**Handout 1.5:**

**PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGES OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

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| **STAGE IN THE MPA**  **PLANNING PROCESS** | **APPROACHES TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES** | **TOOLS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES** | **LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIELD** |
| **1. Pre-planning STAGE Designing a Stakeholder Process**   * Deciding on different levels of stakeholder engagement * Determining on how to choose appropriate stakeholder representation * Determining who will manage and facilitate the process * Deciding on roles and responsibilities of stakeholders * Determining type of decision making process * Planning for on-going feeding of information and communication with stakeholders * Avoiding stakeholder fatigue * Conducting an open and transparent process | * **Determine upfront level of staff engagement and financial resources you are able to commit to this process** * **Consult with stakeholders early and often to increase acceptance of problems and solutions** * **Work with the community leaders and organizations that are already established to build strong relationships** | * **Develop template laying out skills, knowledge and technical expertise required for management plan process** * **Develop charter laying out structure, protocols and procedures for planning team, consider having them sign the charter** * **Develop communications plan for the duration of the process** * **Develop nomination form to ensure stakeholder representative is supported by broader stakeholder group** | * **Inevitably, you will forget a stakeholder who should be on your planning team so don’t be afraid to add someone or find another role for them** * **Clearly layout your final decision making process and the protocols for coming to agreement, *AND* be sure your facilitator enforces the protocols** * **Often times you will find that a stakeholder representative is not there in earnest, but rather to watch dog the process, address this at the first indication and don’t be afraid to address this issue and take action of necessary** |
| **2. Characterizing the Members of Your Planning Team**   * Understanding each stakeholder’s wants, needs and expectations * Selecting the right people * Identifying appropriate levels of engagement | * **Understand their memberships and affiliations** * **Understand their beliefs and attitudes about the issues** * **Understand the homogeneity of each stakeholder group** * **Understand their relationship to the management area and why they want to engage in this process** * **Understand the degree of economic and social/cultural reliance on the resources** * **Understand their behaviors in regards to the issues** * **Understand whether they are more oriented to the present or the future** * **Understand any barriers in their willingness to come to solutions** | * **Interview planning members before you start to engage with them in the planning process** * **Engage your planning team in an informal activity prior to starting the planning process – e.g., walking or boat tour of management area to hear what they know about the area; a joint mapping exercise to get preliminary input from the planning team; informal social activity** | * **Ensure that the stakeholder groups are actually involved and support the development process, and not just their one representative at the table** |
| **3. Building a Working Relationship**   * Building trust * Opening the doors of communication * Learning how to share information | * **Create an environment for open communication** * **Consult with your local communities and make them feel like *their* issues are being heard** * **Make repeated effort to re-establish contact with stakeholders, particularly after contentious situations occur** * **Ensure that the stakeholder representatives are assisted in developing the skills they need to participate in the planning process and effectively solve problems** | * **Develop a mechanism or procedure for receiving regular input from the local community this could be through a website, community meetings or workshops** * **Set up a way to keep communities informed about your plans for the future this could be through a website, community meetings or workshops** | * **Be proactive, solution oriented, present facts not speculation** * **Acknowledged internally, and publically state, that you need the community’s trust to gain social license to manage effectively** * **Initial meetings with stakeholders should be on their own turf, where they are most comfortable (e.g., pubs, docks, cafes)** * **A sense of trust will wax and wane throughout any process, never give up continuing to work on building trust** |
| **4. Setting the Stage for That initial Engagement**   * Identifying and understanding the problem (big picture) * Building joint vision * Coming to agreement on the MPA management objectives | * **Ensure the aims of the MPA planning process are simple and everyone in the understands what, when, why, and how the process will happen** * **Identify key issues and problems that resonate with the members of your planning team** | * **Scenario building is a good way to build a range of options for the future** * **Developing a joint vision statement takes the planning team from where they are now to where they want to be in the future** * **Diagramming the problem statement** |  |
| **5. Gathering Information for Decision-making**   * Communicating science * Using stakeholders as a source of information * Sharing local knowledge * Understanding spatial, temporal, dimensional and infrastructure requirements of both target resources and human uses * Analyzing areas of conflict and compatibility | * **Use a common language that everyone understands** * **Draw on the expertise of the planning team as much as possible, but know when to bring in experts** | * **Use visual aids for communicating science like graphs, tables and pie charts** * **Group or individual interviews are an effective approach to gathering local knowledge** * **Mapping of human uses helps to clarify the spatial extent and needs of each human use activity** * **Have planning team research potential future uses by using the internet or interviewing municipal government about inquiries for permits** * **Use a simple compatibility matrix to start the discussion about compatible uses** | * **Create a level playing ground for all planning team members by providing them with ample information, well in advance of meetings, and in a format that speaks to their ability to understand the information** * **If the compatibility analysis is conducted carefully and with full buy-in, it will make moving into the decision making process easier** |
| **6. Looking for Joint Solutions – Making Management Decisions**   * Taking ownership of the problem * Understanding and identifying a range of management solutions * Understanding the need for trade-offs | * **Ensure the goals and needs of all stakeholder groups are known and acknowledged** * **Layout a full range of management options (solutions) before you even get into the discussion finalizing the management strategies** | * **Develop a matrix of possible management options for the planning team to review and understand before they come together to develop the final management plan** | * **At this stage there should be a strong sense of cooperation with the joint focus primarily being on meeting the management objectives already established by the planning team** |
| **7. Communicating THE PLANNING Process Outcomes**   * Ensuring appropriate communication with broader stakeholder community * Managing engagement with the press * Informing user groups about the new MPA plan * Empowering stakeholders to continue their participation in the implementation of the MPA management plan | * **Ask for help from stakeholders for implementation of the plan** * **Use stakeholders as liaisons to the broader community to communicate about what is going on** * **Be proactive and manage the media messages** * **Create and deliver messages that are appropriate for each target audience** | * **Develop a template to understand each of your target audiences and how best to communicate messages to them** |  |
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