LAND AND
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
PLANNING

Public Participation Guidelines

Interim Guidelines
November, 1993

Province of
British Columbia

Contents

Executive summary

Land and resource management planning in British Columbia is entering a new era of openness, where all interests and values are recognized. This calls for highly interactive public participation processes to help build consensus wherever possible.

These *Public Participation Guidelines for Land and Resource Management Planning* (LRMP) provide a framework that allows public participation methods to be designed for particular circumstances and needs. Although the primary user of the guidelines is the LRMP planner, all government and public participants in the LRMP process should find them a useful reference.

This document is a flexible working guide for designing public participation methods.

There are seven major steps in the LRMP process. Each step involves several critical public participation and related planning tasks, which are summarized below. Each task must be completed to ensure the success of the planning process. Together, these steps make up a generic process that is guided by the principles endorsed by government and stated in the LRMP document *A Statement of Principles and Process*. Alternative public participation procedures and techniques, as noted in Appendix 2, can be used for each planning step to tailor public participation to suit the unique circumstances of every LRMP process.

Each LRMP process is unique.

Step 1 Preliminary organization

- review public participation reference material (Appendices 1 - 3)
- assemble and train (as necessary and as possible) an inter-agency planning team
- identify funding and staffing resources for all agencies
- begin to identify public values and interests
- public consultation—identify who must be involved
- First Nations consultation
- consult with the public—review range of possible participation alternatives with potential participants (consultation ↔ shared decision making), within staff and funding limits
- begin identifying constituencies and establishing communication links
- all participants discuss the objectives of the planning process and evaluate the opportunities for success

Accomplishments of Step 1:

- a trained inter-agency planning team
- a list of potential participants and their interests
- public interest group awareness of the LRMP process and alternatives for participation
- a statement of government funding and staffing commitments
- a draft list of values or constituencies that can be represented by individual(s) selected by public groups
- a list of draft objectives for the LRMP process
- a list of potential obstacles to success and options for their resolution
- newsletter #1 (optional)

Step 2 Plan initiation

Important decisions are made to initiate the plan.

- agree (public and government representatives) on details of the public participation process
- enable participants to select a mediator/facilitator where suitable and possible (given funding and need)
- develop terms of reference: agreement on process, roles and responsibilities, procedural ground rules, budget, chairperson(s) and time frame
- provide training for participants within funding limits

Accomplishments of Step 2:

- selection of a facilitator (given funding and need)
- a detailed outline of the public participation process, including a communications strategy
- terms of reference
- trained participants (given funding)

Step 3 Information assembly

- agree on information requirements and format
- identify how local knowledge and expert opinion will be used and incorporate this information in the inventory process
- identify all values and objectives (general)
- consult with general public

Accomplishments of Step 3:

- newsletter, edition #2 (optional)
- draft resource unit boundary map and resource unit descriptions (may not occur until Step 4)
- list of general values and objectives for the LRMP area
- general public comments on products of Steps 1, 2 and 3

Step 4 Scenario development

- define resource unit boundaries
- develop land use and resource management objectives and strategies
- identify land use and resource management direction or discuss scenarios
- analyze and assess impacts of consensus or scenarios

Accomplishments of Step 4:

- resource unit map
- resource unit descriptions (and overhead overlay maps of inventory)
- draft resource management objectives and strategies for each resource unit and draft scenarios for the LRMP area
- socio-economic and multi-resource analysis reports
- newsletter, editions #3 and #4 (optional)

Step 5 Building an agreement

- general public review
- review analyses and public comments, and short-list land use and resource management scenarios
- negotiate a consensus land use and resource management direction or draft an agreeable range of options
- review consensus management direction or options with general public (optional)

Accomplishments of Step 5:

- a consensus management direction report or an options report and supporting documents
- newsletter, edition #5 (optional)

Step 6 Approval

- forward consensus or options for review and approval

Accomplishments of Step 6:

- final submission to government
- final plan

Step 7 Implementation, monitoring and review, and amendments

- implement and monitor as outlined in terms of reference
- participate in periodic review of plan

Accomplishments of Step 7:

- monitoring committee (optional)
- annual monitoring reports
- formal 10-year public review report or terms of reference for new plan

1.0 Introduction: a message to the user of this guide

Land and resource management planning (LRMP) is a process for defining land and resource management within large areas. In total, there will be roughly 40 LRMP areas in British Columbia. The intent of the planning process is to develop a plan that will guide land and resource use on all Crown land over a period of up to 10 years. However, with participation of local governments in the LRMP process, the resulting plan can also assist with planning for the use and development of private land.

Participants in the planning process identify and evaluate alternative land and resource management scenarios based on the consideration of all resource values within the area. The basic principles of this process, as outlined in *Land and Resource Management Planning, A Statement of Principles and Process*, include:

Basic principles of the LRMP process:

- participation of all resource management agencies (federal, provincial and local);
- meaningful and open public participation;
- decision making by consensus wherever possible; and,
- integration with other planning levels (provincial, regional and local).

These guidelines are directed at the LRMP planner; the government planning professional who, in most cases, is responsible for ensuring that each step of the LRMP process is completed as outlined in policy and guidelines. (Figure 1 on page 2 shows the seven steps in the LRMP process). Although generally written for planning professionals, these guidelines are recommended reading for anyone involved in the LRMP process.

These guidelines are flexible.

Each LRMP project may have to meet unique public participation needs. Therefore, this document is **a flexible, working guide** for designing public participation processes. It presents choices on how to structure a process and how to apply public participation techniques. The success of a public process is ultimately judged by the participants themselves. Be flexible and creative. Good luck.

Figure 1: LRMP Planning Process Steps

Process Steps	Planning Products
1 Preliminary organization • Set regional priorities • Identify agency commitments • Appoint and train inter-agency planning team • Contact public stakeholders • Identify preliminary issues and planning area	***Agreement to do plan***
2 Plan initiation • Select public participation approach and provide training • Confirm issues and planning area • Define budget and schedule • Confirm principles, process and expected products	***Terms of reference:*** an outline of the planning process, the public participation process, preliminary issues, the project schedule, and the dispute resolution process
3 Information assembly • Describe issues and links to other processes • Assemble resource inventories • Conduct resource analysis	***Resource information reports***
4 Scenario development • Define resource unit boundaries • Develop management objectives and strategies • Identify management scenarios • Analyze and assess impacts of scenarios	
5 Building an agreement • Submit consensus on management direction or agree on a range of options	***Consensus report/option report:*** all scenarios (including the recommended consensus management direction) or options; impact assessment of the scenarios or options; and for the consensus management direction, at a minimum, maps of resource units, description of the objectives and strategies for the planning areas and for each resource unit
6 Approval • Submit consensus report for approval or option report for decision • Prepare final plans based on approval	***Final plan:*** outline of the planning process, summary of issues, summary of scenarios considered, approved resource unit map, description of approved objectives and strategies for the planning area and for each resource unit, a strategy for implementation, monitoring and evaluation including responsibilities
7 Implementation **Monitoring and review** **Amendment**	***Monitoring report*** ***Amended plan***

2.0 Getting started: organization of the guidelines

Before initiating a public participation process, all participants are encouraged to review this entire document.

The body of the guidelines is devoted to the basic principles and process of public participation in LRMP. Section 3.0 outlines the principles that form the foundation of a successful public participation process. It is important to ensure that the process design is based on these foundations. Use Section 4.0 of this document as a general guide to working through a public participation process that satisfies the policy criteria of LRMP.

Section 4.0 has seven sections that represent the major steps in the LRMP planning process. Each section is introduced by a list of key tasks. Following the list is a detailed explanation of each task, ending with a list of key accomplishments.

While this material may appear to be very detailed, each task is designed to build public credibility in a systematic way. The final products of the LRMP process can then withstand scrutiny from both government and the public.

Common questions and answers

The questions and answers listed in Appendix 1 address concerns that are often encountered when beginning an LRMP process. Appendix 2 provides descriptions of a range of additional public participation techniques that may be applied throughout the LRMP process. Appendix 3 lists several readings which provide background and technical information on public participation. These publications are useful references for both public and government participants.

Again, do not be overwhelmed by the details in this set of guidelines. It is necessary to provide enough detail for you to run a complex planning process that may last up to two years and involve hundreds of people. Always keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to create a sustainable, consensus-based land use and resource management plan that serves the needs of all interests for the next few years.

3.0 Principles of effective public participation

Credibility and impartiality

The success of an LRMP process is largely dependent on two basic principles of process management: **credibility** and **impartiality**.

There are many ways to satisfy these principles. Each new planning project often requires specific adaptations and innovations. However, to satisfy basic public expectations, public participation in a planning process should be based on the following criteria.

Principle 1. The process must be **credible** to ensure participant support and confidence.

A credible process can be created by meeting these criteria.

All participants must be confident that their opinions and values will be considered during the process and be reflected in the final product. A clear mandate for meaningful public participation is integral to creating and operating a credible process.

Criteria:

Mandate

- the lines of accountability are clearly outlined
- the planning process is authorized by senior levels of government

Representation

- group representatives are authorized by, and are accountable to, their constituencies
- the full spectrum of interests has the opportunity to be represented (in person or by proxy)
- all participants are treated equally
- representation of all interests is fair and balanced

Communication

- communication is open and sincere
- government is in frequent dialogue with other participants—both government colleagues and non-government participants
- prompt and thorough response is given to public concerns and comments

Access to process

- financial barriers to participation are addressed and resolved within the resources allocated to the process

- public has the opportunity to participate in the earliest stages of the process (e.g. drafting terms of reference)
- there are opportunities for participation throughout the process

Verification of opportunity

- public perspectives are reflected in consensus management direction or options
- public input influences products

Coordinated government approach

- all agencies support planning process
- mandates are clearly outlined to all participants
- all agencies act in a coordinated manner

Commitment

- there is a clear understanding of what a consensus agreement means
- government and public are committed to consensus-building and to implementing a consensus agreement

Understandable information

- information is clear and comprehensive
- there are agreed procedures for information gathering and analysis

Principle 2. Negotiation, dispute resolution and general management of the process must be carried out in a competent and **impartial** manner.

Impartiality depends on following specific criteria.

Project management must be carried out in a way that is impartial to outcomes and perspectives. Use of an independent facilitator and a well balanced planning team can be helpful in achieving adequate impartiality.

Criteria:

Neutral process management

- chairperson of the joint steering committee (see Step 2 in Section 4.0) is chosen by all participants
- impartial facilitation is used at appropriate stages
- clear and fair procedures are agreed at the outset of the process

Documentation

- timely and full access to information
- detailed documentation of the steps taken to involve the public; and, an account of how public participation has affected plan products

Consideration of all values

- all values are recognized and respected
- participants recognize potential value conflicts

Communication

- background information and scientific data is equally available to all participants

4.0 Planning steps

The following sections describe the major steps in the LRMP process. Each section begins with a list of tasks related to public participation. Following this list is a detailed description of each task, ending with a list of accomplishments that the planner can expect to achieve before moving on to the next step.

Step 1 Preliminary organization

Suggested procedures *(Refer to Appendix 2 for further options)*

Review guidelines and reference material

These guidelines are written for the benefit of all participants. Take the time to read them carefully and contact planning staff, agency and public participants in other locations who may have experience in LRMP. Obtain copies of LRMP documents from these other locations or from the Integrated Resource Planning Committee (IRPC) contact person for your LRMP. Often, the best reference material for plan participants is the experience of colleagues.

Assemble and train an Inter-agency Planning Team

There are seven Inter-agency Management Committees (IAMCs) in the province. The people in charge of resource ministries in each region sit on the IAMC. Among their tasks is the prioritizing of land and resource

Roles of participants

The role of agency participants in LRMP is to represent their mandated resource management responsibilities at the planning table, as well as to provide technical and administrative support. Agency staff must also ensure that the process is consistent with government policy and that it stays within the limits of funding and staffing. While government staff may provide leadership in LRMP, they should not dominate the negotiation process.

Public participants in LRMP represent the full range of resource and land use interests at the planning table. They bring to the process public issues, values and objectives. As participants, members of the public are full partners in the negotiation and consensus-building process. Members of the public with leadership skills may become leaders in the LRMP process.

management plans. An LRMP process must be authorized to commence by the regional IAMC or be specified in a regional land use plan.

At some point early in the LRMP process, the IAMC members should be introduced to the agency and public participants. It is important to establish a working relationship with the regional managers who approve the LRMP terms of reference and review final LRMP products before transmitting them for approval.

An inter-agency planning team is brought together.

After the initiation of the planning process has been authorized by the IAMC, ministries must establish an Inter-agency Planning Team (IPT). The IAMC must ensure that all relevant agencies are adequately represented in the LRMP process. Next, the IAMC appoints a planner who takes responsibility for the day-to-day LRMP tasks, and who ensures that the principles and guidelines for LRMP are followed. The planner is a government employee who has extensive experience in land and resource management planning, a clear understanding of the principles and procedures for LRMP and a familiarity with the LRMP area.

It is important that the planner be acceptable to all participants. For this reason, both the IPT and the public participants (later in Step 1 and in Step 2) should be asked if they are comfortable with the person who is in this position. If dissatisfaction is present, and it is not easily resolved, a new person should be appointed to this task. Once the agency representatives and the planner have met, a chairperson is chosen for the IPT.

General training should be arranged for all IPT members. This should include instruction on the various technical components of the LRMP process, and the use of consensus in the land use planning process. Contact your IRPC representative for guidance on training.

Collect examples of terms of reference, process outlines and final reports from other LRMP processes. These may be obtained from your colleagues or your IRPC contact, and can be useful points of reference for all participants.

Consider options for, and define, the structure of the IPT to ensure that the basic tenets of an effective planning process are satisfied. (Refer to Section 2.0)

Determine procedural ground rules or protocol for inter-agency project management. Consider budget, chairperson, facilitation, media relations, time lines, staffing, training needs and specific agency roles. These topics will be revisited with the public participants during Step 2.

It is critical that the agencies be coordinated before formally approaching the public. Not only does this save time, it reinforces the credibility of the process.

Coordinate agencies before approaching the public.

definition:

Consensus building:

- is the development of a decision with group members working together rather than competing against each other. The goal is a decision that is consented to by all group members; however this does not mean that everyone must be completely satisfied with the outcome (total satisfaction is rare). Rather, the decision must be acceptable enough that all participants agree to support the group in choosing it (Avery, 1991).
- Consensus **is not** a vote, majority rule or a poll.
- Consensus **is** listening, as well as sincere attempts at understanding and learning.
- refer to Appendix 2 in *Land and Resource Management Planning, A Statement of Principles and Process.*

Funding and staffing

All agencies must state their financial and staff commitments to the LRMP process before it is initiated. This is usually done through the regional IAMC.

When a participating agency is clearly unable to provide adequate staff or finances to the LRMP project, then the IAMC has a responsibility to ensure that the agency's values are included in the analyses and final consensus or options.

A project budget must be prepared to enable the IPT to plan the next steps in the process, including the funding available for public participation. Allocating money to specific tasks will be done during Step 2, in cooperation with public participants.

Project budget

Participant funding can be a significant cost of operationalizing a planning process. Appendix 1 (Participation/Membership Considerations) and Appendix 2 (Miscellaneous Participation

Techniques and Issues) both address the topic of participant funding. If participant assistance funding is used, the IPT should identify an administrator. This person must receive and check receipts and issue cheques.

Refer to the IRPC project contact for information about other LRMPs' costs for specific planning steps or events.

Initial identification of values and interests

Early information gathering should grow out of a solid foundation.

This type of information gathering may begin before the official start of an LRMP process. With a clear understanding of the history of resource management in the area, and a sound familiarity with local interests, values and issues, the government participants will enhance their public credibility. Early research may also point out significant information gaps that can be inventoried before the LRMP process begins.

Based on personal and colleagues' experience, make a preliminary list of interest groups and individuals who may wish to be involved in the process. This list will be used to set up informal meetings. Remember that anyone directly affected by land use decisions, as well as any member of the public with an interest in land use or resource management, should be encouraged to participate.

Public consultation - identify who must be involved

Meet with interested groups and individuals and encourage all levels of participation in the planning process.

The IPT members should arrange informal, low key meetings with all identifiable user groups and other parties with an interest in the planning area. Meet at locations that are familiar to or convenient to the user groups (living rooms, offices, community centres, etc.).

Take time to outline the reason for doing a plan, and discuss the basic principles of LRMP. Make sure that potential participants are introduced to the meaning of integrated resource management, sustainable development and consensus building—and how these are critical foundations of the LRMP process.

Emphasize that extensive public participation is necessary for the success of the planning process. Potential public participants must be made aware that they are being offered a very wide range of options for involvement, and that they are the people who will decide how this involvement happens throughout the process. Explain that the final plan will reflect their values, as it will be created by consensus. Also, discuss the anticipated role of government staff (e.g. the IPT). Note that in Step 2, the IPT and the public must come to agreement on the desired level of participation. Find out what this level may be from all potential participants. Public desire and project budget constraints must be primary considerations.

This is the time to ask about the nature of each group's interest in the area and in the planning initiative.

Request the selection of a group representative to participate in an initial joint meeting of all participant groups during Step 1B.
Finally, determine if the group is aware of any other parties that should be contacted.

While it is ideal to have all interested people involved in the LRMP process from the start, it is important to look for missing interests throughout the process. Adopt the principle of inclusion rather than exclusion.

First Nations consultation

Active participation by First Nations in LRMP must be strongly encouraged by the IPT chairperson and LRMP planner. Where First Nations choose to participate, land and resource management plans will help meet the objectives of provincial policies on interim measures.

The IPT chairperson must contact aboriginal affairs staff of participating agencies to determine the current protocol for consultation with First Nations. If current protocol permits, all affected aboriginal communities should be personally contacted by the IPT chairperson or designate prior to the formal commencement of a planning initiative. Efforts to make personal contact versus letter writing or phoning are appreciated by aboriginal communities.

Things to think about during the planning process

Record keeping:

Documenting all parts of the process, including public participation, is important. This documentation will be the basis for evaluating the project. Also, written records can inform others (including government and public) of the benefits and pitfalls of different approaches.

In addition to documenting all steps that are taken to involve the public, it is important to ensure that records of all public meetings, and IPT meetings as appropriate, are copied and distributed to the participant groups. Public representatives should have the opportunity to correct, revise or make comments before notes are officially circulated. This will help to keep the process credible.

Initially, the IPT should arrange record keeping files as soon as the public become formally involved in the LRMP process. Rules for record keeping should be mutually decided and then documented in the terms of reference.

Mailing lists:

Begin assembling mailing lists during Step 1. There are various ways to categorize the participants.

One list should include all persons interested in the process. Another list should identify user/interest groups and reference centres where copies of your LRMP process documents will be available. Include the IPT address and phone number on your list so groups can be added if they wish.

An alternative grouping of participants is: participatory members; consultative members; and, general interest.

Be aware that many bands do not have the resources either human or financial, to participate fully.

Band councils should be consulted early in the planning process about how they would like to be involved or consulted, and how their interests and rights can and will be accommodated, in a 'without prejudice' context. Every effort must be made to understand and to avoid infringing upon aboriginal rights within the planning area.

Consult with general public - review range of participation options

Meet with the public to identify representatives and participation methods.

This particular task is optional. Previous, informal contacts with groups and individuals should provide the IPT with a fairly good understanding of who wants to be involved in the LRMP process, and how. By now, the public should also have a general understanding of the principles and process of LRMP.

However, if there are large numbers of people interested in being involved in the process, or if the general understanding of LRMP seems low, then a public meeting or workshop may be useful before starting Step 2.

The purpose of this event is to introduce the reasons for doing an LRMP, and to discuss the various steps that the public must be involved in for a successful plan to be created. It must be made clear to the public that this process needs extensive public participation for it to succeed, but that there are a variety of ways for this participation to take place (Refer to Appendix 2).

The meeting or workshop should be held at a central, convenient location and time (or more than one location and time for geographically dispersed populations). Arrange the logistics and advertise the meeting. (Refer to Appendix 2). Keep advertisements and invitations very simple and positive.

During the event, the IPT should be available to answer questions about the planning process and discuss suggestions.

Show that the process is flexible . . . and that the public will be fully involved.

Develop a registration system that can be used for preparing a mailing list. Make use of standard LRMP communication materials such as overheads, slideshows, displays or brochures. Any locally-designed communication products must conform to provincial standards and should highlight existing plans for the area (not future direction). In addition, public participation options should be clearly described. Remember that it is important to show that the planning process is flexible (within constraints of budget and policy), and that the planning process cannot begin before the public is fully involved.

It may be useful to display examples of LRMP products from other areas of the province. These may already have been collected during Step 1.

A participant survey may elicit several types of information.

Provide public comment forms or a questionnaire. This could also be mailed out in advance with the meeting notices or newspaper ads, with instructions to mail it to the IPT chairperson or drop it off at the meeting. Questions should focus on:

- appropriate or suggested involvement procedures and techniques (provide flexible options);
- issues and objectives that are important in the planning area; and,
- suggestions for process participants, facilitator, meeting venues, and project timing.

Tabulate the results and make them available to all participants.

Ensure that all people who attend receive notice of the next meeting.

Identify constituencies and establish communication links

About constituencies...

"...the requirements for membership are 'knowing' and 'caring', and those are not wholly determined by where someone happens to live."

(Behan. 1988. *American Forests*. July/August.)

These tasks can either be completed during the optional meeting of Step 1, or at the meeting or workshop held at the beginning of Step 2.

Because there are logistical limits to the number of people who can meaningfully participate in the planning process, it may be useful to build constituencies or common value groups that are then represented by one or two people at the planning table. Remember that some values may require both local and regional/provincial representatives.

The public can be asked to try to form logical groups of common interests. However, the planner and IPT chairperson may help to identify these constituencies by asking participants specific questions. These questions should focus on why the participants are interested in the LRMP process, and, given the principles behind LRMP, how may their interests be most effectively represented throughout the planning process.

Prior to or during this meeting, it may be useful to draft an outline for a communication strategy. A final version should be prepared during Step 2, when the details of the public participation process are discussed. The draft communication strategy should be prepared by both government and public participants. It should outline how all

It may be useful to draft a communication strategy and have participants draft statements of authority.

participants may best communicate information about the process to their constituencies and the general public, and how these groups can provide feedback to the participants. This may involve briefing sheets, a newsletter, phone and fax access, and schedules of community or association meetings (refer also to the box below).

More things to think about during the planning process

Newsletter:

The first edition of a simple newsletter may be prepared during Step 1. Each edition, recording the events of the preceding stage, should be distributed to groups and individuals on the mailing lists.

It may be useful to create a sub-committee (with members from both the IPT and the public) to write or edit the newsletter. An alternative, given funding, is to find a local independent writer who may attend one or several meetings, and write his/her impressions in a newsletter or briefing sheet format. Local media representatives may also be informed of the LRMP process, and invited to produce feature articles on the process events as they unfold.

Office services:

The IPT should provide office services to all formal public participants (members of committees or working groups). For example, the Kamloops team provided office space and assorted services (phone, fax, photocopier, computer) for the use of public groups participating in the planning process. Space in several different locations (depending on the size of your planning area) can be available on a reservation system so that public groups are equally able to inform and involve their constituencies.

In some cases, it may also be useful to have each public representative draft a statement of authority/accountability that can be endorsed by his or her constituency. This may be done later in Step 2, when the participant structure is operating smoothly. As part of the official planning record, these statements would outline:

- the membership or makeup of each group;
- the perspective that the group represents;
- how accountability is to be achieved; and,
- the nature of the authority of the spokesperson to speak on behalf of the sector.

Discuss plan objectives and evaluate opportunities for success

Meet to discuss plan objectives.

Both this and the following tasks may be best addressed through individual and small group consultations as part of Step 1, or at the first meeting/workshop in Step 2.

Prioritize your objectives.

All participants should be asked to brainstorm the possible objectives for the LRMP process and identify priority objectives from this list. It is each government representative's job to keep participants informed of

the relevant policy and guidelines that help to structure the process. Objectives may be as broad as "to encourage participation of all interests in the LRMP area."

Define a "successful" planning process.

It is important that the IPT and potential public participants take time to discuss the definition of a successful planning process. Participants must be asked if they feel that there are barriers to resolving any land use or resource management issues. These barriers can then be systematically addressed. If there appears to be an unresolvable issue, then refer to Appendix 1, "Terms of Reference and Procedural Considerations," where dispute resolution is discussed.

The results of this task should be documented, including:
- both the definition of a successful process; and,
- and any barriers to this outcome and possible solutions.

Accomplishments of Step 1:

- a trained inter-agency planning team
- a list of potential participants and their interests
- public interest group awareness of the LRMP process and alternatives for participation
- a statement of government funding and staffing commitments
- a draft list of values or constituencies that can be represented by individual(s) selected by public groups
- a list of draft objectives for the LRMP process
- a list of potential obstacles to success and options for their resolution
- newsletter #1 (optional)

Step 2 Plan initiation

Initiating the plan requires agreement on several details.

- agree (public and government representatives) on details of public participation process
- enable participants to select a mediator/facilitator where suitable and possible (given funding and need)
- develop terms of reference: agreement on process, roles and responsibilities, procedural ground rules, budget, chairperson(s) and time frame
- provide training for participants within funding limits

Suggested procedures *(Refer to Appendix 2 for further options)*

Agree on the public participation process/ select facilitator

Defining how the public wants to participate can be the most critical step in the consensus-building process.

In order to move to the next major task of drafting terms of reference, it is necessary to define how the public would like to participate in the rest of the LRMP process. This can be the most critical step in the consensus-building process. To do this, it may be most appropriate to hold a public meeting or workshop. It should be attended by the inter-agency planning team and all potential public participants (open to general public). Both members of the public and IPT representatives experienced in public participation should help organize this event. It should be professionally facilitated if funding permits.

Based on the feedback from Step 1 and on the interest of participants at this meeting/workshop, there should be general agreement on whether a formal public structure should be created (committee, board, advisory group) or if the public feels more comfortable participating at only key stages in the process, or, some other variation. Intensive public participation must be encouraged, and is likely to be preferred by interest groups.

Working with small groups

Holding a workshop, where break-out groups are used, or organizing special working sessions for LRMP participants takes special skills. These participation techniques can be very successful if they are well planned and chaired. If you are to be involved in arranging these types of small group events, be sure to find and read reference material on this subject ahead of time. Two good sources of information (see Appendix 3) are *A Manual for Group Facilitators*, by Auvine et al, and *The Manual on Public Involvement in Environmental Assessment: Planning and Implementing Public Involvement Programs*, volume three, *Praxis*. Also, ask for the advice of colleagues that have had success in working with small groups.

Do you need a facilitator?

The need for a facilitator during later planning steps will depend on:

- the public participation structure that is designed;
- the trust that exists among participants; as well as,
- the size of the group.

If there is good rapport within the participant group (government and public representatives), it may only be appropriate to hire a professional facilitator if there are large group activities, such as workshops during Steps 4 and 5.

The terms of reference will set the context for the whole process.

The products of this meeting or workshop will form a significant component of the terms of reference that are drafted next. This sets the context for the entire planning process. In order to adequately address the public participation component, the IPT and public participants should:

- discuss the definition of consensus and determine how it is to be used in the LRMP process [refer to "consensus building" box on page 8, and to Avery (1981), *British Columbia Round Table on Environment and Economy* (1991-Vols. 1 and 2) and Hansen (1992)].

- discuss and provide recommendations on general procedures for the initiative and for public participation during the process. These should include, for example, selection of the chair, media relations, mediation and dispute resolution techniques, committee structures and reporting relationships, facilitation and funding;

- determine, through consensus, the roles of the non-government participants in the process and their relationship to government. Remember that policy dictates certain parameters for this relationship. This may include the creation of some form of participant-driven steering committee or community resources board, with the composition determined at this workshop. (Further formal and informal meetings may be necessary to finalize a board's structure and function). If constituency or value groups were identified during Step 1, then their representatives would likely be members of this committee or board. A planning committee may be structured and mandated in various ways. However, the key interest groups and the government agencies should jointly decide how this can best function. Although it is unlikely, the public may choose not to become formally involved. What is more likely is that some people will want full participation while others will only want to be involved from time to time.

What are the participants' roles?

The public may want formal involvement or just prefer to be consulted on certain issues.

- determine, through consensus, the appropriate format and sequence (timing) for information exchange and for the collection of additional information/data as needed. This should include how local knowledge and expert opinion are to be used (see Step 3).

Extensive public participation is critical to the success of the planning process. Government participants must emphasize this, and make a special effort to ensure it is possible. Note that if, after direct consultation, the public does not wish to be extensively involved in the LRMP process, then it becomes the IPT's responsibility to ensure general public consultation occurs at key stages in the process. These stages are:

- identifying issues, values and objectives (Steps 1, 2 and 3);
- agreeing on a public participation approach (Step 2);
- writing terms of reference (Step 2);
- defining resource units (Step 4);
- developing and assessing scenarios (Step 5); and,
- reviewing consensus management direction or options report (Step 5).

Develop terms of reference

Developing terms of reference is the first step in building a consensus-based plan.

The key product of this step is a terms of reference document. Its contents must be acceptable to both government and public participants. This is the first step in building a consensus-based plan. There are several options for producing this document. If the public has chosen not to directly participate in the LRMP process, then the IPT must draft the terms of reference. If involved, the public representatives and the IPT may choose to agree on fundamental components of the terms of reference, and then direct the IPT and/or a sub-committee to draft an outline. Alternately, the public group may wish to be directly involved in drafting the document, and another workshop or meeting may be organized to do so. Remember that the public has a wide range of options for participation in the LRMP—and their choice will be reflected in the terms of reference.

If a community resources board or similar formal public committee has been established, it may be necessary to hold a follow-up meeting to finalize terms of reference for the LRMP process (and possibly for the committee as well). The group of public representatives and the IPT must come to consensus on the terms of reference for the LRMP that, as a minimum, include:

Contents of the terms of reference:

** Refer to LRMP, A Statement of Principles and Process*

- vision and objectives;
- description of plan area and map;
- principles of public participation;
- planning steps*;
- planning products*;
- structure of participants (organization of IPT and public representatives);
- procedural items, including rules for decision making (consensus, dispute resolution), collection and use of information, meetings, budget;
- schedule;
- list of participants (IPT and public) and constituencies or representative values; and,
- special definitions.

The terms of reference must be approved by the regional inter-agency management committee.

*A **joint steering committee** may be formed.*

As noted above, the public may wish to create a formal structure for continued involvement in the process. There are several types of intensive public participation structures that can be formed to link the IPT and the public. These structures may include:

- a joint steering committee, with both public and government representatives;
- a community resources board and an IPT;
- a public advisory group and an IPT; or,
- an IPT and public workshops, enhanced by informal consultation.

Refer to Appendix 2 for detailed descriptions of these structures.

For clarity, it will be assumed in these guidelines that a format has been created. Such a body will be referred to as the **joint steering committee**, or steering committee for short.

What is the role of the joint steering committee?

The specific roles and responsibilities of the steering committee should be clearly outlined in the terms of reference. Thing to consider are:

- Does it wish to be involved in technical analysis?
- Do members want to take a largely advisory role throughout the process?
- Are there specific stages in the planning process at which the committee should become directly involved?
- Is the committee going to write or edit reports and other products?
- Should the committee participate in the general administration of the process?

The terms of reference should outline how the steering committee will meet to discuss key topics throughout the LRMP process. Most likely, it will be informal meetings or facilitated workshops and other appropriate consensus-building meetings. *(Refer to further information regarding consensus-building techniques in Appendix 2B)*. The members of this committee should determine both the schedule and nature of these sessions.

Finalize a communication strategy.

Once the steering committee is in place, a final version of the communications strategy may be prepared. This may have been started during Step 1B, and should now be checked to ensure that it is consistent with the terms of reference.

Provide training for participants

Training should be equally accessible to all participants.

The public representatives on the joint steering committee must be offered training to provide them with a better understanding of some technical aspects of LRMP. This must include consensus building and shared decision making, conflict resolution and the general principles of LRMP.

These basic training components are strongly recommended for all participants. The steering committee may choose to make training mandatory in the terms of reference. The only exception is for those people who have already had this training, but they should be asked to help the facilitator or trainer. Training must be equally accessible to all participants. The LRMP project contact on the IRPC may be able to offer further advice on this step.

Accomplishments of Step 2:

- selection of a facilitator (given funding and need)
- a detailed outline of the public participation process, including a communications strategy
- terms of reference
- trained participants (given funding)

Step 3 Information assembly

- agree on information requirements and format
- identify how local knowledge and expert opinion will be used and incorporate this information in the inventory process
- identify all values and objectives (general)
- consult with general public

Suggested procedures *(refer to Appendix 2 for options)*

Step 3 is where the technical discussion begins. Once basic values are identified and information requirements are discussed early in Step 3, the next step is to delineate resource unit boundaries. This task may also be part of Step 4.

Important publications to read:

Before beginning any work during this stage, all key participants should read: *Resource Analysis Guidelines for Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia* (unpublished); *Social and Economic Impact Assessment for Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia;* and, *Resource Units in Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia.*

It should be noted that this step can be costly and very technical. The following tasks relate only to the public's role in information assembly; other tasks are outlined in the guidelines listed above.

Also keep in mind that the technical nature can become confusing to the non-expert. Maps—at standard scales, on boards, overheads, hand-outs and overlays—as well as satellite images, are powerful tools in helping the public understand the nature of land use and resource management issues. Make sure that maps are used throughout the process to illustrate the current state of resource values, as well as possible future scenarios.

Agree on information requirements and format

The planning participants may consider creating a sub-committee to address this topic. It is important to agree on what information is needed to complete a plan and to understand why such information is necessary. Invariably, this involves learning more about the scenario development step in the planning process. Participants must understand how scenarios are developed as well as what information they may need to effectively evaluate a range of scenarios. It is important for all participants to agree on the amount of information that is necessary to make land use and resource management decisions. Participants should be informed of the status of current inventories (scale, format, accuracy), as well as the cost of gathering new information.

Information requirements as well as research and analysis expertise and methods should be agreed in advance.

Normally, technical activities such as information gathering and analysis are conducted by designated experts. These people may be members of the IPT. The expertise and general methodologies for information gathering and analysis should be agreed in advance by the process participants (e.g. the steering committee).

In addition, the types of information and the formats in which it may be presented should be described to all participants so that they can

definitions:

Values:
- must be defined before discussing objectives;
- are basic principles or standards for the planning process; and,
- may also be expressed by sector.

Examples:
- biological diversity;
- clean water;
- historic sites;
- scenic landscapes; and,
- an example of a value statement - "Our group places high value on endangered wildlife habitat."

Objectives:
- are the desired outcomes or targets for land use and resource management;
- must reflect personal/organizational values;
- are what the participants want to achieve; and,
- must be mutually acceptable if consensus is to be reached; otherwise, create options.

Example:
- to **maintain** biodiversity within this area.

Strategy:
- is a specific number or instruction that will achieve your objective on the ground;
- has quantifiable/measurable management instructions;
- is expressed by indicators; and,
- is not necessarily mutually acceptable, thus you develop options (sets of strategies).

Example:
- more than 10 per cent of total plan area to be protected in protected areas distributed among all biogeoclimatic zones (includes 60 per cent of river foreground buffers, all recreational lakes and trail foreground buffers, and five per cent of grizzly bear habitat).

understand how these factors impact analysis results. This is important because the participants must believe the results of research and analysis to be credible.

Local knowledge and expert opinion

Local knowledge is an important source of information.

These can be key sources of information for the planning process. Local knowledge and expert opinion may be the only source of information for resources that do not have formal inventories. It is important to note those people who can provide this type of special knowledge and ensure that their comments are part of the official record. It is advantageous and desirable to incorporate their input in analysis. For example, local knowledge is critical to socio-economic analysis. The protocol for using this information must be noted in the terms of reference.

After data has been collected by agencies or experts, the IPT may want to consider having such information verified, based on local knowledge.

Identify general values and objectives and information requirements

Participants must believe in the results of research and analysis.

An important task of Step 3 is to identify general values and objectives. Some of this information may already have been obtained during Step 1. This should now be compiled by the planner. However, broad objectives for land and resource management within the plan area may also be brainstormed by the joint steering committee at this stage. This may naturally lead to discussions about resource unit boundaries and specific resource unit objectives. Keep in mind that detailed negotiations on objectives and strategies should not occur until Step 4.

Resource unit boundaries may need to be drafted for discussion.

Before Step 4 is begun, the IPT members may be asked to draft (for discussion only) resource unit boundaries based on ecological and physical attributes (see guidelines), as well as brief descriptions of the bio-physical and socio-economic characteristics of each resource unit. The joint steering committee may wish to be involved in writing the descriptions. This input should be supplemented by information from acknowledged local experts (see earlier references in Step 3). These descriptions provide a good base for discussions with all participants about management objectives for each unit (see Step 4).

Consult with general public

An open house may be required to give the public an opportunity to review documents and comment on the process.

The general public must have an opportunity to view and comment on the results of the planning process at this point. Any documents, such as terms of reference, plan objectives and inventory maps, should be reproduced, distributed to participating organizations and displayed at

convenient, accessible public reference centres (e.g. storefront offices or libraries). This should be advertised. It may also be appropriate to invite specific interest groups to meet with the planning participants to discuss the project and solicit feedback.

During this step, the planning participants should produce at least one edition of the newsletter for circulation to those on the general mailing list.

Accomplishments of Step 3:

- newsletter, edition #2 (optional)
- draft resource unit boundaries and resource unit descriptions (optional, may not occur until Step 4)
- list of general values and objectives for the LRMP area
- general public comments on products of Steps 1, 2 and 3

Step 4 Scenario development

- define resource unit boundaries
- develop land use and resource management objectives and strategies
- identify consensus land use and resource management direction or discuss scenarios
- analyze and assess impacts of consensus or scenarios

Resource units are a key tool for accommodating interests.

Suggested procedures *(Refer to Appendix 2 for further options)*

Define resource unit boundaries

Steps 4 and 5 may involve three to five meetings or workshops. Keep in mind that a lot of learning takes place during these steps. Extra working sessions may be needed to clarify all participants' values and how they can be translated into objectives and strategies.

At the start of this step, the joint steering committee should review the definition and function of resource units. It is important to show that resource units are the key tool for accommodating interests.

Map-based resource units are a fundamental tool for developing a consensus management direction. The process of deciding upon resource unit boundaries can be an important first step in developing a sense of common purpose among planning participants. Refer to *Resource Units in Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia* for details on how to complete this task.

Defining resource unit boundaries can be an important step to developing a common purpose among participants.

Remember that resource unit boundaries are just tools to help set management direction at a workable, logical scale. Drawing resource unit lines can be an iterative process. The boundaries can be flexible and may change at later stages in the process, if it facilitates reaching consensus on land use and resource management.

Focus on areas of agreement first.

When discussing boundaries, management objectives or strategies, it is always best to focus first on areas of agreement. When all agreement has been noted, return to areas of disagreement. This approach helps to focus early discussion on positive ideas and saves time by reducing the number of areas that are subject to negotiation.

For those LRMP projects with many direct participants, the two-day workshop format has worked well in the past to arrive at consensus on these boundaries. As noted in Step 3, several tasks may be combined during such a session. The complexity of the issues to be addressed, as well as the number of people involved in the process, will determine the number of steps that can be comfortably amalgamated into a single working session.

Optimize the knowledge of local experts and professionals at workshops.

If break-out groups are used as part of a workshop, assign each group a specific portion of the LRMP area or number of resource units for discussion. Regional staff and IRPC members are available and have experience in facilitating break-out groups. Ensure that people with knowledge about a specific geographic area are placed in corresponding working groups. Also make sure that interests are balanced within each group and that people with technical expertise are available to answer questions. After several hours of discussion, bring the working groups together to compare notes and permit general comment.

Be aware that participants may not be comfortable discussing some topics in break-out groups. For instance, if the 'conservation' sector has only one or two representatives and there are more than two break-out groups wanting to discuss this topic, then it may be better addressed by the larger group.

It is important to note that areas discussed and recommendations developed in break-out groups are not final. Participants in other groups will have an opportunity to review and comment on all products of these sessions.

It may be beneficial to have these workshops facilitated by a neutral professional in order to build consensus and reassure participants of impartiality. It may also be appropriate to invite local people with special knowledge of the plan area to this workshop. The rules for using this type of expertise should already be documented in the terms of reference, in a section dealing with information gathering and presentation. Make sure that these 'experts' are placed in working

groups that will benefit the most from their knowledge. Experts should only attend meetings to provide information, not to negotiate solutions (unless they are already members of the joint steering committee).

Also try to ensure that any mapped information on resource units (resource inventories, land use status, etc.) is transferred to large scale maps that can be easily read by all members of workshop groups. Overhead overlays work well. Make copies for each working group.

Develop objectives and strategies, define land use direction or scenarios

Discuss and set management objectives for each resource unit.

This task is part of the two day workshop, although more workshops or meetings are likely necessary to finish this step. Once resource unit boundaries are drawn, the next step is to discuss and set management objectives for each resource unit, then to write management strategies that describe how to achieve these objectives by different means (objectives may already have been discussed during Step 3 - bring this information forward).

It may be helpful to arrange extra training for participants on the subject of scenarios and analysis, as these are fairly technical subjects that many people do not find easy to understand. This understanding is necessary if participants are to negotiate realistic management objectives and strategies.

Use the same procedures for structuring working groups as described above for creating resource units. Also ensure that the same quality of reference material on resource management and land use is provided to the working groups. A socio-economic base case description of the LRMP area should be prepared and ready at this time. If any information gaps were identified during earlier steps, address them now before final negotiations begin.

It is likely that a range of scenarios will need to be tested for areas where agreement is not readily achieved.

It is possible that the participants may come to mutual agreement on land use and resource management in all resource units within one or two meetings. However, it is more likely that a range of hypothetical situations, or scenarios, will need to be described and tested for those areas where immediate agreement is not possible. Negotiations toward consensus are based on the research and analysis of these scenarios. Generally, any management direction that is acceptable to all participants should be common to all scenarios.

Complete analyses

Scenario analysis

Please refer to *Social and Economic Impact Assessment in Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia* and *Resource Analysis Guidelines for Land and Resource Management Planning in British Columbia* (unpublished) for a detailed explanation of analysis procedures.

The joint steering committee should be involved in setting direction for the analysis of scenarios. In particular, it should be consulted on the development and use of indicators for multi-resource, social and economic analysis. Public representatives should understand that impacts on their interests are measured through the use of such indicators. Socio-economic and multi-resource analyses may then be completed for each scenario or the consensus management direction. Negotiations continue based on the analysis results during Step 5.

The resource unit map, the resource unit management objectives and strategies, and the analysis reports (expressed as simply as possible) should be provided to all interest groups and public reference centres in the distribution system.

Accomplishments of Step 4:

- resource unit map
- resource unit descriptions (and overhead overlay maps of inventories)
- draft resource management objectives and strategies for each resource unit and draft scenarios for the LRMP area
- socio-economic and multi-resource analysis reports
- newsletter, editions #3 and #4 (optional)

Step 5 Building an agreement

- general public review
- review analyses and public comments, and short-list land use and resource management scenarios
- negotiate a consensus land and resource management direction (draft options if no consensus)
- review consensus management direction or options report with the general public (optional)

Suggested procedures *(Refer to Appendix 2 for further options)*

General public review

Newsletters can keep all interested persons and groups informed about the LRMP's progress. As well, official minutes and research reports should be copied and distributed to central locations (e.g. storefront offices or libraries).

When presenting the work of the planning participants to the general public, it is important to show that this information has been produced by a representative and balanced group of people from both government and the public. Describe the length of the process, milestones along the way, the working principles of the committee (consensus, conflict resolution, etc.) and the ultimate goals of the LRMP process.

The public should be encouraged to:
- *review the consensus management direction or scenarios; and,*
- *write letters and submissions.*

It is likely that the steering committee has come to consensus on the land use and management objectives for some areas, while scenarios have been developed for those areas where some disagreement or uncertainty exists. Let the general public know that their input is critical to helping the steering committee reach consensus on the remaining areas of disagreement. Ensure that questionnaires or comment sheets focus on these areas. If consensus has been reached for the entire LRMP area, then this must be presented to the general public for comment.

At open houses and/or public meetings, and through printed advertisements and newsletters, the general public should be encouraged to review the consensus management direction or scenarios and their analyses, that were completed during Step 4. Written submissions (letters and/or briefs) should be encouraged. Careful cataloguing, content analysis and filing of these submissions is essential.

Sixty days should be given for the general public to comment on the steering committee's work. This should be advertised. The steering committee must review the comments, and ensure that the consensus or options that are subsequently developed reflect general public desire. This must be documented.

Review analyses and short-list scenarios/negotiate consensus

If a consensus management direction has not yet been reached, then several more meetings or a facilitated workshop may be held according to a schedule that is decided by the steering committee.

The steering committee works to build a single management direction to address all interests.

After accepting the expert analysis of the scenarios (if developed) or consensus management direction, and reviewing the general public's comments, the steering committee works to build a single management direction that addresses all interests. The objective is to produce, to the greatest degree possible, a consensus direction for management within each resource unit.

If consensus is not reached after significant effort, then a set of agreeable options should be prepared by the steering committee. These should reflect the range of values and objectives already described during the process. Repeat analyses as outlined in Step 4.

Review consensus or options with the general public

Ideally, the designated public representatives should take responsibility for consulting with their constituencies. During the consensus-building process the distribution of information and reports is the responsibility of the joint steering committee.

It may not be necessary to ask the public for further comments at this point.

When a consensus management direction (or an agreeable set of options, if consensus is not achieved) has been described and analyzed, it must be presented to the general public for final comment. If consensus was reached, then general public comments must be appended to the report when it is forwarded for approval. If an options report was written, then general public comments must formally be recorded, then incorporated into the options.

Accomplishments of Step 5:

- a consensus management direction or an options report and supporting documents
- newsletter, edition #5 (optional)

Step 6 Approval

- forward consensus or options for review and approval

Suggested procedures

Submission to regional inter-agency management committee

The publicly-endorsed consensus management direction with accompanying documentation (resource unit map, scenarios considered, analysis, record of public participation and comment) must be submitted to the regional inter-agency management committee for comment. If the steering committee cannot reach consensus, then an acceptable range of options must be negotiated and submitted in an options report, with relevant documentation.

The regional inter-agency management committee may request additional information, further consideration of implications or continued efforts to achieve consensus. In any of these cases, the public must be notified of the regional committee's request, and be invited to participate in further work on the plan.

Review and comment by ADMs and approval by ministers

Once the inter-agency management committee has reviewed the consensus management direction or options report and appended any comments and recommendations, the report is forwarded to the Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) of participating agencies. Assistant Deputy Ministers, at their discretion, may seek input from other agency

ADMs or C.O.R.E. The ADMs review, append comments and recommendations, and forward all appropriate material to the approving ministers.

If the consensus management direction is approved or an option is chosen by the ministers, then the joint steering committee prepares the final plan and ensures that the general public is informed of the decision.

It is important to note that all LRMP products, once approved by the participants, are not altered in any way prior to submission to the approving ministers. Comments or recommendations from the IAMC or ADMs are simply appended to LRMP documents. If changes are requested, then all LRMP participants must be involved in the editing process and must agree to the final products that are resubmitted for approval.

Accomplishments of Step 6:

- final submission to government
- final plan

Step 7 Implementation, monitoring and review, and amendment

- implement and monitor the plan as outlined in terms of reference
- participate in a periodic review of the plan

Suggested procedures

Implement and monitor plan

Specific monitoring and review procedures, in the context of general government policy, should be defined in the plan by the steering committee.

The plan is ready to implement and monitor.

The steering committee may want to consider forming a monitoring committee. Its purpose may be to periodically review the implementation of the plan, focusing on any local land use issues that emerge.

Alternatively, the joint steering committee may wish to meet annually to be updated on the success of the plan, regardless of whether or not there has been an expressed need for review.

A monitoring committee may be considered.

Membership on a monitoring committee should include public representatives, and may be based on the same parameters that formed the joint steering committee. It should adopt working procedures similar to those outlined in the LRMP's terms of reference.

Any public comments received by the monitoring committee or regional interagency management committee must be included in an annual monitoring report. This may be distributed to the LRMP mailing list.

Details of the plan should be readily available to any member of the public. The use of public reference centres and the routine distribution of updated information to public groups are appropriate techniques.

Review and amendment

Coordinating amendments

Unscheduled amendments may be made at any time after the plan is approved. Recommendations for amendments can be coordinated by the monitoring committee or the regional interagency management committee. Broad public participation is required.

Every plan is subject to a full public review beginning in the eighth year and ending in the tenth year after approval. The review may occur earlier if the regional IAMC decides that issues cannot be resolved through amendments.

When it occurs, the plan review should feature public displays, advertisements and possibly open houses to present the plan and any proposed amendments. Following these sessions, formal public meetings may be scheduled to hear general public concerns and issues. Other public forums may be organized as the monitoring committee and/or IPT deems appropriate.

The review may result in a complete rewrite of the plan, in which case new terms of reference must be created by government and public representatives.

All reviews or amendments are subject to the same approval process as the original LRMP.

Accomplishments of Step 7:

- monitoring committee (optional)
- annual monitoring reports
- formal 10-year public review report or terms of reference for new plan

Appendix 1: Common questions and answers

As a participant in an LRMP process, you will have many steps to consider. The following questions and answers are presented to assist you when beginning an LRMP process.

Initial considerations

What are the goals/objectives for the project and for public participation?

- to reach final decisions that have general acceptance across society, and are therefore more stable and enduring
- a final plan that is sustainable environmentally, economically and socially (refer to C.O.R.E.'s *Report on a Land Use Strategy for British Columbia*, 1992)
- a final plan that is drafted using consensus decision-making and the broadest possible public participation
- refer to Step 3 for further details
- refer to *Land and Resource Management Planning - Principles and Process*

How extensive should public involvement be in the LRMP project? What are the expectations of the general public and of key public groups?

The extent of public involvement is flexible.

- public participation is mandatory in the LRMP process
- the extent of public involvement is flexible; it depends on the desire of the public to be involved and is bounded by the government policy for LRMP
- the general public will have a wide variety of expectations; it is up to the members of the IPT to determine what these may be in Step 1
- extensive public participation must be encouraged by the IPT, as it can only serve to strengthen the power of final LRMP products

Who will initiate, design and eventually manage the process?

Managing the process should be a joint effort between the IPT and public representative.

- the plan is officially initiated by the participating agencies, with the endorsement of the regional interagency management committee; however, members of the public may approach the regional interagency management committee with proposals for beginning or reviewing an LRMP process

- the IPT or regional interagency management committee appoints a planner to support day-to-day planning activities throughout the LRMP process
- ideally, management of the process should be a joint effort between public representatives and the IPT

How can process credibility and public confidence be developed?

Credibility and public confidence

- government must not pre-judge what the public wants; procedures or products must have broad public support
- the first Step of the LRMP process is critical; government agencies must be organized before going to the public, but must be very careful not to decide the way the process will unfold without full public participation
- government representatives should be able to clearly describe alternative participation methods as well as indicate what the LRMP products may look like; these descriptions should show the public that there is structure and substance to the LRMP process
- all participants must show openness and a willingness to listen
- an impartial facilitator can build public confidence when a process is dealing with complex issues and varied personalities
- read Section 3.0

What role should the government agencies adopt? What roles are played by public groups? What is the general public's role?

The guidelines provide flexibility in participants' roles.

- read *Land and Resource Management Planning - Principles and Process*
- there is flexibility in each of these participants' roles; agencies often can act as facilitators, and always provide technical support as members of the IPT; public groups may appoint representatives to a public committee or may choose to use a system of 'values' to decide participation so that there is less duplication of viewpoints—these representatives may take a lead role in managing the process or may act as advisors to the IPT; the general public is most often involved indirectly in the process; however, there may be people who are not affiliated with a particular public group who want to formally participate—as a rule, you should not exclude anyone from direct participation

How can inter-agency cooperation be fostered?

Inter-agency cooperation

- with the assistance of the regional inter-agency management committee
- operate on a consensus decision-making basis
- establish all budgetary commitments to the process before you go to the public

What resources will be required to ensure an efficient and successful process? What is government's commitment to the project?

Resources and government commitment

- project priorities are established provincially; approved priorities for each region are funded by the IAMC
- resources include staff, information and money (to fund public participation activities, analyses, facilitation, etc.)

How long might the process take? Should time limits or guidelines be established?

The LRMP should be completed in less than two years.

- the LRMP process should be completed in less than two years
- time lines are included in the terms of reference and should be regularly reviewed by all participants to ensure that the schedule is kept

How best can the key public groups and interests be brought into the process?

Bringing groups into the process

- it depends on the local situation—how many groups exist and to what degree they participate in current resource management projects
- an open, personally delivered invitation to participate may be the best first step in encouraging involvement, followed by a phone call of encouragement

Are general educational materials on the planning process and public participation available for circulation?

General education materials

- there are many books available that discuss the concepts of land use planning, public participation and consensus building
- refer to Appendix 3
- training and communication materials for LRMP are available from the IRPC; these include overheads, a slide show, display and communication standards

Are staff sufficiently prepared/trained to manage a public involvement process? What further training might be needed?

Training

- if you are preparing for an LRMP process for the first time, agency staff may require training on the procedures for shared decision making and consensus; the IRPC has several standard training components for LRMP and can recommend professional instructors when they are needed

- introductory workshops/seminars on these and other LRMP guidelines may be appropriate for all participants; check with your LRMP project contact on the IRPC to arrange for such training

What are the needs for non-government expertise or contract services?

In-house or contract services?

- this must be part of the budgeting process (Steps 1 and 2)
- can independent experts provide useful training or can this be provided internally?
- is their a suitable 'neutral' person available to chair the joint steering committee (consult with the public before deciding!); if not, you may need to hire a professional facilitator as chairperson (refer to Appendix 2B)
- if you hold public workshops, a professional facilitator is highly recommended
- in most cases, it is useful to provide training for your public representatives, once they have been decided, on the use of consensus and the guidelines associated with the LRMP process—this may be a combined session with agency staff, depending on the amount of technical information that must be presented
- information collection and analysis may also be contracted if expertise is not available in-house

Participation/membership considerations

What public interest groups should be invited to participate?

Invitations to participate

- all interested groups and individuals must be welcomed and encouraged to participate

Group size

Should the number of direct participants be limited to ensure that the group size can work well? How might this be accomplished to the satisfaction of all interest groups?

- initial numbers should not be limited; however, collaboration/ consolidation of interests should be encouraged; those people chosen to represent a number of groups or interests should be responsible for informing their constituents of planning issues; this procedure can be documented in the terms of reference
- if you have an overwhelming number of people who wish to be direct participants, you may wish to hire a professional facilitator to help design a process that is acceptable to all participants—some participation techniques, such as workshops (suggested maximum 30 people) or community resources boards (suggested maximum 15 people), have logistical limits to the number of people who can participate effectively

What methods of information distribution will be most effective in notifying the public of the opportunity to participate?

Contacting potential participants

- direct personal contact by agency staff is the most effective first step in notifying potential interest groups
- supplement this with the use of local media resources: newspaper ads, newspaper feature articles, television interviews, posters in key locations, direct mail-outs, radio announcements

How can representatives ensure that they have the authority to represent their group?

Authority to represent a group

- outline preliminary ideas for building collaborative relationships during Step 1B
- establish the final rules for representation during Step 2
- if authority is a critical concern for participants, they may wish to obtain written authority to participate as an official spokesperson from their constituents
- refer to Appendix 2B

Is there an approach which will ensure a balance between general public values and participant interests?

An 'open chair' can represent broader interests

- it may be desirable to have one or two people on the steering committee who represent no particular interest; this would be left to the wider group to decide by consensus; one way to do this is to have an 'open chair' at each meeting that one guest may occupy
- a local elected official may chose to participate
- open houses and other events targeted to the general public must be held at key points throughout the process

Should there be funds to assist interest group participation? How can these be fairly distributed among the participating agencies and fairly allocated to appropriate participants?

Interest group funding

- refer to the 1993 Interim Participant Assistance Policy for all agencies; C.O.R.E. is also addressing this issue
- check with each agency for internal interim policies on assistance and reimbursement of expenses
- the regional inter-agency management committee must approve this funding
- this issue must be addressed in the budget prepared during Step 2

What venues and meeting times will best serve the needs of the majority of interests?

Meeting times and locations

- consult with local groups; if participant assistance is not available, evenings and weekends will be preferable; locations may be rotated to give all participants equal access
- open houses, and other events designed for the general public should be held at central locations throughout your planning area; this often means three to six locations

How do we ensure that all interest groups have relatively equal ability to participate, considering both human resources and finances?

Ability to participate

- provide office services and out-of-pocket expense reimbursement
- encourage collaboration between interest groups so that more human resources are available to address common interests

How are provincial interests and policies represented in the process?

Provincial interests

- by the IPT and its contacts with the regional interagency management committee

Terms of reference and procedural considerations

Who develops and approves the terms of reference?

Terms of reference

- all participants develop the terms of reference through consensus, although the IPT may prepare a rough outline for early discussion
- the terms of reference must be approved by the regional inter-agency management committee (refer to Step 2)

Who decides what technical information is necessary?
What will be the source(s)?

Technical information and sources

- the public representatives must be comfortable with the type of information that is used to develop the consensus management direction or scenarios; information sources should be jointly agreed upon by the IPT and the public committee
- information sources should be discussed openly and participants should have the opportunity to ask questions and resolve any information concerns before analysis begins
- refer to Step 3

What information should be made available? Is there information that an agency should withhold?

- within the limits of funding and time, all information must be available for discussion by the IPT and the public committee
- all draft documents should be displayed at a central location, such as a library or storefront office, for general reference
- refer to the *Freedom of Information Act*

How can the process deal with the issue of timber harvesting while the plan is being developed?

- the Ministry of Forests should, wherever possible, identify and implement measures to ensure that sensitive areas are managed with special care during the course of a planning process
- areas where timber harvesting or other forms of development are scheduled throughout the duration of the LRMP process should be identified by the Ministry
- areas where LRMP participants have concerns about development should be recorded
- LRMP participants should then determine whether or not concerns can be accommodated informally or in existing planning and decision-making processes; the participants may be able to arrive at an informal agreement with the logging company or the Ministry of Forests to defer timber harvesting or take other mitigating measures in sensitive areas pending the outcome of the planning process
- where participants' concerns have not been addressed to their satisfaction and a response is requested, the Ministry of Forests will respond in writing; the response must explain why operational harvesting plans cannot be adjusted to accommodate the concerns expressed by participants

How does the LRMP process take into account local planning?

- local plans that fall within the LRMP boundaries should be identified during the earliest stages in the process and copies of local planning documents should be available for discussion during the information assembly and scenario development steps
- agencies and public representatives involved in local plans may recommend to the IAML to delay, stop or continue various processes if the issues can be better addressed through the LRMP
- the LRMP participants may make recommendations to the IAMC regarding the start-up of new local plans during the course of the LRMP process
- the final land and resource management plan provides direction for future local planning and may specifically recommend that a local plan be initiated

Should written replies be provided to participant or public concerns?

Responses

- yes, always

Why hold meetings or workshops?

- at key steps throughout the planning process, meetings or workshops are intended to:
  - share information between the IPT and the public; and,
  - direct research and data gathering (as needed) and discuss results.

Should an independent chairperson be involved?
What credentials are necessary?

Independent chairperson

- the chairperson of a project committee must be acceptable both to agencies and the public; to accomplish this, the ideal chairperson must be perceived as fair, educated and impartial to outcome
- when a completely impartial chairperson is unavailable, especially due to funding limitations, the person appointed by the project committee must attempt to remain neutral and must be well versed in LRMP procedures and consensus-based processes

What consensus-building procedures and techniques are appropriate?

Consensus building

- refer to details in Step 1 (Preliminary Organization)
- there are several good reference books on this topic; refer to the recommended reading the Appendix 3

What dispute resolution techniques are available to the process?

Dispute resolution

- a dispute resolution process should be defined during Step 2 and documented in the terms of reference
- alternative methods for dispute resolution include the use of a mutually acceptable facilitator, referral to the regional inter-agency management committee, and, in particularly difficult circumstances, referral to the assistant deputy ministers' committee or to processes to be defined by the C.O.R.E.
- obtain copies of dispute resolution guidelines from other LRMPs (ie. Robson Valley)

Should there be training programs for consensus building and workshop facilitation for staff and/or public representatives before the process is initiated? How can this be provided?

Training

- yes, during Steps 1 and 2
- ask your LRMP project contact on the IRPC for access to the standard training materials
- there are government staff capable of providing training on specific topics; if funding permits, training and facilitation may be provided by private consultants

What if local scenarios or values are inconsistent with the provincial setting? How do we ensure that the options and the consensus management direction or options report considers both local and provincial values?

Addressing local and provincial values

- the socio-economic analysis and resource analysis techniques are designed to address both local and provincial values
- agency representatives are expected to bring information from the provincial perspective to the planning process; they should know the regional and provincial significance of local resources; and, they should have a clear understanding of provincial legislation, policies and regulations so that they can advise participants on those activities or actions that are possible, those that are not possible, and those that may have an impact on provincial priorities.

What recourse is there if a public group is unwilling to accept the process?

Disagreement with the process

- if consensus is attempted, but not achieved, differences must be noted in minutes or other appropriate official record; points of disagreement accompany the consensus management direction or options report to the regional inter-agency management committee who may request more information from all participants
- if a public group is approached at the same time as all other groups and is offered equal opportunity to participate but chooses not to, this should be noted on the official record and submitted with the consensus management direction or options report

Appendix 2: Participation techniques

This appendix offers basic information about commonly used techniques. Each public participation process should be developed in cooperation with all potential participants.

A. Key participation techniques

The following techniques are listed in order of the intensity of public participation. This is not an exhaustive list.

Steering committee/round table

Shared decision making

What: The steering committee is a joint project management team composed of both government and public representatives. It operates under the principles of consensus decision making and within the LRMP policy parameters.

Why: This technique provides the most intense form of public participation in the LRMP process. The steering committee coordinates the planning process, facilitates communications within interest groups and between interests, develops and negotiates packages of information, issues, proposals and recommendations for broader constituency and public review, and designs public participation procedures to facilitate public discussion throughout the LRMP process.

When: The steering committee should be set up during Steps 1 and 3 of the LRMP process. During Step 1, the range of interests or values in the area is determined and potential participants are noted. Step 2 formalizes the management structure in the terms of reference.

Who: Public and government representatives from the full range of value perspectives or interests in the LRMP area should be present. Ideally, this includes the general public, public interest groups, First Nations and all levels of government agencies.

Community resources board

Autonomous groups of public representatives

What: The community resources board is a new concept, and is still evolving. Three broad criteria may distinguish a board:

- it consists of autonomous groups of public representatives that works in liaison with government to address resource management issues of common concern;

- it is involved in a mandated planning process (e.g. LRMP); and,
- it represents the full range of interested parties whose representatives have the recognized ability to negotiate on behalf of their constituencies (or representatives value perspectives) with government agencies to reach consensus on an outcome which can be implemented.

Why: The general reason for forming a board is to have a degree of ongoing public control over a planning process and influence on resource management, without strong or direct influence by government. The board may share responsibility for the public component of the LRMP process.

A board allows some ongoing public control.

When: Ideally, a board should be set up before terms of reference for the process are finalized. The board may have its own terms of reference, so long as the LRMP terms of reference are compatible. However, a board can be set up at any time and then merge with the planning process—it may not necessarily be associated only with the LRMP process.

Who: Motivation for creating a board can only come from the public, although agencies are responsible for presenting information on the range of public participation opportunities to the public. The board usually meets separately from the IPT, although joint meetings should be held periodically. Technical staff from the IPT may be invited to attend board meetings as necessary.

Public advisory group

What: This is a formal group or committee that is set up specifically to provide direct comment to the IPT throughout the LRMP process. It may be integrated with the IPT so that separate meetings are not necessary. In other cases, the two groups may function separately, except during key steps in the planning process (see Step 2). It is composed of representatives of all resource interests in the plan area who have responsibility to report to their constituencies. Business is conducted by consensus.

An advisory group provides direct comment to the IPT and ensures consistent public participation for LRMP.

Why: The public advisory group is established by the public so that there is consistent public participation throughout the LRMP process.

When: A group should be formed before the terms of reference for the LRMP process are finalized.

Who: Members are representative of all resource values or public interests in the LRMP area. As in community resources boards, they should have the endorsement of their constituencies.

Working group

Working groups provide a range of perspectives.

Why: Working groups bring together selected people with a range of perspectives on a topic. The objective is to discuss and assess the general issues of importance, determine priorities and establish preferences for general procedures and terms of reference. Working groups are also set up to specifically address technical issues such as information gathering and analysis.

Small and informal

When: Working group meetings may be held early in a process as part of Step 1 (Preliminary Organization). During the later stages, a working group of public interest and agency representatives, concerned with a particular aspect of a project, might also be formed.

Who: Working groups should be small and informal, attended by not more than 10 persons. The attendees should represent a cross-section of perspectives. Representation of official interest group positions is not desired at such sessions. The facilitator or chairperson of a working group must be perceived as neutral.

Where: Informal settings, usually removed from the premises of any of the participants.

Planning workshops

All participants attend

What: These are joint working sessions attended by representatives of all participant groups (agencies and public representatives). The objectives include exchanging background information, evaluating information needs, and developing consensus on procedures, terms of reference, resource unit delineation and negotiating management direction.

When: Planning workshop(s) should start early in the process and continue to be held throughout it.

Who: Delegated representatives of all interest groups and participating agencies.

Where: The location and facility must be accessible and reasonably convenient to the majority of the participants. If groups are geographically dispersed, it is important to have representatives attend a central workshop.

How: During informal, preliminary meetings, ask each group to identify a representative (and alternates) to attend such subsequent workshops and meetings.

Consult with all groups to determine a central location and time; these should be decided at general meetings.

Identify and resolve financial barriers to participation.

Use an independent facilitator.

Whenever possible, use an independent facilitator to run the workshop. This will reduce concern that the sessions are controlled by any one sector and will allow members of the planning team to more fully participate.

Break into smaller groups.

It is usually essential to break into smaller groups during a workshop to accomplish specific tasks. For instance, when discussing resource units management strategies, each working group should focus on only one to three units. Areas of agreement should be discussed first and recorded. Areas of disagreement can be noted, and then solutions can be negotiated by using scenarios to test ideas. Analysis following the workshop will help point to likely solutions. Each working group reports back to the larger group so that all participants can review and comment on different geographic areas.

Produce draft report

The facilitator should promptly produce a draft report summarizing the workshop. This should be circulated to the participants for comment. A finalized report should then be made available to the public.

Forums, seminars and conferences

Formal and semi-formal events

What: These are formal or semi-formal events held to share and learn about technical information and ideas presented by a range of experts.

When: The scale and formality are dependent upon the nature of the project. They are held when there is a need for all participants to obtain a common understanding of technical issues.

Who: Delegated and invited representatives of all interest groups and other invited members of the public; representatives (including working level and decision level) of participating agencies; experts from government, academia, and the private sector.

Where: A location central to the geographic scope of the project and the distribution of participant groups.

Public interest group consultations

Separate, informal meetings can be used to initiate dialogue

Why: These are informal meetings between representatives of the IPT and interest groups. Each group warrants a separate meeting. The purpose is to initiate direct dialogue with each major interest group (such as First Nations councils, guide-outfitters, farming associations, tourism operators, outdoor recreation groups, forest companies, environmental associations, energy and mining representatives). This is the first opportunity to discuss the general nature of the project and to exchange preliminary information about issues, values and objectives, as well as tentative procedures and terms of reference. Substantive discussion of issues or their resolution should not occur at such meetings.

When: These discussions should occur during Step 1 (Preliminary Organization), but may also be necessary or appropriate if specific disputes or communication problems develop that may be best resolved by private discussion.

Who: Representatives of the planning team or the professional facilitator meet with each public group.

Where: The meetings may be preceded by telephone discussion, depending on the distance between the IPT members and the public interests. If a facilitator is used early in the process, he or she may also wish to contact the groups personally. The personal consultations are best held at locations chosen by each public group and may be private offices or facilities. Alternatively, a no-host meeting room may be rented.

How: Listen, document, draw, discuss—but do not defend.

Public meetings, community meetings

Community meetings can be volatile when tension exists.

What: Public meetings are normally semi-formal or formal sessions at which there are both registered and unregistered presentations. Be aware that this format can be volatile and may not be appropriate in circumstances where there is significant tension among interests.

Why: These are structured opportunities for the general public to hear and make comment. Public groups, government agencies and the general public are encouraged to attend, listen, raise questions and make presentations to the chairperson, panel, or facilitator.

When: Public meetings should be well advertised and normally occur (1) in the early stage of a planning process, as part of the Preliminary Organization (Assessment) stage, or (2) in the later stages of a planning process when a consensus management direction or range of options has been proposed.

Such meetings should occur mid-week evenings or, if appropriate to the community, on Saturdays. Public meetings should not normally be scheduled on holidays, during peak vacation periods, or during periods when major portions of local populations (e.g. commercial fishers) may be absent.

Who: Public meetings are open to all. They should be chaired by a neutral party (preferably the chair of the IPT).

Where: Most public meetings on significant local issues require venues with seating for 200 - 400 people at a central location.

How: Determine appropriate venues, considering public access.

Determine who will chair or facilitate. This function should be undertaken by someone who is appropriately skilled and is perceived by the public to be impartial.

A facilitator or chair needs to be impartial.

Determine whether an open house should precede the public meeting.

Advertise two weeks, one week and one day prior to the event in regional and local media.

Arrange for registration, agenda printing and circulation, and comment forms. Remember that printed materials usually require one month to prepare.

Formal presentations from the IPT and/or the public committee should occupy no more than the first 30 minutes, followed by registered presenters from the public, with a maximum of 10 minutes per presentation. The balance of the meeting should be spent hearing unregistered comments and questions from the public. Time must be allowed to hear from everyone who wishes to speak. Opportunity for rebuttal or reply may be allowed.

Facilitator/chairperson should produce a summary of the public meeting and this should be widely available to the public. Comments on this document should be encouraged.

A summary of the meeting should be widely available.

Open houses

Why: These are events where information is publicly displayed. They allow the general public to informally meet members of the IPT and official public representatives (if they have been chosen).

When: Since open houses are focused on providing information, they should be used early in a process, in conjunction with public meetings, or at stages when important information has been assembled. Weekday evenings or Saturdays are normally considered acceptable. Allow approximately two months to plan and organize these sessions.

Information should be displayed for a wide audience.

Who: Open to all interested people. Hosted by the IPT and public representatives.

Where: These sessions are best held in localized community centres. It is important to ensure that all communities encompassed by or potentially affected by a project are provided with equal opportunities to learn about the project.

Highlight opportunities for public participation.

How: Assemble the necessary printed and display information; ensure that personnel have scheduled their attendance. Display information must include a full outline of the process as developed to date, with emphasis on options and opportunities for public participation.

If material displayed is in draft form, ensure that it is marked as such. Public confidence in a process can easily be lost if it appears that government is working independently and not listening. It is both courteous and advisable to circulate printed materials to all plan participants for comment before such items are presented for general comment.

Arrange for hall rental or use. Consider accessibility, display needs, special equipment needs, and provision of refreshments.

Advertise in regional and local media; provide information to local newspaper, radio and TV community service programming.

Informally register guests in order to add them to the mailing list and otherwise keep them informed.

Accept and record written submissions.

Be prepared to accept written submissions (letters, etc.) from attendees. These should be date stamped and registered in the presence of the person submitting the documents.

Design, distribute (possibly in advance) and collect a questionnaire to obtain concerns and comments on the information being presented at the open house. The results can provide information for future planning steps and help to evaluate the effectiveness of the open house in terms of the number of guests, the quality of dialogue and the general satisfaction of the guests with the proceedings. Adjust plans for future sessions based on what is learned.

Public submissions

Wide range of comment

Advertising requests for public submissions on an issue can be an effective way to receive a wide range of comment on planning issues. Sometimes a discussion paper or issue paper can be published in advance of the advertising, but this is unlikely to be necessary during an LRMP process. It may be adequate to advertise in local media as well as through the LRMP newsletter. The public submissions not only provide valuable comment, they enhance mailing lists and can help to identify key public groups and individuals. At least 30 days must be allowed for responses. In an open public process, suggested target dates for comment may be more appropriate than rigid deadlines.

Submissions should be sequentially registered and filed in order to make it easier to refer to them in the future. On-going content analysis, as submissions are received, is effective and produces timely results for the creation of a summary of submissions.

Replies to submissions

All those providing written submissions should receive written acknowledgment and should automatically receive a copy of any summary of submissions produced.

Storefront offices

Other possibilities for encouraging public participation:

A storefront is a publicly accessible office where all available information and files are housed. A storefront must be staffed by well informed personnel and be open during reasonable public hours.

Discussion papers, issue papers

To stimulate and inform the public, discussion or issue papers may be produced and distributed. These describe the issue(s) at hand, present a number of considerations and implications, and invite public comment.

Open telephone access

In order to encourage the public to telephone for information, 1-800 or call-forwarding services may be implemented.

Public files

To help establish credibility, a project planning team should ensure that all LRMP files are publicly available. In this way, all participants can see all the substantive written materials that could influence the proceedings and the outcomes. Procedures should conform to current government policy and practice, notably the *Freedom of Information Act*.

Proceedings

Documenting the process

The proceedings of all public meetings and similar events should be recorded in some form. Normally, except for public hearings, tape recordings are acceptable. All speakers should clearly be identified on the taped records. Copies of the taped records can be provided at cost to interested parties. Transcripts involve considerable expense (several dollars per page) and tend to be little used.

Summary reports or newsletters

Following each major public involvement step in the process, a summary report or newsletter which expresses the range of ideas and issues heard from the public should be prepared. These reports should be distributed to all interested parties (refer to address lists gathered from open houses and public interest group lists written at the start of the process). Depending on local interest, the size of your communities and your budget, you may wish to consider a general mail-out to all residents.

B. Miscellaneous participation techniques and issues

Delegated representation

Designating representatives

It is vital to a process that participant groups be represented through individuals they have chosen and given authority to discuss issues and to negotiate on their behalf. Groups should also designate alternate representatives in the event that the initial representative is unavailable. Representation should be consistent throughout a process.

Facilitator

Facilitators can help move a group towards consensus.

Facilitators can provide an invaluable service to the LRMP process. A good facilitator is neutral, publicly acceptable, well organized, an excellent listener and experienced. To find such a person, ask for references from local professional associations, or contact planners in other areas of the province. The value of this person is that they can put a wide range of participants at ease, help structure group activities, permit venting, negotiate solutions and, ultimately, help a group move towards consensus.

Participant funding

Ensure that all participants in the LRMP process have seen government's 1993 "Interim Participant Assistance Policy" (or most recent version). Agencies should also refer to individual internal policies on assistance and reimbursement of expenses.

The regional inter-agency management committee must approve participant funding, and it must be annotated in the LRMP budget that is prepared during Step 2.

It is important to consider the issue of financial barriers to participation. Major choices include the following:

Consider financial barriers to participation.

- expenses for unfunded public group representatives when attending process meetings. For example, the provincial government's interim policy on participant assistance;
- per diem fees and expenses for unfunded public group representatives when attending process meetings (currently under review by Cabinet);
- funding for experts for non-profit public interest groups (currently under review by Cabinet); or,
- no funding provided.

In recognition of budget considerations, government should make a decision at the outset of a process that does not discourage reasonable participation. The first option listed previously has been a more common practice in recent years.

Site visits

A site visit can give the planning team first hand knowledge.

A site visit is a special type of meeting that may be useful to ensure that all members of a planning team (government and non-government) have first hand familiarity with the location of interest. The visit should be

organized to allow full discussion of pertinent issues. It is important that there be sufficient formality so that proceedings can be recorded in the event that some consensus is found.

Venue selection

Venues for all public meetings must be carefully selected and previewed. Attention must be paid to size, location, accessibility, support services, facilities, seating arrangements, access for persons with disabilities, and staging of information and presentations.