



# THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

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MY VOICE COUNTS 2012 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

## Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

- The Rio Declaration of 1992 enshrines public participation in its 27 principles. Principle 10 states that "environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level".

Beneficiary Participation  
Deliberative democracy  
Stakeholder engagement

# Public participation

Public involvement  
Citizen participation  
Consensus building  
Direct democracy

Goal:

Create processes that allow people to influence the decisions that affect their lives









# National Research Council Conclusion

“When done well, public participation improves the quality and legitimacy of a decision and builds the capacity of all involved to engage in the policy process. It can lead to better results in terms of environmental quality and other social objectives. It also can enhance trust and understanding among parties.”

# An Analysis of 239 Public Participation Cases

“The case study of the past 30 years paints an encouraging picture of public participation. Involving the public not only frequently produces decisions that are responsive to public values and substantively robust, but it also helps to resolve conflict, build trust, and educate and inform the public about the environment.”

Beirele and Cayford (2002)

# World Bank Study – 121 Rural Water Supply Projects

“Beneficiary participation” was:

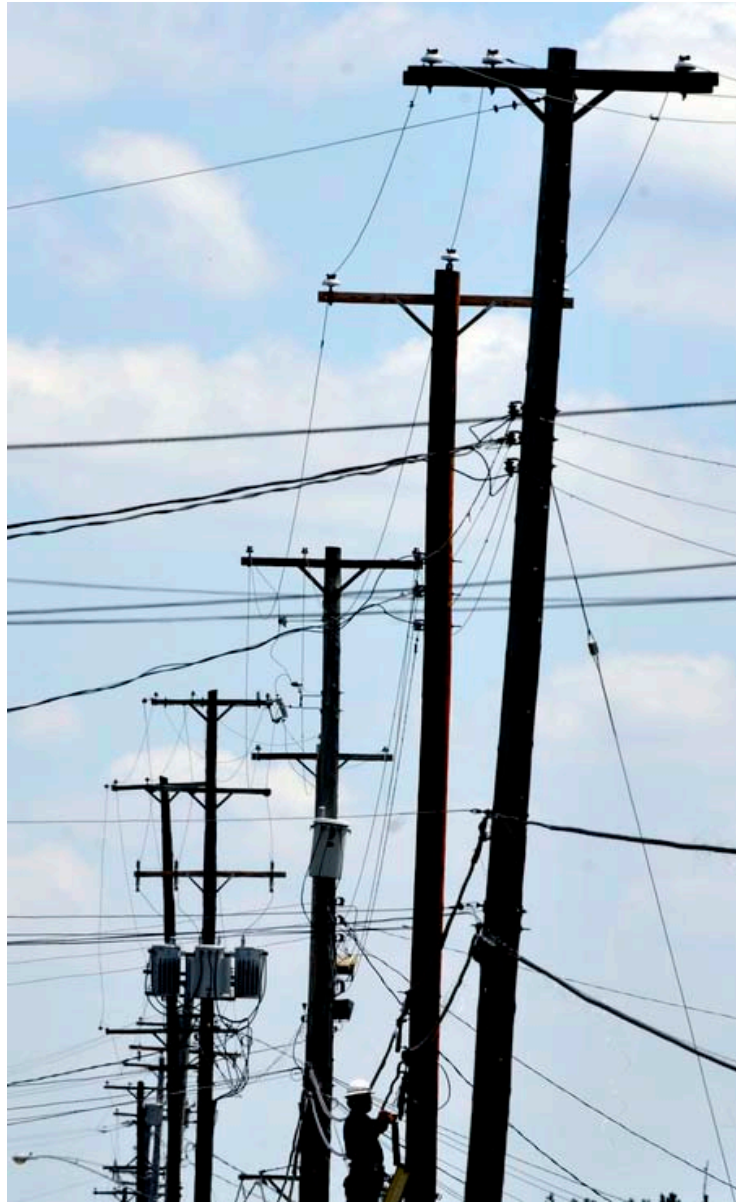
- Single most important factor in determining overall quality of implementation
- Single most important factor contributing to increased access to and control over water
- Resulted in community members acquiring new water-related and organizational skills, and strengthened community organizations which went on to undertake other development activities

# Inter-American Development Bank:

## Benefits From Public Participation

- Empowers and mobilizes people as actors and overseers of their own development.
- Helps create and maintain stable democracies.
- Helps poor and marginalized people acquire skills and develop attitudes which facilitate their integration into the wider society.
- Improves the financial and sustainability of projects.
- Improves project design.
- Helps resolve or manage conflict.
- Can generate social learning and innovation.
- Strengthens local institutional capacities
- Provides a mechanism for assessing whether the benefits of a project have been distributed equitably.







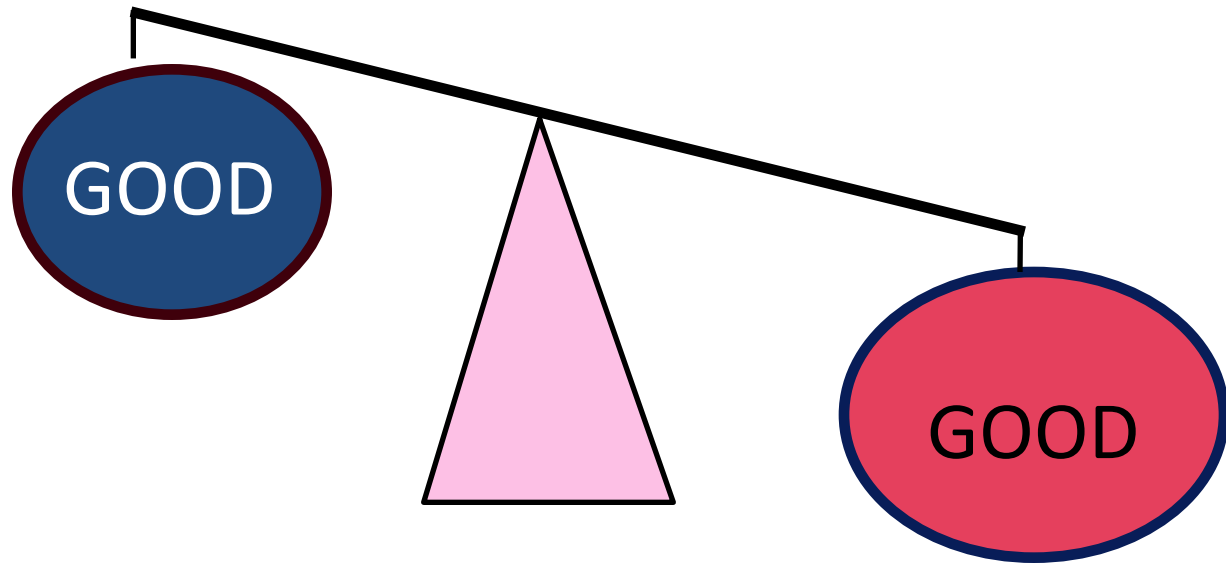


Most larger decisions made by government agencies aren't really technical decisions, but values choices, informed by technical information.

# Why Should The Public Be Involved In “Technical Decisions?”

- Many technical decisions are, in fact, choices between “values”
- Values choices are choices we make about the relative importance of one thing society thinks is good relative to other things society thinks are good.

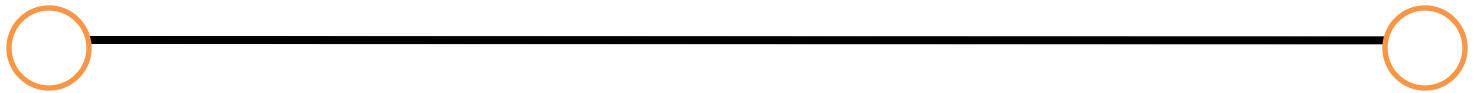
# Choosing Between Two “Goods”



# Which Value is Most Important

Privacy

Security



# Where Do You Stand?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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Direct  
voting on  
all issues

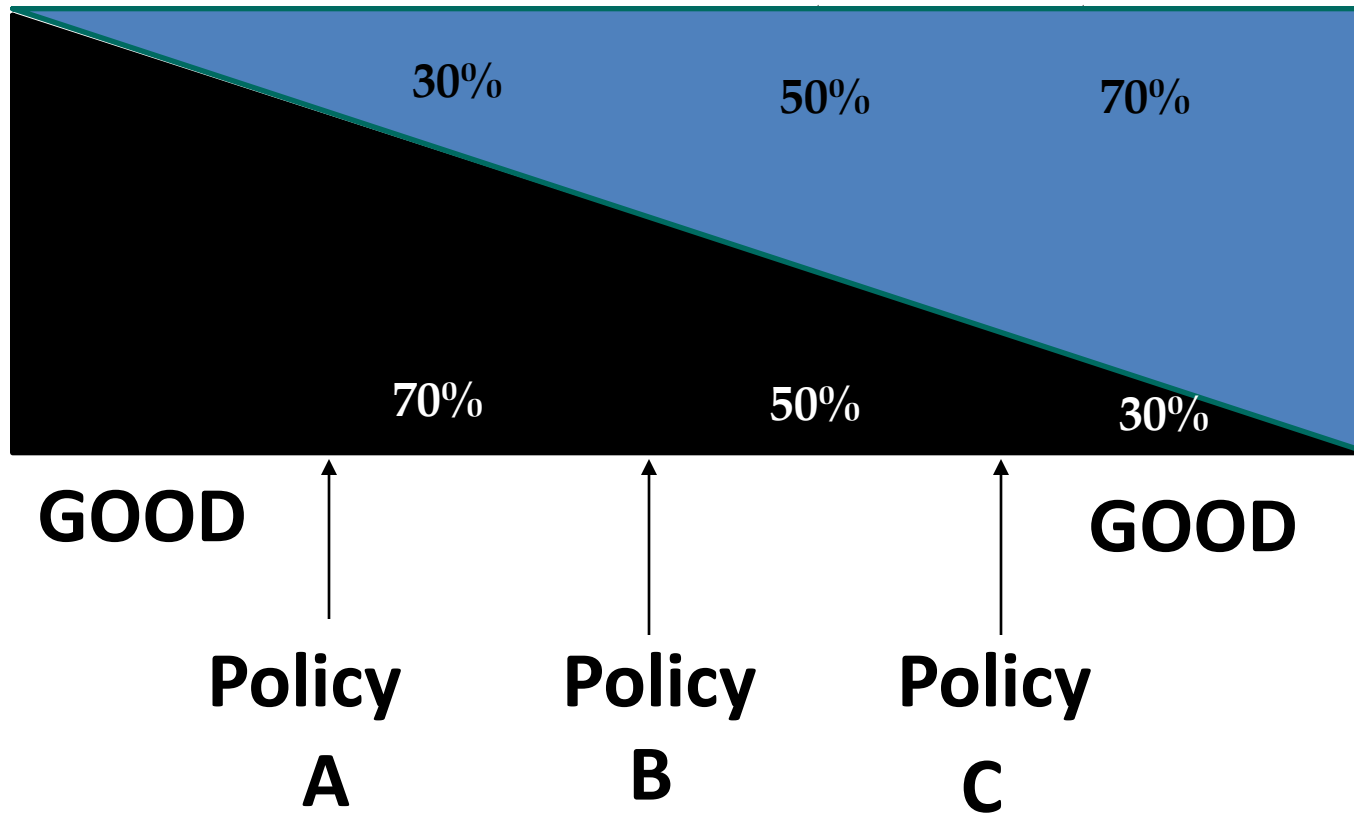
Decisions  
made by a  
technical elite



# Some Observations About Values

- When there are big values differences, the other side will always appear “over-emotional and irrational.” The parties literally don’t share the same premises.
- People of similar point of view tend to cluster together, discussing only the slightest variations and having little conversation with people who have significantly different positions.

# Policy Choices Are Values Choices



# Technical Decisions

- Involve only one value, e.g. which alternative is best economically
- Are governed by recognized procedures and standards
- In theory, two technical people would reach approximately the same decision

# Policy Decisions

## Policy Decisions:

- Require balancing of two or more values
- Bestow benefits and costs on different segments of the public
- Will be seen as “political,” even if made by technical people

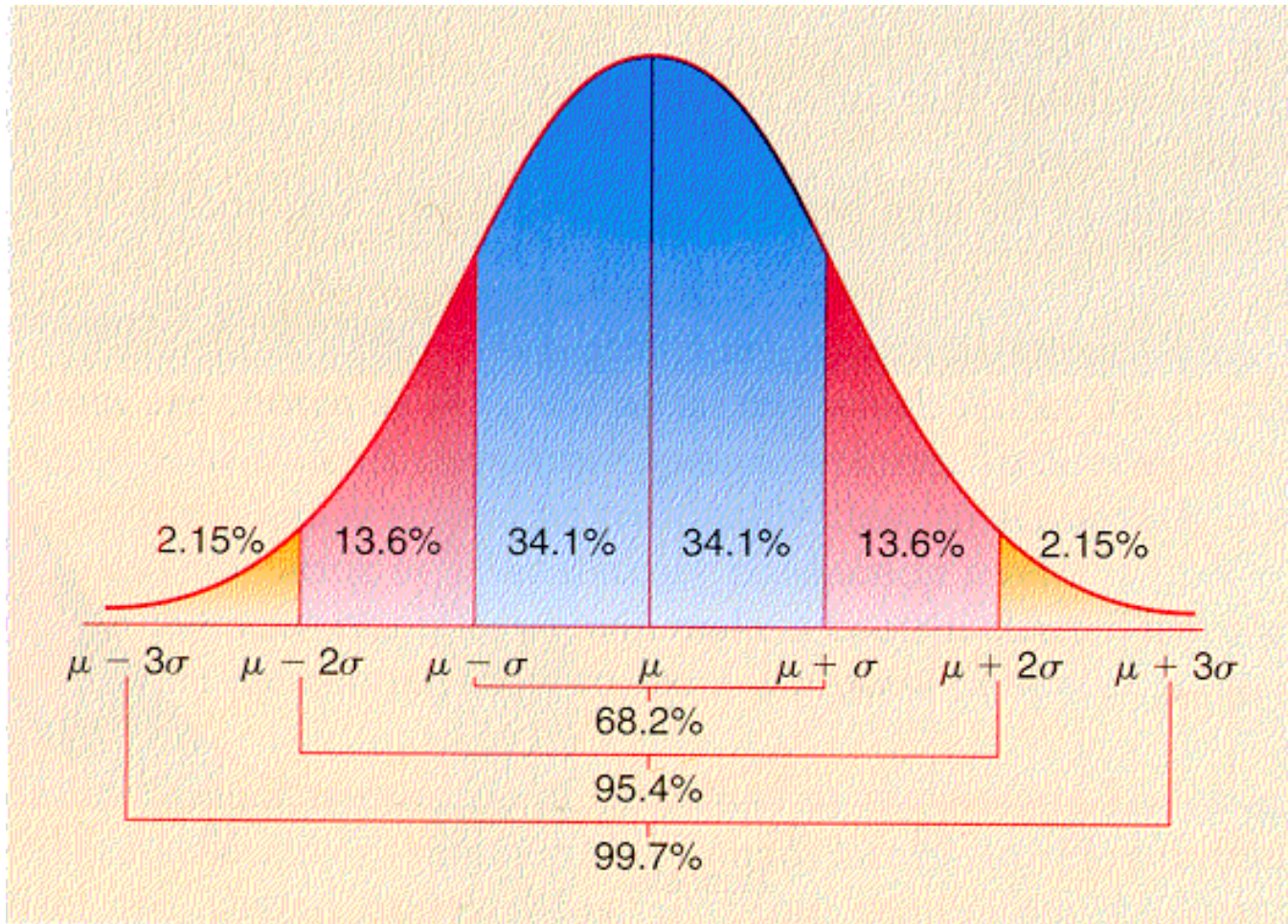
# Agency Decision Making and Values

- Agencies develop homogenous values systems
- You don't get ahead by appearing "over-emotional and irrational"
- Values determine which issues agencies think are important, which alternatives get considered, and which dimensions are considered when making a decision

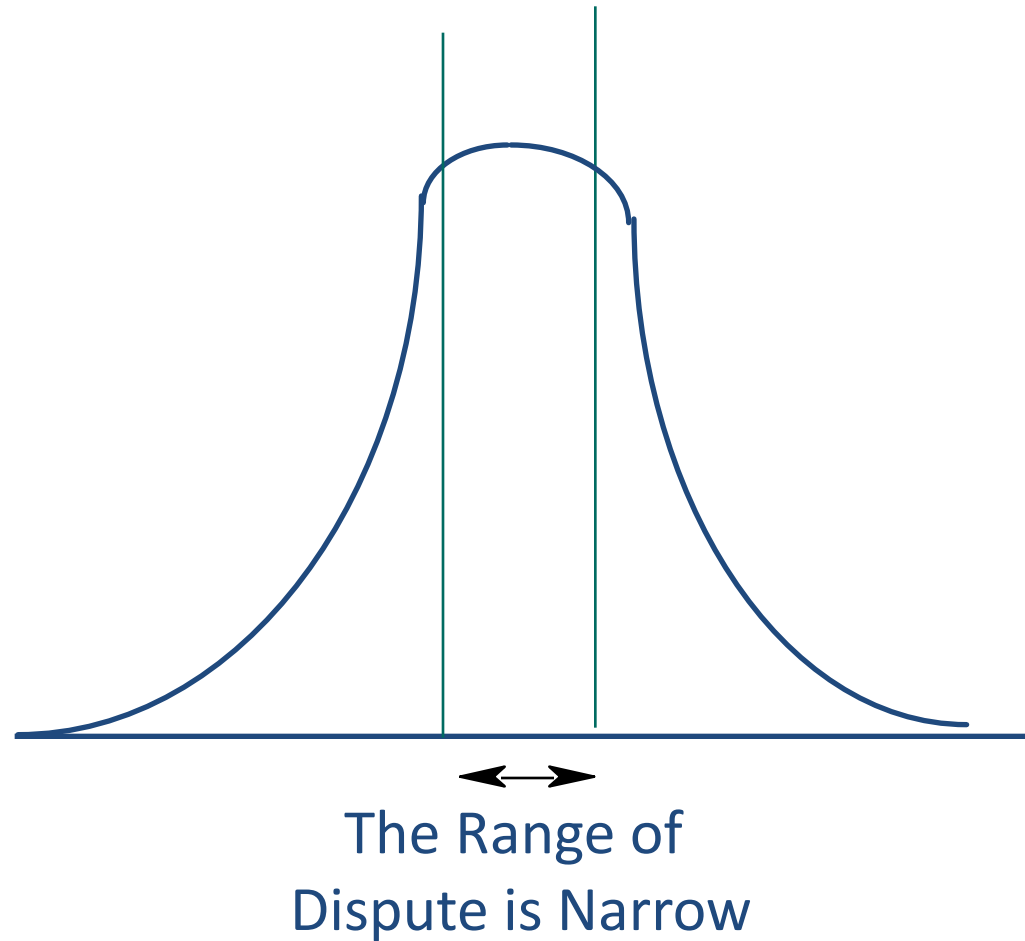
# “Political” Decisions

- The public views decisions about values as “political” in nature – your choice in favor of one value over another bestows benefits and costs on different segments of the public
- Technical training doesn’t make resource managers/engineers more qualified than others to decide what’s good for society
- So it is precisely these values choices on which the public wants to be consulted



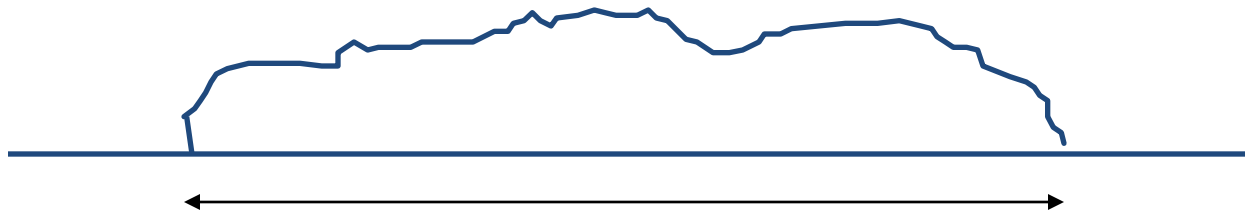


# When There Is Social Consensus



LEAVE IT TO THE EXPERTS

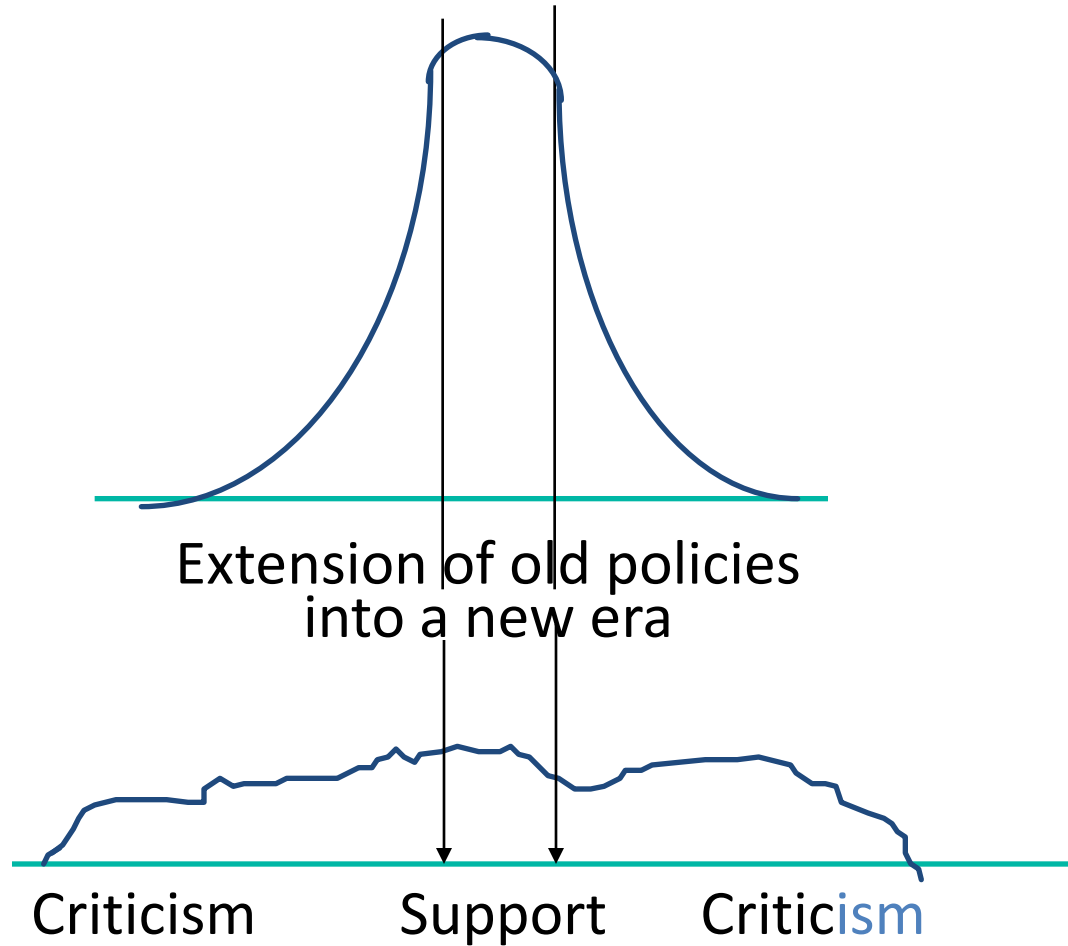
# When Society Is Undergoing Change



The Range of Dispute is Very Wide

- There's no one position that enjoys majority support
- There's a battle for momentum
- This creates a demand for issue-by-issue accountability

# Why Organizations Find Themselves In Trouble



# The Limits of Accountability Get Stretched

The demand for issue-by-issue accountability  
over-extends the representative system

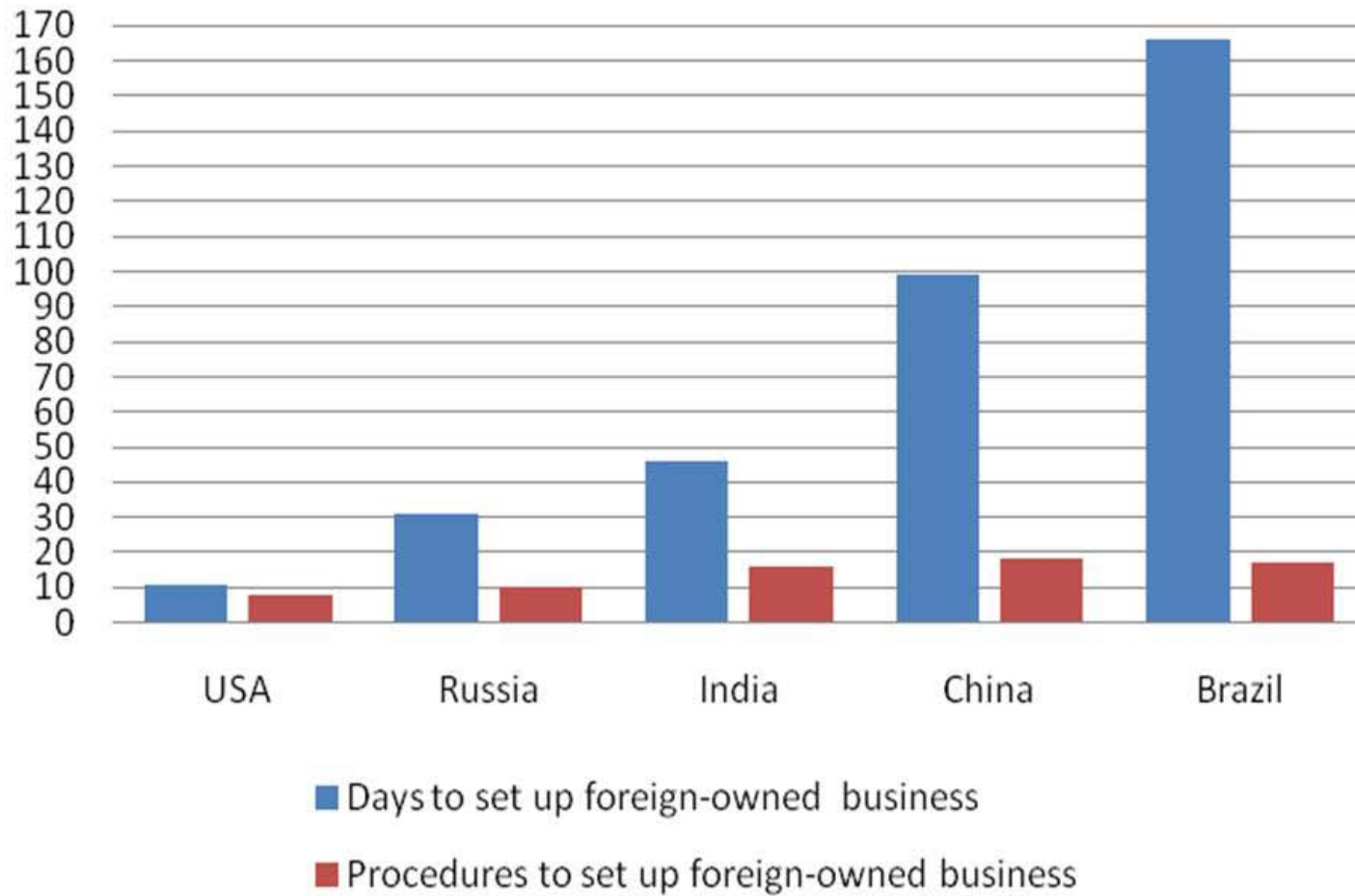
Public participation is an adaptive  
response needed to provide issue by  
issue accountability







# Comparative Bureaucracy

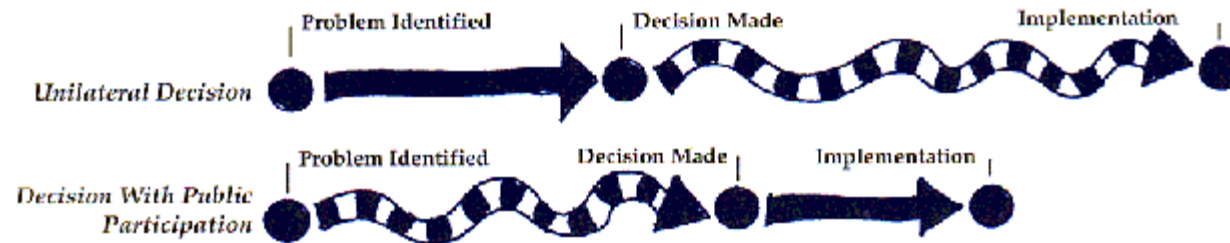


# Benefits from Public Participation

# Improved Quality of Decision

- Anticipating public concerns and attitudes
- Better problem definition
- Full consideration of alternatives
- Better understanding of “why things are the way they are”

# MINIMIZING COST AND DELAY?



Increased ease of implementation

Sustainability of implemented programs

Avoiding worst case confrontations

Reduced perception of risk

Developing civil society



# The Role of the Agency Manager Changes

The agency manager no longer just designs and builds the project. The manager is now also directly responsible for creating a process that builds the mandate needed to act.



What does “participation” mean?

# Levels of Participation

- Be informed before the decision
- Be heard -- have the opportunity to comment before the decision is made
- Influence -- have to opportunity to impact decisions made at each step in the decision making process
- Agree -- agree to the outcome of the decision

# IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

*Increasing Level of Public Impact*

## Public participation goal

### **Inform**

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

### **Consult**

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

### **Involve**

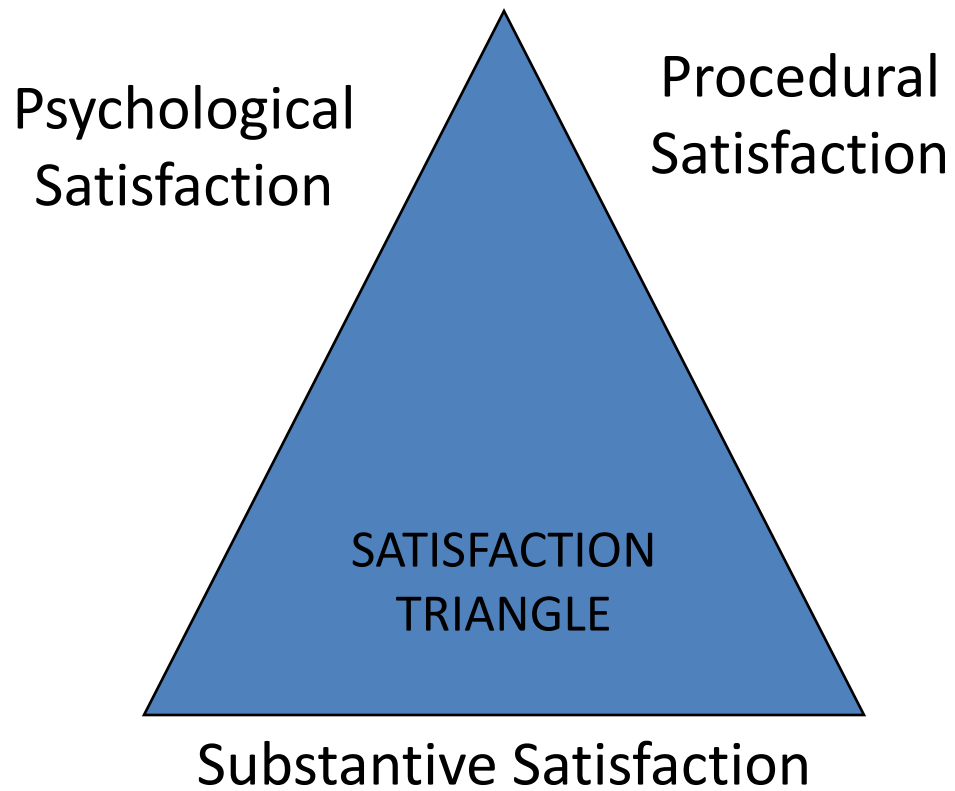
To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

### **Collaborate**

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

### **Empower**

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.



# Why agencies don't just turn over decisions to the public

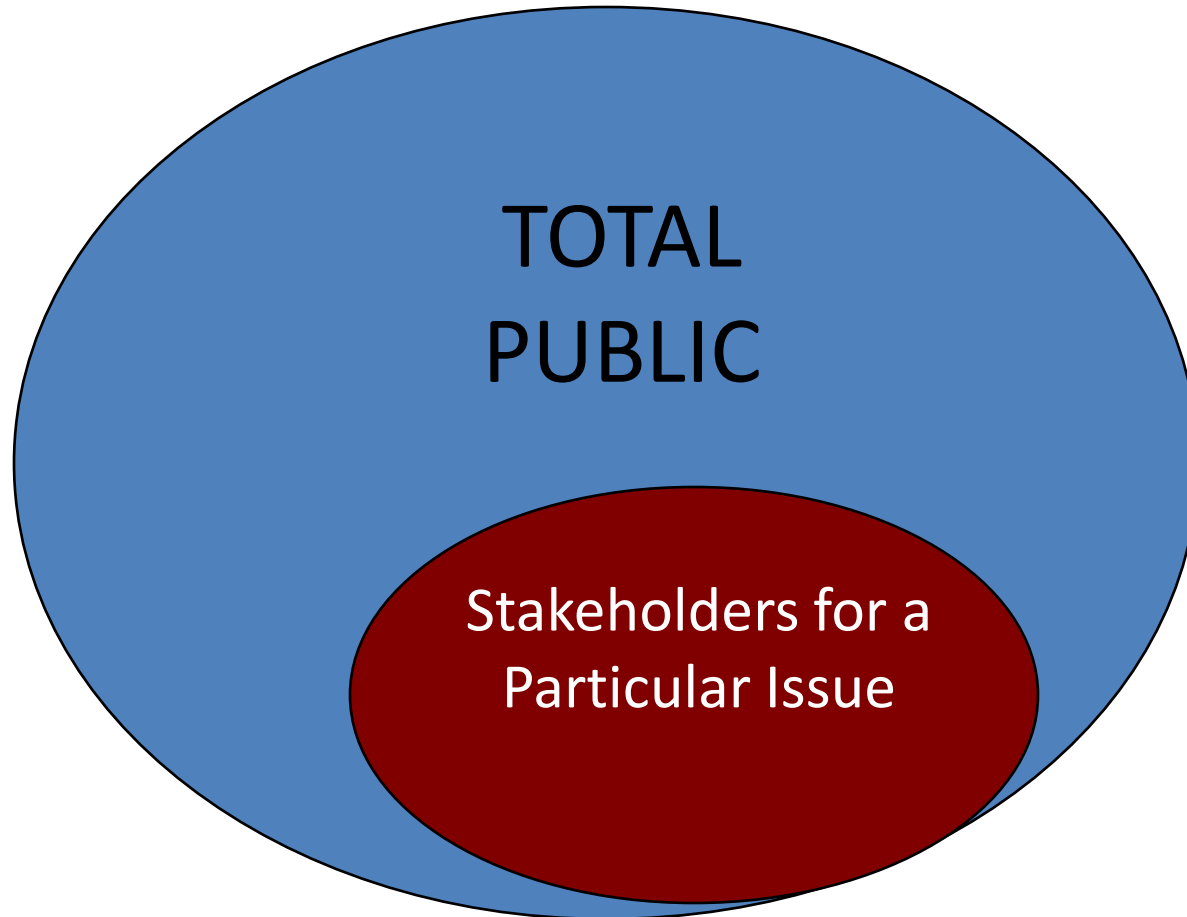
- Competing expectations
- “The public” which participates is always a small segment of the total public
- Legal mandates
- Budgets
- Environmental laws and regulations

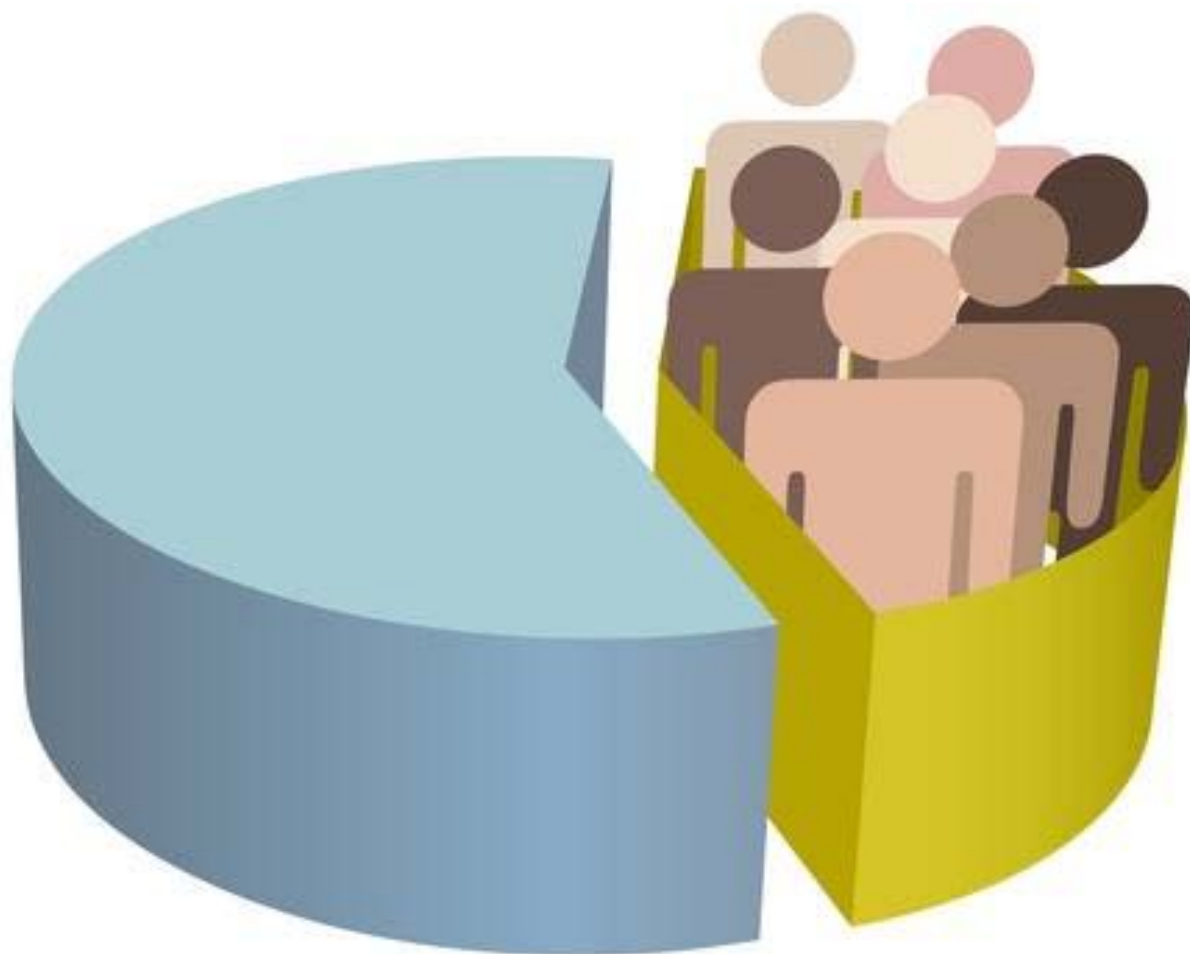


Who is “the public”?



# WHO IS THE PUBLIC?





# Who Is a Stakeholder?

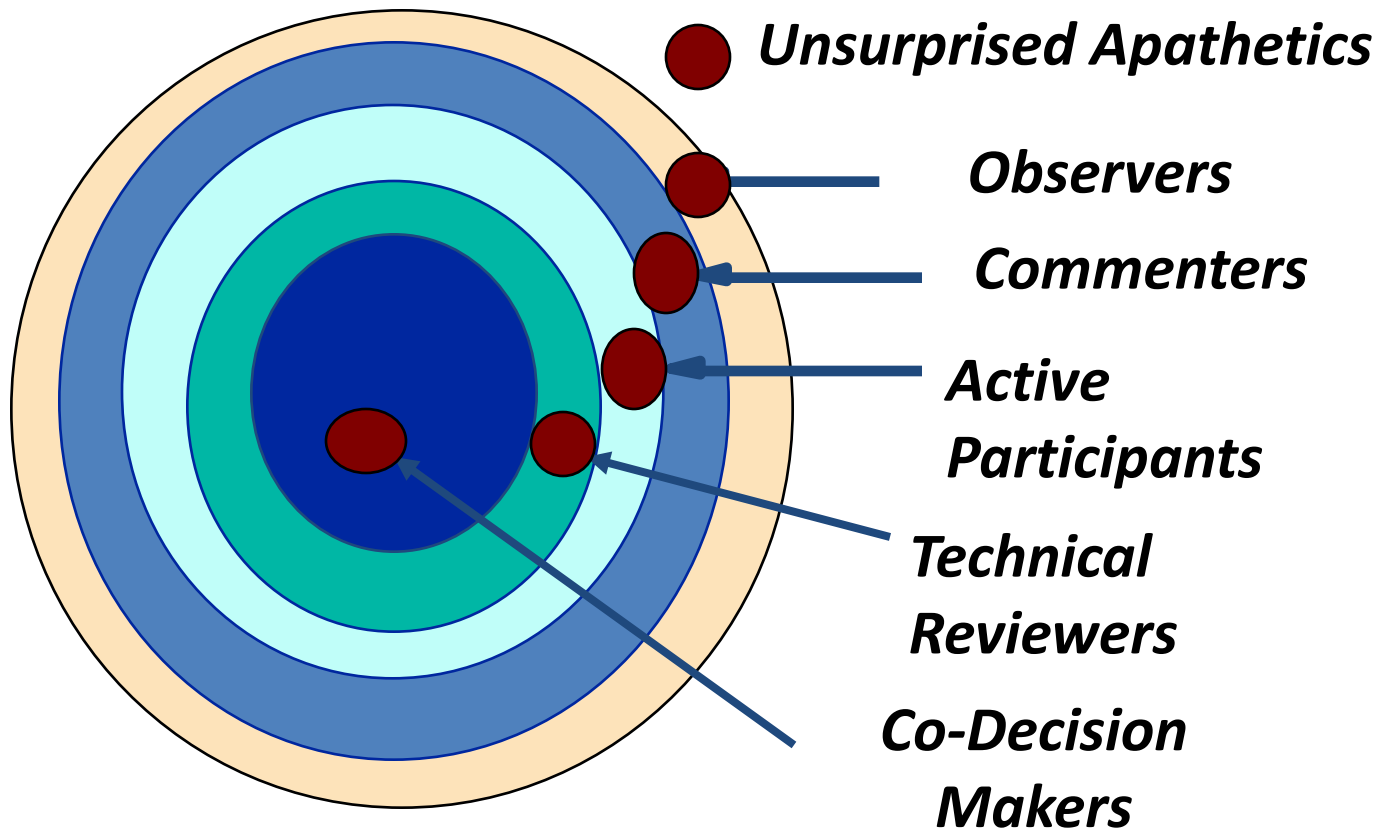
- People who perceive themselves as having a stake in the decision. This “stake” could be economics, use, mandate, proximity, or values/philosophy
- Internal stakeholders (people or organizational units inside the agency) often have as much or more impact upon decisions as external stakeholders

# How “The Public” Changes

- There's a different public for each issue.
- Different groups and interests will be involved at different stages of the decision making process.
- You may involve different "orbits" differently, even during the same step in the decision making process.

# Orbits of Involvement

The closer to the center you are, the more impact you have on the decision – but the more resources it takes to participate.



ORBIT OF PARTICIPATION	POSSIBLE MECHANISMS
Co-decision makers	Team meetings, negotiation
Active participants	Citizen advisory groups; workshops
Technical reviewers	Peer review processes
Commenters	Public meetings, comment periods
Observers	Newsletters, information bulletins, web pages
Unsurprised apathetics	Press releases; news stories



Techniques

# Information-Providing Techniques

- Briefings
- Exhibits/Displays
- Feature stories
- Information repositories
- Mailings containing technical reports/environmental reports
- News conferences
- Newsletters
- Newspaper inserts
- News releases
- Press kits
- Public service announcements
- Speaker's bureau
- Web pages



# Information-Gathering Techniques

- Focus groups
- Plebiscite
- Polls, surveys, questionnaires

# Interaction/Information Exchange Techniques

- Hotlines
- Advisory groups/task forces
- Interviews
- Nominal group process
- Open houses
- Participatory television/cable television
- Public hearings
- Paid advertisements
- Public meetings
- Retreats
- Samoan Circle
- Workshops



# Open Houses





# Workshops



# Individual Contact/Coffees



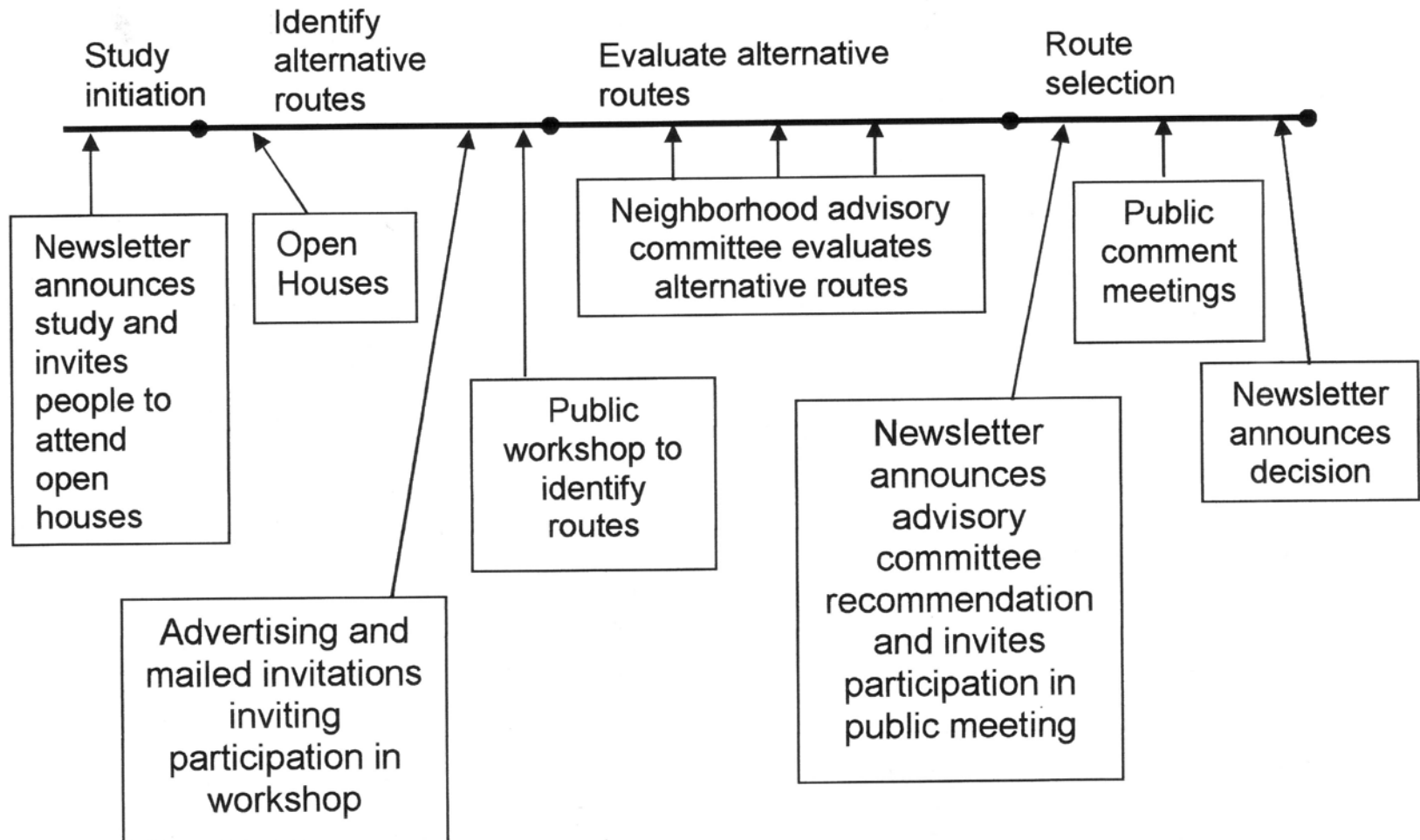
# Web-Based Participation

- Web sites as information repositories
- Web sites with interactive informational materials
- Web sites as a mechanism to receive comments





# A “Typical”” Public Participation Program





# Highly Effective Public Participation Programs

- Provide genuine opportunities to influence the decision
- Are well integrated into the decision-making process
- Have a clearly defined expectation for what they hope to accomplish with the public
- Are targeted at those stakeholders most likely to see themselves as impacted by the decision

# Highly Effective Public Participation Programs - Continued

- Involve interested stakeholders in every step of decision making, not just the final stage
- Provide alternative levels of participation based upon people's level of interest, and reflecting the diversity of the people participating
- Take into account the participation of internal stakeholders as well as external stakeholders



**Hewlett  
Packard/  
Agilent  
Headquarters**



# Across the Street



# The Political Setting

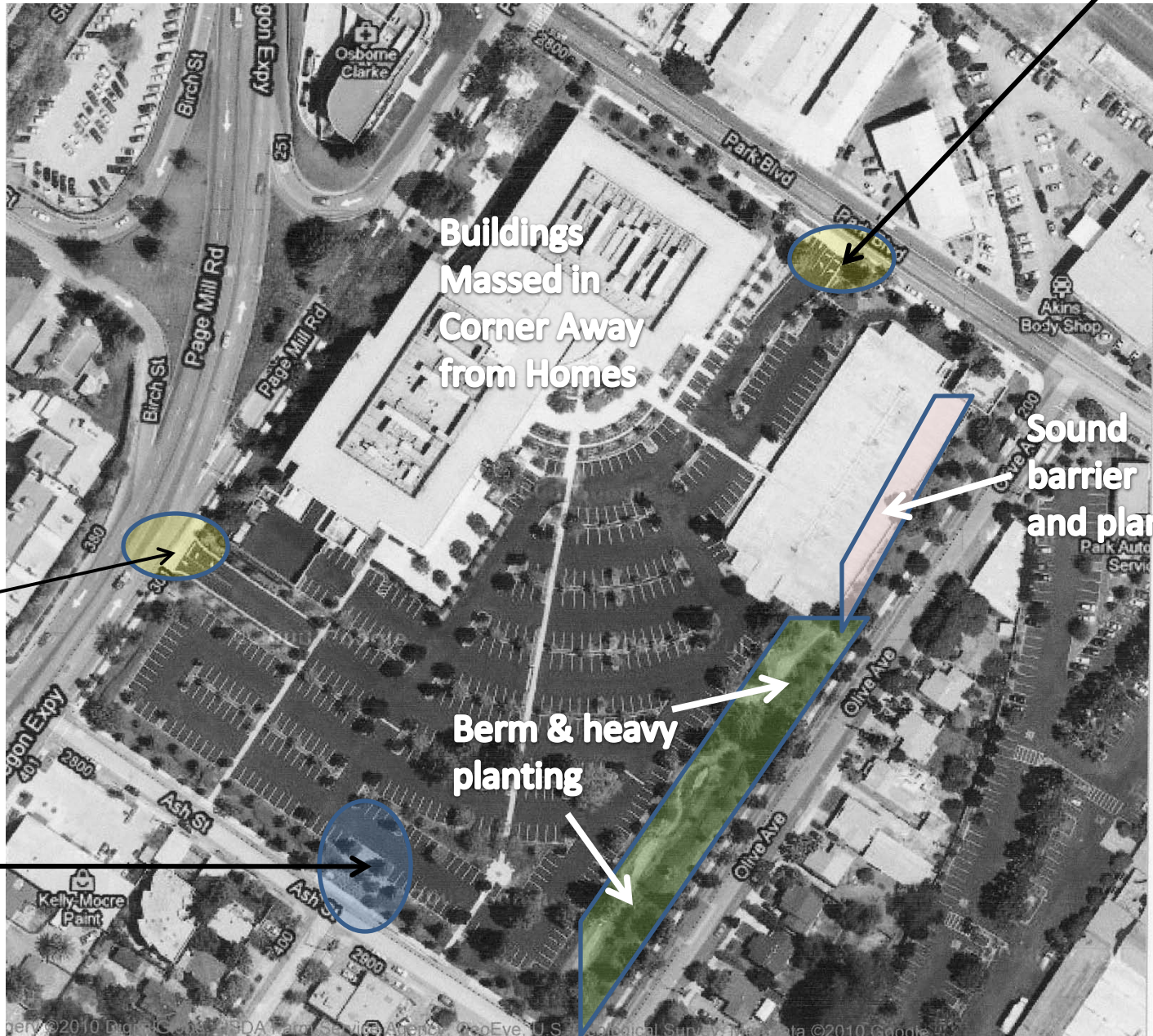
- In Palo Alto, planning is a “blood sport”
- “Don’t want the project on the front page in the CEO’s hometown”
- Prior city workshop identified this as a mixed use site
- City Planning Chief: “Bring me something I can approve.”

# Process

- Call on every house in neighborhood
  - Hand a newsletter
  - Invite to workshop
  - Comments about project
- Workshop in building on site
- Newsletter describing “what we heard”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop – options/alternatives
- Newsletter describing proposed action
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop to discuss proposed action
- City permit process



Traffic Entrance/ Exit



Traffic  
Entrance/  
Exit

Visual  
Barrier





# Sanibel Island Wetlands Permit

- Army Corps of Engineers must grant a permit for any development in a wetlands area.
- Sanibel Island is a famous resort area in the State of Florida - but also full of wetlands
- 500 individual permits a year – very costly
- Corps has the authority to grant a “general permit”

# Sanibel Island Wetlands Permit

- District Engineer established a panel representing all key stakeholders on island
- Gave them a choice: (1) Corps could write the terms of the permit; or (2) Panel could write the terms and he would sign them – if there was consensus in the group
- Panel reached consensus on terms
- District Engineer issued the permit using their terms
- Permit in force for five years; no protests during the entire period

# Sanibel Island Wetlands Permit

## Follow-Up:

- District Engineer tried the same Approach In A Large Urban Area (Miami)
- Panel representing all interests
- Panel about ready to reach agreement, environmental groups showed up and demanded changes
- Consensus reached, including regional office of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- National HQ of Environmental Protection Agency overruled the permit

# BOLIVIA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT

- The poor state of water and sanitation services in rural villages in Bolivia is responsible for endemic waterborne diseases.
- Program funded by Government of Netherlands and administered by UNDP-World Bank.
- Determine the demand for water and sanitation services, and help communities study, analyze, and plan solutions to their problems.
- Most participants were non-literate.

# BOLIVIA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT- Continued

Techniques used:

- Pocket charts – identify water sources/preferences – put tokens in pockets to create matrix
- Three pile sorting – cards depicting behaviors – sort into “good,” “bad” and “in-between”

- continued

# BOLIVIA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT - Continued

## Techniques – Continued

- Mapping – draw maps of where water systems are located – sources of pollution, etc.
- Story With a Gap – two pictures, one with an undesirable behavior, one with an desirable behavior – ask for stories for how the village could get from one to the other

- continued

# BOLIVIA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT - Continued

Techniques – continued:

- Nonserial Posters – pictures of dramatic human situations – groups create a story (beginning, middle, end) connecting the pictures – tell stories to other groups and discuss themes
- Felt-boards – multiple stick-on figures that can be moved around to create stories (can be used both to solicit information and to educate)



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# Bolivia Water Supply and Sanitation Project

- Continued

## Outcome:

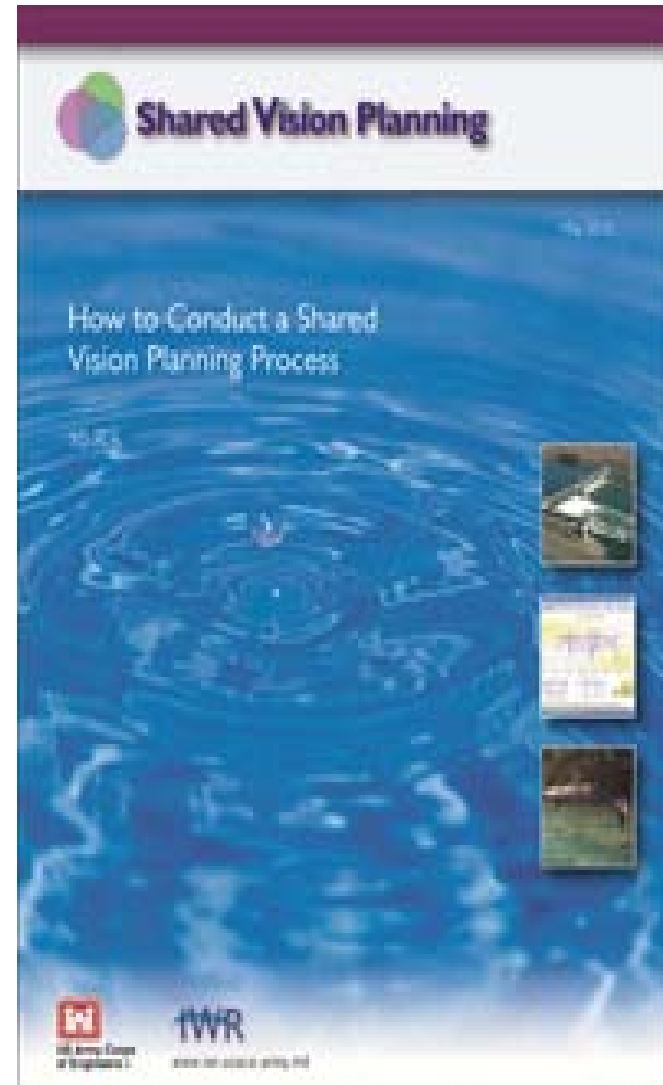
Helped form water committees in 209 communities;  
total of 4,200 community development activities;  
more than 125,000 participants.

# World Wide Views

- 4000 participants
- 38 countries
- Selected to represent the demographic diversity in their country
- Provided unbiased information about global warming
- Deliberate with fellow citizens at meetings (100 participants each)

# Shared Vision Planning

<http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/Portals/70/docs/iwrreports/10-R-6.pdf>





Peter Johnson

CEO, Bonneville Power Administration

“I am more convinced than ever that public involvement is a tool that today’s managers in both public and private institutions must understand. With external stakeholders now exerting considerable influence in every sector, conflict is inevitable. The only choice is whether to dodge the controversy or learn to harness it.

“...While other are mired in disputes and litigation, astute practitioners of public involvement will have hammered out an agreement and gotten on with the project. In short, they will have made better decisions and found a new source of competitive advantage.”

Harvard Business Review