

2009 ACR/Environmental and Public Policy Conference  
Managing Climate Change Through Collaborative Governance  
Addressing Policy Challenges Globally and Locally

## **Key Challenges Facing Efforts to Institute Collaborative Efforts into Global Climate Change Governance**

*Facilitators Note:* The last plenary session was designed to gather conference participant thoughts on the challenges and successes in how climate change has or could be addressed through collaborative governance. The end of the session included a discussion on possible next steps that EPP could take to further advance climate change and collaborative governance integration. The facilitator has added narrative language to the bulleted list captured during the session based on his memory of the discussion.

### **Challenges**

A variety of challenges for collaborative governance and climate change integration and advancement were raised by the participants. The following is a list of the key challenges raised:

- It is important for practitioners to help leaders know when collaboration fits vs. legislation, regulations and enforcement;
  - Big change comes via movements – not necessarily a good fit with collaboration
  - Who to convene at local and state levels and would they be seen as legitimate?  
Who is the right convener
- Doing ‘adaptive collaboration’ in real time: Re – short term, legislation focus/outcome; we need to analyze quickly and provide feasible options.
- One participant highlighted the balance and sensitivity that is needed in conveying the urgency/crisis aspects of climate change so folks are appropriately engaged in problem solving but not paralyzed by hopelessness;
  - Communicating needs/opportunities in their terms; not what we see as the framing of the need
  - Big problems – affect many people vs the need to act soon/fast
- Both the collaborative governance community and its clients and funders need more models, case studies and etc. so they can see, learn and adapt from them;
  - Apply collaborative systems support inside agencies, mediation groups and etc.
  - Collaboration decision making – how to move to action, monitoring to get real results
- Unlike many environmental conflict and management situations climate change involves understanding and dealing with long term risk of big changes (global in nature) but many of the solutions and actions that need to be taken are at the individual, household,

community, state and regional levels. This makes it hard to keep bring together and maintain disparate multi-sector processes.

- Need specific small changes at individual level to add up to big effects
- Throughout the conference the tension between ‘neutrality’ and ‘advocacy’ and ‘consensus’ by practitioners was brought up along with
  - Our views on climate change – keep separate from our work
  - Tension between Environmental/Climate Justice outcomes and consensus outcomes (not always in alignment)
  - Need to architect more inclusive processes
- Money – how to work with communities for innovative financing to support collaborative systems support for climate change efforts – facing economic downturn

### **Successes**

Although less time was spent on documenting successes in integrating collaborative governance for climate change participants highlighted many relevant examples that already exist in the practitioner community related to transportation, green building and land use planning. Although these may not be framed as climate projects they have that context or may be a co-benefit. Some specific examples include:

- Sacramento Area Water Forum - Lower American River Task Force – group to monitor and implement a River Corridor Management Plan  
<http://www.csus.edu/ccp/projects/recent.stm#loweramericanriver>
- Pennsylvania Environmental Council: Climate Change Roadmap for Pennsylvania  
<http://www.pecpa.org/roadmap.htm>
- Tanya Denckla Cobb – convened summit on food = Virginia Food Systems Council (focus on local foods).
  - Tanya stepped forward as a collaborative leader not as a ‘neutral facilitator’  
<http://www.arch.virginia.edu/faculty/TanyaDencklaCobb/>  
<http://tanyadencklacobb.com/>

There was one caution in the discussion that the practitioner community resist the temptation to label too much as fitting ‘work on Climate Change’.

### **Next Steps, Opportunities and Obligations**

A variety of next steps, opportunities and potential obligations were brought up in the discussion they include:

- That EPP members should collaborate and be active in helping to showcase the benefits of using collaborative governance systems for climate change solutions and finding (advocating) for more resources for it;

- Increase connections on specific projects, especially across academic specialties and research – development – results
- One participant also called for EPP members/conference participants to think and act outside of their ‘own paid work’ to take on a wider obligation to the overall practice advancement – suggesting that folks should commit a set amount of resources (5%, 20 hours etc.) to develop and implement specific next steps coming out of the conference;

In addition to the next steps brought up in the last plenary session a longer list of potential next steps were created in a smaller open session facilitated and recorded by John Jostes the morning of the last day. Included below are the main categories from that document (see his full notes in separate document):

1. **Conversation Call-In on Managing Climate Change Leadership Efforts** (Juliana Birkhoff, Lead) - Plan for and structure a conference call among a small group of senior mediators and ADR professionals to have a conversation not unlike a “Samoan Circle” wherein they discuss a small set of questions or challenges pertinent to grappling with the challenges of collaboration, leadership, and conflict management pertaining to adaptation to (or mitigation of) climate change implications.
2. **USIECR/EPP 2010 Conference in Tucson: Topics for Discussion** (2010 Conference Planning Team Lead) - Consider and recruit panelists for the following topics for next year’s conference
3. **Blogging on the EPP Website** (Harry Manasewich + Others?)
4. **The Art and Science of Framing Climate Change (CC) Issues** (Peter Murchie + Others?)
5. **Wiki on the Tools** (no action taken)
6. **Strategic Alliances Discussion** (no action taken)