in charge
Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)



Levels of government
Federal



Year of implementation
2021



Current status
Fully operational

Overview

The public often possess helpful information about the potential environmental, social, and economic effects that proposed government actions may have on people, places, and resources. It is therefore important to provide the public and stakeholders the opportunity to provide information to the government so it can take the input and unique perspective into account during the decision-making process. In the United States, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on the environment, including interrelated social and economic effects. The environmental review process under NEPA provides an opportunity for the public to get involved in a U.S. Federal agency's decision-making process. *A Citizen's Guide to the National Environmental Policy Act: Having Your Voice Heard (2021)* is a resource to help individuals become familiar with NEPA and the CEQ NEPA regulations. This guide provides an explanation of NEPA, how it is implemented, and how people outside the Federal Government—individuals, private sector applicants, members of organised groups, and representatives of Tribal, State, or local government agencies—can participate in the assessment of environmental impacts conducted by Federal agencies of their actions, including rules, programs, policies, construction projects, land management actions, permit grants, etc. The guide helps the public and stakeholders understand proposals for Federal actions, when to offer their thoughts on alternative ways for the agency to accomplish what it proposes, and how to offer their comments on the agency's analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action and possible mitigation of potential harmful effects of such actions. Similarly, the *Community Guide to Environmental Justice and NEPA Methods (2019)* provides information for communities who want to assure that their environmental justice (EJ) concerns are adequately considered when there is a Federal agency action that may involve environmental impacts on minority populations, low-income populations, and/or Indian tribes and indigenous communities.

REFERENCES:

- CEQ (2021), *A Citizen's Guide to the National Environmental Policy Act: Having Your Voice Heard*, <https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/citizens-guide-to-nepa-2021.pdf>
- EJ IWG NEPA Committee (2019), *Community Guide to Environmental Justice and NEPA Methods*, [https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2019/05/f63/NEPA Community Guide 2019.pdf](https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2019/05/f63/NEPA%20Community%20Guide%202019.pdf)