

# Procedure on Policy Development

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This Document outlines the procedure for IFI Operational Policy Development and for the Development of national inland fisheries policies.

# IFI Procedure for Policy Development

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## Version Control Table

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) defines a policy as the rules that govern our organisation (IFI) and the natural resource which we are here to develop, protect and conserve. IFI's policy statements document "the rules", both organisational and sectoral, rather than how to implement the rules and should be generally be written in clear and simple language. Procedures are the implementation of policy rules and should follow logical order and be written in clear concise, factual, simple language. Good procedures are tied to policies and thus should reference the same and should evolve over time. Procedures document how the policy is implemented and will help IFI achieve its goals and strategic plan. Procedures should be supported by staff and be seen as a help rather than a hindrance; this can be achieved through the inclusion of users in the procedure development, giving the user options within the procedure, and offering a path to change and develop procedures and encouraging a sense of ownership.

## **PROCEDURE DESCRIPTION**

This IFI procedure defines the development of two types of policies, which would have very different development paths (see figure 1.0), namely *National Inland Fisheries Policies* (National) and *Inland Fisheries Ireland Policies* (Operational). National policies in inland fisheries require extensive stakeholder inclusion, consultation and support, while operational policies can generally be developed in-house in consultation with IFI staff.

## ***OPERATIONAL IFI POLICY DEVELOPMENT***

The development of an IFI Operational policy within IFI will be supported by a Policy Group, appointed by the CEO of IFI and lead by a Chairperson/Policy Owner. The Chairperson will lead the policy developers to ensure consistency of approach across policies, to give guidance on IFI intent, to be a driving force for policy development, to arbitrate over policy disagreements and to ensure adherence to the Policy Group's Terms of Reference (TOR). It is the Policy Owner who will manage the policy development process and schedules and be responsible for taking final drafts of policies through the defined review process. Consultation with IFI staff and Union inputs are vital in policy development, other consultation with external bodies may also be required should the policy impact on their operations or in the case where external expertise may offer support to the development of the policy.

Consideration should also be given to the requirement for regional deviations or exceptions to policy, there could certainly be a case made for regional variations to be accommodated in IFI policies or procedures. These variations/deviations should be processed through the Policy Owner and follow the same process as outlined in IFI Policy Developed see Figure 1.0. The final release of IFI policies will be approved by the Board of IFI.

All documentation and submissions associated with the development of IFI policies and the policies themselves will be available via IFI's intranet.

## ***NATIONAL INLAND FISHERIES POLICIES***

The development of policy within IFI will be supported by a Policy Group, appointed by the CEO of IFI. The Policy Group will be led by an IFI Chairperson/Policy Owner. The

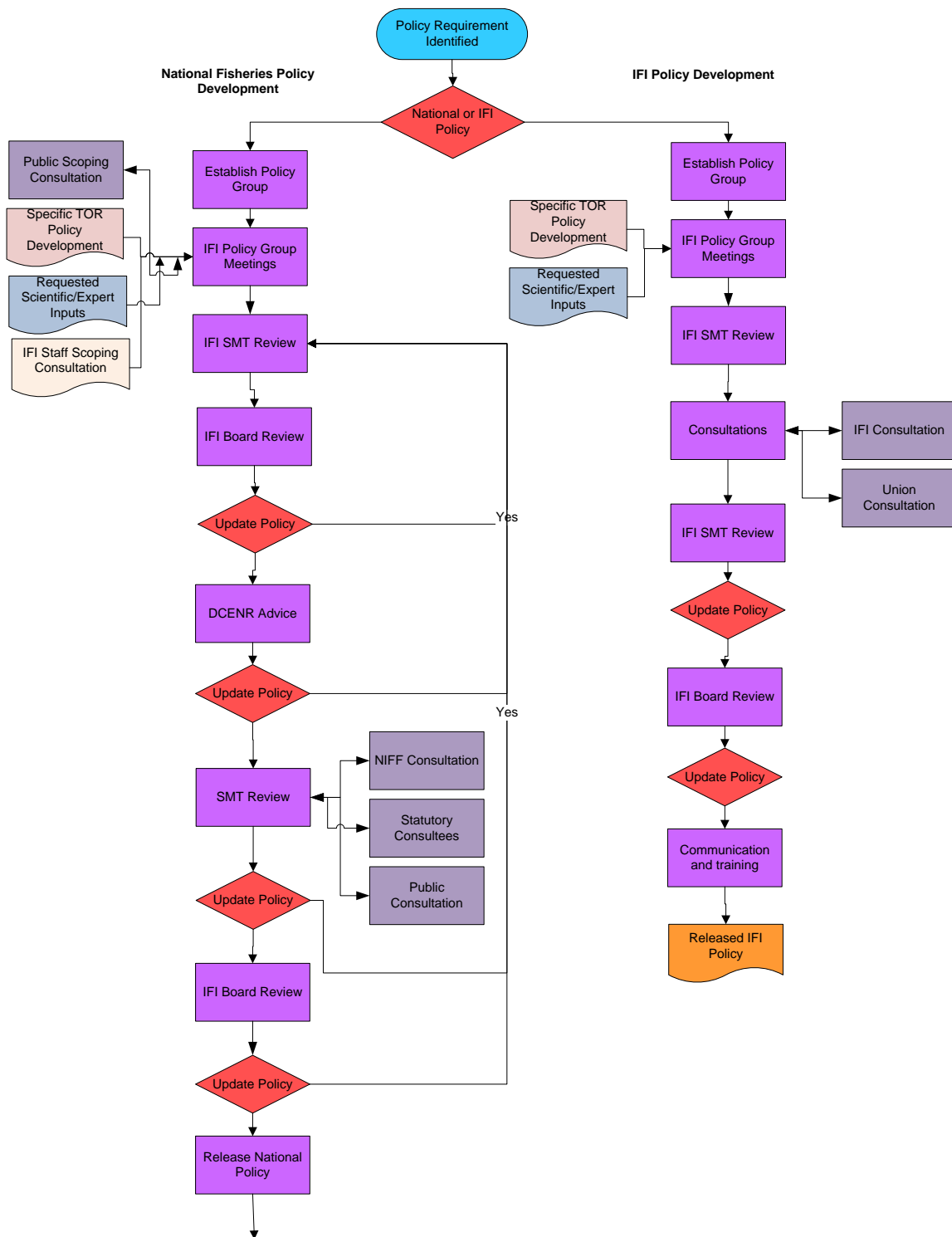
Chairperson will lead the policy developers to ensure consistency of approach across policies, to give guidance on IFI intent, to be a driving force for policy development, to arbitrate over policy disagreements and to ensure adherence to the Policy Group's Terms of Reference (TOR). The Policy Group's TOR will be drafted and approved by IFI's Senior Management Team.

In the case of national policy development stakeholder engagement is vital and thus the development will be guided by IFI's Public Consultation Policy. A starting point for all policies should be a public scoping consultation, which will elicit from IFI staff, the public and stakeholders perspectives and views on the specific policy area; these inputs will be published and considered by the Policy Group in the development of the first draft of the proposed policy. The process for the development, review and release of National Inland Fisheries Policies is defined in Figure 1.0 with a more detailed process, to include documentation requirements, included in Appendix A. This process offers IFI Senior Management Team (SMT) and Board opportunities to input and review policy suggestions. The national policy development process will also facilitates the receipt of comments and inputs from IFI's parent department; this is essential when dealing with national policy where departmental officials offer extensive knowledge and background offer insight into political and legislative sensitivities. Proposed non editorial changes to draft policy versions should be supported by rationale for change. It is also proposed that the Board of Inland Fisheries Ireland would approve, after considering all advice tendered, all national inland fisheries policies prior to release.

It is also important that IFI considers how interested State Agencies and statutory consultees could be included in the national inland fisheries policy development process; with this in mind IFI will maintain an agreed list of consultees for all national policies. The agreed list will be reviewed annually by the CEO of Inland Fisheries Ireland, who will consider representation for additions to the list of consultees. This consultation process will parallel and replicate the Stakeholder Forum policy review process with the IFI management team considering written submissions on the proposed national policy. IFI will also consider the requirement on a policy by policy basis for a full public consultation on the draft policy. Should a full public consultation be required it will be guided by IFI's Public Consultation Policy, with all inputs made publically available.

It would be good practice for IFI to have a review of policies on a periodic basis and this should be a planned process with a review date attached to the policy. Consideration should also be given to the requirement for regional deviations or exceptions to policy or procedures. IFI in development of national policy will ensure that they are not prepared in isolation; the proposed new policy will reference other national policies to ensure no contradictory or conflicting messages are delivered and that any policies or messages are not contradictory to the messages of IFI. For example a national policy on the management of Pike fisheries should not be in conflict with a national policy on the management of Trout fisheries and visa versa.

The process for development of national inland fisheries policies is intended to be inclusive and transparent, will all submissions and documentation relating to the policy development made available through an IFI Web portal.



**Figure 1: Flow chart for IFI Policy Development**

**APPLICABILITY**

This procedure should be considered by all IFI Staff and for all those concerned or affected by national inland fisheries policy.

## APPENDIX A: Detailed Policy process to include document version control

