

POL-710

Park management policy

Policy statement	Parks and reserves will be managed according to their statutory purposes and government policies, and as part of a broader park and waterway system.
Purpose	This policy provides the basis for staff to determine operational management direction and processes used to plan, program and prioritise management actions across all Parks Victoria managed areas, recognising changing community characteristics and needs, landscapes and climate.
Scope	This policy applies to all Parks Victoria employees, contractors and agents.
Operating principles	<p>Relevant legislation, government policies and strategies</p> <p>Park management operations will be in accordance with relevant legislation, government policies, approved Victorian Environmental Assessment Council et al recommendations and strategies including those for the conservation of biodiversity, threatened species and communities, catchment management and fire management.</p> <p>Operations will be conducted in partnership with other agencies having land management, fire and catchment responsibilities relevant to parks and reserves.</p> <p>Historical land uses</p> <p>Traditional Owner land management practices and customary uses are recognised as integral components of ecosystems, and the cultural significance of other land uses since European settlement represents a further dimension of the environment.</p> <p>Landscape scale</p> <p>The broader context of the landscape and impacts of park management on communities will be key considerations in decision making for environmental management so that approaches and investment in parks and reserves complement and build on work in the broader landscape.</p> <p>Parks Victoria will work with other land managers in seeking to achieve habitat connectivity across landscapes using parks as keystone areas.</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Planning and programs will define objectives and outcomes for key park values based on risk assessment and priority setting.</p> <p>Planning and programming will be undertaken in accordance with any approved Joint Management Plans and after engagement with appropriate Traditional Owners.</p>

Planning will be evidence based and undertaken openly and collaboratively with the community.

Plans and programs will be adapted in light of monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness.

A consistent approach to planning will cover multiple parks and reserves at a landscape scale, and will be integrated with the management of adjacent public land and communities.

Park operations

Only land and waters formally assigned, including land that it is appointed as Committee of Management, will be managed by Parks Victoria.

All park management operations will be delivered safely, efficiently and in an environmentally sustainable manner to relevant standards and practices.

Appropriate authorised uses will be permitted and monitored.

Inappropriate uses will be subject to “risk-based” compliance activities in accordance with priorities and available resources.

Staff will be appropriately trained and skilled to undertake management operations, including enforcement of regulations.

Climate change adaptation

Parks Victoria recognises the accumulating evidence of climate change as a critical risk to park and reserve environments and will actively pursue adaptation strategies that minimise the impact of changes in temperature, hydrology and extreme events in Victoria’s park system.

Monitoring and evaluation

Management effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated to improve decision-making and program delivery.

Scientific research will be directed to informing park operations and decision-making. All management activities will be informed by adaptive planning and scientific evidence.

Definitions

Environment – is inclusive of the living and non-living elements of the landscape such as: marine and terrestrial biodiversity; natural ecosystems, flora and fauna communities and species; soils, geological features and landforms; catchments, rivers, waterways and water resources; and ecological processes such as fire and hydrology.

Joint management – Formal partnership arrangement between Traditional Owners and the State where both share their knowledge to manage specific protected areas together.

Traditional owner – Member of a Victorian Traditional Owner group that includes but is not limited to native title holding bodies, groups with agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* and native title claimants.

Related references

- National Parks Act 1975
- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)
- Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010
- Forests Act 1958
- Land Act 1958
- Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987
- Port Management Act 1985
- Marine Safety Act 2010
- Climate Change Act 2017
- POL-130 Risk and compliance policy
- POL-620 Visitors and park use policy

Operation of this policy

This policy operates to provide broad guidance on the relevant issues.

This policy is supplemented by procedures and other guidance material.

Accountable officer

Executive Director Planning and Partnerships