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Effective Collaborative Processes on Sustainability Development and Environmental Policy:

- The background
- The process



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Guidelines for Conducting Effective Collaborative Processes:

- Ethical Base for Collaborative Process.
- Participation by all Affected Parties.
- Atmosphere of Trust.
- Support Needs of Diverse Cultures.
- Transparent and Accessible Process.
- Technical Information Accessible.



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Guidelines for Conducting Effective Collaborative Processes [continued]:

- Recognize Interests and Knowledge of all Parties.
- Monitor Effects of Decisions and Follow-up Regarding Implementation.



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Ethical Base for Collaborative Process:

- An ethical approach to dialogue will engage us in a cooperative struggle. In its most profound and ideal form, an ethical process enables each of us to see the world from the perspective of all other participants, to stand for a moment in their shoes, and to recognize our common humanity.



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Suggestions:

- Must be open to changes in ourselves.
- Negotiations should not force impossible choices.
- Attentive listening is essential.
- Ensure respectful communication.



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Participation by all Affected Parties:

- Participation is a crucial issue. All parties potentially affected by prospective policies or actions should be represented in a forum designed to discuss or negotiate them. Creating opportunities for constructive participation by less influential but equally concerned groups is essential.



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Suggestions:

- Representatives must clearly represent the stakeholder group they portray themselves representing.
- All must understand how decisions will be made.
- Consensus is often the preferred process, but it may result in the minority being losers.
- Financial consideration must be addressed so that all stakeholders have access to the table.



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Atmosphere of Trust:

- Trust is an important goal, as a means towards making collaborative processes successful. Trust may take a long time to develop. Trust will also be promoted through establishment and adherence to group process norms.



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Suggestions:

- Show respect for all views even when you do not agree.
- Identify and work to remove barriers to trust.
- Build on existing positive relationships.



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Support Needs of Diverse Cultures:

- In order to provide an open and congenial atmosphere for discussions, the needs and requirements for various cultures to participate in collaborative processes should be recognized and actively supported. Such cultures include corporate, institutional, ethnic, regional or national cultures, as well as cultures associated with particular ideologies, philosophies, religions or professions.



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Suggestions:

- Identify when cultural differences may be influencing the process.
- Commit to ongoing process of mutual education.
- Work to establish common definitions.
- It should not be assumed that silence implies consent.



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Transparent and Accessible Process:

- Both the process and the substantive issues of collaborative processes should be transparent to participants and their constituencies.



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Suggestions:

- Clearly identify issues, goals and work product.
- Establish ground rules and procedural guidelines.
- Status and results must be accurately recorded and made accessible to all participants.



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Technical Information Accessible:

- The process of generating, compiling and analyzing information must be balanced by a recognition that there will always be significant uncertainties. Determining what should be done with scientific or technical information is a political decision involving value judgments.



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Suggestions:

- Drive the technical process and determine questions that need answers.
- Process of generating, compiling and analyzing information must collaborative.
- Technical data must be “translated” into terms that all stakeholders can understand.



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Recognize Interests and Knowledge of all Parties:

- Every stakeholder group will have different backgrounds, different interests and different perspectives and as a result different knowledge bases.



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Monitor Effects of Decisions and Follow-up Regarding Implementation:

- Dialogue and negotiated agreements are of little value without follow-up and implementation. Some balance must be struck between holding parties accountable to follow through on their commitments and allowing flexibility in how agreements are implemented.



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Suggestions:

- Establish clear, measurable goals and measure progress.
- Make clear whether the goals are binding or voluntary.
- Incorporate appropriate flexibility regarding methods to achieving goals.
- Set up mechanism for modifying agreement as circumstances change.



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Consensus Decision-making Process - The Benefits:

- Group decisions may really be better, more complete, or richer than that of a majority or a small group or individual with power to impose a decision.
- Multiple ideas can be gathered and synthesized, rather than simply picking the best.
- Working collaboratively on decision making encourages openness and discourages private “deal making.”
- People may feel they have been persuaded, rarely coerced.



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Consensus Decision-making Process - The Benefits (continued):

- If people buy into a decision, they will work to carry it out.
- Working together and reaching agreement is an empowering process, encouraging people to work together in the future.

Consensus is particularly powerful when there are no majorities possible or when the active support of all significant interests groups is needed to move forward.



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<http://cgli.org/positions/IPPDbig.pdf>



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Questions?



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