

## **Optional Assessment 1B: Identifying Stakeholders**

Developed by: Amy Rosenthal and Chantalle Clarke-Samuels

### **Question 1: How do I know who the ‘relevant stakeholders’ are?**

If you need to identify relevant stakeholders for input and review in a marine planning process, some options include:

- Map the people and institutions in the area
- Perform systematic analysis of the actors
- Identify providers and users of key ecosystem services and coastal resources
- Conduct surveys and interviews in the region of interest
- Consider regulators and private sector participants in the process, in addition to community members

### **Question 2: When and how should I engage stakeholders?**

Designing a stakeholder engagement process is more art than science. Each case is different. In general, the literature recommends:

- Begin stakeholder engagement early on in the process to allow stakeholders to have input on all phases of planning
- Allocate sufficient time for input, learning, feedback, and iteration
- Bring all relevant stakeholders to the table
- Provide good, independent facilitation of the process
- Consider multiple types of activities for engaging stakeholders
- Provide stakeholders with scientific tools and information to make good decisions
- Ensure that all participants understand and agree with the objectives of the process
- Identify useful outputs of the process that can have real influence on marine planning

### **Question 3: What are some of the common challenges to engaging stakeholders?**

Marine planners have identified multiple challenges to effectively involve stakeholders in a planning process. Some of these difficulties include:

- Having sufficient time and resources for informing stakeholders and gathering input/feedback
- Ensuring high-quality facilitation to resolve conflicts that arise among stakeholders and achieve useful, shared outputs
- Overcoming stakeholder suspicion or fatigue for effective engagement
- Mitigating disparities in power and representation
- Fostering two-way learning, transparency, and satisfaction with the process by stakeholders

As you begin to think about designing a stakeholder engagement process, you may want to systematically assess factors that can affect the success of stakeholder involvement in marine planning. The following checklist is one method for informing good design and mitigation of challenges.

## Checklist for Policymakers Designing Stakeholder Engagement Processes

As you begin to think about designing a stakeholder engagement process, consider the following factors that can affect the success of stakeholder involvement in policy and decision making.

1. For each question, rate whether this is a positive (+) or negative (-) factor for your process. A positive factor is one that will contribute to the success of the process; a negative factor is expected to handicap or slow the process.
2. For each question, also rate whether you and your team members and/or partner organizations have high or low control. In other words, how much power do you have to influence a given factor for success, and how much depends on things outside of your control?

After you have finished filling out the table, examine the factors that fall in the low control and negative categories. How many are positive and/or high control? Are any of the low control and negative factors particularly worrisome? If so, how might you be able to mitigate some of the negative factors?

This exercise will help you to identify top priorities to invest effort in to ensure that engaging stakeholders in developing a policy will be successful – leading to a better policy, strong stakeholder education, and better likelihood of effective implementation. Being aware of the negative factors you can't control can help you anticipate challenges. Knowing the factors you can control can help you direct resources and time to make sure that they promote successful outcomes.

#	Question: <i>For each, ask yourself: is this positive or negative AND do I have control over this factor?</i>	Positive (+) or Negative (-) Factor	High or Low Control
1	What is the extent to which the <b>history and culture of the stakeholders</b> promotes public participation?		
2	Do <b>stakeholders and policymakers have trusting and productive relationships</b> based on past or ongoing interactions?		
3	Does <b>the team designing the stakeholder engagement process have sufficient experience</b> to design it effectively?		
4	<b>How early and often will stakeholders be engaged?</b> Is it sufficient to ensure continuity and feedback throughout the process?		
5	Are <b>sufficient resources allocated</b> to the engagement process, so that desired events and activities can be conducted?		
6	Is <b>sufficient time allocated</b> to the engagement process and is there <b>flexibility in the decision-making timeline</b> ?		
7	Have the <b>potential stakeholders been systematically analyzed</b> and have the <b>relevant stakeholders been invited</b> to participate in the engagement process?		
8	Will there be high-quality, unbiased <b>facilitator and facilitation methods</b> during stakeholder engagement events?		
9	Will you <b>provide stakeholders with the tools and scientific and other knowledge they need to be able to participate effectively</b> ?		
10	Will the engagement process be <b>transparent and fair for all stakeholders</b> ?		

#	Question:	Positive (+) or Negative (-) Factor	High or Low Control
11	Can you ensure that stakeholders have a <b>good understanding of the objectives for their involvement early</b> in the process?		
12	Will the process emphasize <b>two-way learning</b> between stakeholders and policymakers?		
13	Will the process involve <b>credible science, scientists to provide expertise, and tools to integrate local knowledge</b> ?		
14	How much <b>influence will stakeholders have</b> on the policy decisions? Are they likely to <b>be satisfied</b> with their level of influence?		
15	Will the <b>outcomes of the stakeholder engagement process be relevant and useful</b> for the policy decision and implementation?		
16	Is <b>stakeholder engagement institutionalized</b> at your agency or organization?		

**What factors need to be mitigated (are negative and/or low control)?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**How can they be mitigated?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---