



**Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol** – An assessment tool to measure and guide performance in the hydropower sector.

**Sustainability**<sup>1</sup> – Involves activity that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable activity should improve the quality of life without doing harm. Sustainability objectives should encompass economic, environmental and social performance.

**Assessment**<sup>2</sup> – An objective process that is done to measure performance against an agreed set of policies.

**Principles**<sup>3</sup> – Fundamental assumptions underpinning the Protocol.

**Sections** – The Protocol consists of four sections appropriate to different stages of the project life cycle. Each section is a stand-alone assessment tool to measure performance of a hydropower project against sustainability criteria appropriate to that point in the project life cycle.

**Aspects** – Each Protocol section contains a set of aspects important to forming a view on the overall sustainability of that project at that point in its life cycle. An aspect is one of a set of key sustainability issues. Each aspect has processes and performance that must be assessed to confidently form a view on the overall sustainability of a hydropower project at a particular point in its life cycle. Aspects can be scored on a graded scale of good practice.

<sup>1</sup> Definition from existing Sustainability Assessment Protocol, page 7.

<sup>2</sup> Definition adapted from existing Sustainability Assessment Protocol, page 4.

<sup>3</sup> Merriam-Webster online dictionary definition of principle - “a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine, or assumption; a rule or code of conduct”

Description – Explanation of the aspect provided to give greater clarity to the assessor.

Policy Objective<sup>4</sup> – Each of the Protocol aspects has an associated policy objective which identifies what is trying to be achieved.

Attributes – Attributes are the criteria which form the basis for determining sustainability performance for each aspect. Each Protocol aspect has a set of process and performance attributes. Process attributes relate to the systems or processes in place to address a particular sustainability issues (e.g. a water quality monitoring program); performance attributes relate to the outcomes of efforts to address a particular sustainability issue (e.g. the quality of the water).

Guidance Notes – Notes to assist the assessor in determination of a score for a particular attribute.

Objective Evidence<sup>5</sup> – Evidence used by the assessor to verify whether and to what degree the attributes have been met. Objective evidence can be qualitative or quantitative information, records or statements of fact, either verbal or documented. It is retrievable or reproducible, is not influenced by emotion or prejudice, and is based on facts obtained through observation, measurements, tests or other means.

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<sup>4</sup> Merriam-Webster online dictionary definition of policy – “a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions”

<sup>5</sup> Definition adapted from existing Sustainability Assessment Protocol, page 5.