



NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY  
TABLE RONDE NATIONALE SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

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MODEL

ROUND TABLE  
FOR

Youth Kit

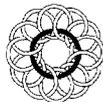
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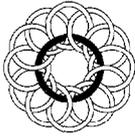
# MODEL

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## YOUTH KIT



National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy  
Table ronde nationale sur l'environnement et l'économie



**National Round Table on the  
Environment and the Economy  
(NRTEE)**

**Table ronde nationale sur  
l'environnement et l'économie  
(TRNEE)**

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) has endorsed the following definition of sustainable development:

Development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We are pleased to provide you with an education package on sustainable development and round tables, aimed towards the young people who will be playing a key role in shaping the future for the next generation. The NRTEE'S Task Force on Education has been particularly concerned about engaging youth in the round table process, and this packaging is the culmination of some of its work over the last four years.

The package features a facilitators' guide to youth round tables. The round table movement is unique to our country and represents a new approach to changing the way we make decisions, changing the way we do business, and a new approach to problem solving. The guide helps students to simulate round tables around a particular issue, identify who the key stakeholders are and the process to follow for achieving consensus around their issue.

We are also pleased to include in this package a poster describing the National Round Table's objectives for sustainable development. We hope the poster will catalyze debate and conversation about the meaning of sustainable development for Canadian society. The final item in this package is an energy disc developed in partnership by Energy, Mines and Resources and the NRTEE. The interactive computer disc features a quiz and a game about energy, against which students can test their knowledge.

A music video and cassette called *Courage*, designed to encourage young people to get involved, are also available from the NRTEE Secretariat. The *Courage* song is about the need for young people to seize the challenge of creating a more sustainable country and to forge new pathways, since they will inherit the future we leave them. The guide is also available on disc, and the energy disc is obtainable in both MAC and IBM. For further information or additional copies of our material, please call Carla Doucet at (613) 947-0668.

Leone Pippard  
President  
Canadian Ecology Advocates  
Chair  
NRTEE Task Force on Education

Ann Dale  
Director of Operations  
NRTEE Secretariat

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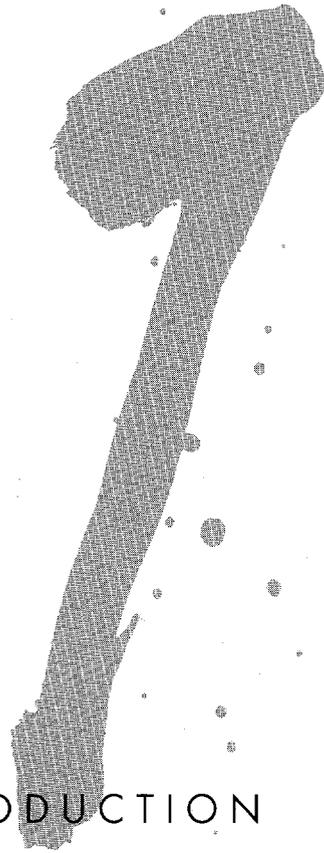
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### **A MANUAL FOR THE TEACHER/FACILITATOR**

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This section provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a round table, with suggestions for guiding and monitoring the process, debriefing the participants, and evaluating the experience. It indicates links to school curricula and includes reference sheets for participants.

# SECTION



INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

This Model Round Table for Youth Kit provides the practical framework for a variety of activities in which young people can discuss, research, and try to find solutions for the economic-environmental issues that confront us all today.

### THE KIT FOCUSES ON:

- the concept of **sustainable development**: development that takes into account the long-term impact of current practices on the natural environment, natural resources, and the quality of life of all living creatures, now and in the future.
- the **round table** process which aims to reach consensus, or agreement among all participants.

Young people, like everyone else in society, are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental and social costs of traditional forms of economic development, for example: air and water pollution, health hazards from a variety of substances and diminishing numbers of birds and animals. As well, there is increasing awareness of the environmental, social, and political costs of stagnating economies, for example: in much of Africa and Latin America, in eastern Europe and what used to be the Soviet Union.

The need for increasing development to meet the needs of the expanding global population and the need to protect the natural environment seem to be conflicting priorities. And this conflict comes at a time when traditional methods of dealing with conflict are not working as well as they seemed to in the past.

But just as sustainable development has emerged as a new way of thinking about the relationship between human needs and the natural environment, the round table process represents a new approach to resolving economic-environmental issues. It brings together all the stakeholders in each issue or conflict — the individuals, organizations, businesses and governments whose interests or responsibilities are involved in the issue — and provides a setting and a framework for these stakeholders to work towards a resolution based on consensus rather than on political or economic power.

## PURPOSE OF THE KIT

THE MODEL ROUND TABLE FOR YOUTH KIT IS DESIGNED TO:

- Help young people develop both a theoretical and an applied understanding of sustainable development by examining issues that affect their own lives.
- Help young people acquire a better understanding of the political, economic, environmental, and social realities of their world, and a fuller realization of the complexity of local and global issues.
- Help young people become aware of the value of short-term and long-term solutions reached through consensus rather than confrontation.
- Provide a framework in which young people can develop skills in research, critical thinking, organizing and presenting information, debating and negotiating, problem-solving and decision-making.
- Encourage young people to take an active interest in local and global issues and to take part in the process of resolving those issues.

## HOW TO USE THE KIT

THE KIT IS DESIGNED FOR USE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

- Do you need basic information about sustainable development?

Use **Preserving Our World** by Warner Troyer

**Sustainable Development** - Section 2

**The National Round Table Objectives for Sustainable Development** -Poster

- Do you want to stimulate discussion of sustainable development and local and global issues?

Use **Sustainable Development**

**The National Round Table Objectives for Sustainable Development**

The activity sheets from the **Activities and Sample Case Studies** Section

- Do you want to stimulate class discussion of sustainable development in secondary studies in history, geography, economics or law?

Use the activity sheets from the **Activities and Sample Case Studies**

- Do you need basic information about the round table process?

Use **The Round Table Process** - Section 3

**The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy** pamphlet  
The sample case study from the **Activities and Sample Case Studies** - Section 4

- Do you want to carry out a round table simulation?

If you have time to research a local issue,  
use **A Manual for the Teacher/Facilitator**

If you do not have time to research a local issue,  
use the information package from the **Activities and Sample Case Studies**  
and **A Manual for the Teacher/Facilitator**

- Do you want to set up a round table in your school or community?

Use **A Manual for the Teacher/Facilitator**

The sample case study from the **Activities and Sample Case Studies** (as a reference  
guide to the practical details of reaching consensus)

**The important thing is for you to use the kit in whatever way best suits the needs  
and priorities of your group, organization, or class .**

# SECTION



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**

That definition, and the first use of the term sustainable development appeared in "**Our Common Future**", the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. But what does it mean in practice? Well, in Canada it could mean:

- less confrontation on economic-environmental issues;
- new, efficient logging practices that respect biodiversity and involve less damage to natural ecosystems;
- new provincial and national parks;
- fewer mill closings due to shortages of timber supply;
- new wildlife reserves and migratory bird sanctuaries;
- fisheries that are not subject to boom and bust cycles as fish stocks fluctuate wildly from one year to the next;
- tourism activities that do not disturb wild creatures or harm ecosystems;
- new types of automobile fuel, and more efficient engines;
- cleaner city air and clean, safe drinking water in all parts of the country.

Those changes will not happen automatically. To bring about sustainable development it is necessary to:

- think differently about development and progress;
- meet essential needs for jobs, food, energy, and water;
- consider the long-term effects of our actions, not just the immediate gains;
- conserve and enhance our natural resources;
- find new ways to resolve conflicts between environmental and economic goals;
- find solutions that are based more on consensus and less on political or economic power.

### **Why should we be concerned about sustainable development?**

A quick glance at almost any newspaper or television news broadcast reveals no shortage of examples of the problems related to development that is non-sustainable:

famine in Africa	food shortages in Russia
floods in Bangladesh	landslides in the Philippines
cholera spreads to Brazil	air pollution in Mexico City
teeming slums in India	the homeless in New York City
crushing debt loads in Latin America	economic collapse in Albania
farm bankruptcies on the prairies	cod war on the Grand Banks
ozone depletion over North America	new signs of global warning

The relationship between any one of these events or conditions and traditional patterns of economic development and progress is not always crystal clear. You can't blame the problem on one government, one corporation, one person. In every case there are a multitude of factors involved.

There are naturally occurring variations in weather and climate; there are cycles and trends in business activities, there are changes in political philosophy and innovations in technology; there is continual growth in knowledge and a growing awareness of the interconnections between all physical, biological, and human activity on the planet.

But that doesn't mean we can't identify key areas of concern:

- **The World Economy**

Years of international trade and aid have done little to improve the standard of living of the vast majority of people in the less developed nations. In fact, the spread between the richest and poorest nations appears to be increasing.

*International debt threatens the industrial world's stability as much as that of developing nations. This is not least because folks who are deeply in debt stop being consumers.*

Preserving Our World, p. 43

- **World Population Growth**

The population growth rate is especially high in developing countries where increasing poverty, hunger, and disease are constant threats.

*In 1985, some 80 million people were added to a world population of 4.8 billion. Each year the number of human beings increases, but the amount of natural resources with which to sustain this population, to improve the quality of human lives, and to eliminate poverty remains finite.*

Our Common Future, p.95

- **Food Production**

The world's agricultural resources are being depleted in a number of ways: soil degradation, desertification, salinization, deforestation and erosion.

*We have the skills, the knowledge and technology to feed everyone. We don't have policies to see food produced and distributed according to human need. Nor have we acknowledged the slow motion disasters created by chronic malnutrition.*

Preserving Our World, p. 59

- **Destruction of Plant and Animal Species**

Scientists do not know exactly how many species exist in the world, but they do know that humans are destroying them at a faster rate than occurs naturally. Wild plants are a source of genetic material that protects and strengthens many commercial food crops.

*Half of all prescriptions dispensed have their origins in wild organisms. World-wide, and including non-prescription materials plus pharmaceuticals, the estimated commercial value exceeds \$40 billion a year.*

Our Common Future, p. 155

- **Energy Supplies and Consumption**

Industrial development depends on energy. As energy resources become harder to find and extract, economic costs will certainly increase, and environmental costs — air and water pollution, acid rain, destruction of wildlife habitat, nuclear accidents, and the possibility of global warming — are likely to increase as well.

*If per capita energy consumption holds at today's rates, we'll need forty per cent more by 2025 to cover population increase. But, if we equalize energy consumption and bring the Third World up to western energy use levels, we'll have to increase energy by 550 per cent in the next thirty-five years.*

Preserving Our World, p. 80

- **The Impact of Industry**

Industrial activity is an important element in all developed economies and is crucial to the development of most Third World nations. In recent years, the environmental damage and potential health hazards from industrial activity have become more apparent.

*Industrial expansion following the Second World War took place without much awareness of the environment and brought with it a rapid rise in pollution, symbolized by the Los Angeles smog; the proclaimed 'death' of Lake Erie; the progressive pollution of major rivers like the Meuse, Elbe, and Rhine; and chemical poisoning by mercury in Minamata. These problems have also been found in many parts of the Third World as industrial growth, urbanization, and the use of automobiles spread.*

Our Common Future, p. 208

- **Urbanization**

By the end of this century, nearly half of the world's population will live in urban communities ranging from small towns to huge, sprawling cities.

*Few city governments in the developing world have the power, resources, and trained staff to provide their rapidly growing populations with the land, services, and facilities needed for an adequate human life: clean water, sanitation, schools, and transport. The result is mushrooming illegal settlements with primitive facilities, increased overcrowding, and rampant disease linked to an unhealthy environment.*

Our Common Future, p. 238

- **Global Peace and Security**

In this area, at least, some recent changes seem to be for the better. The collapse of the Soviet Union has put an end to the Cold War. The unification of Germany and the democratization of Eastern Europe have reduced East-West tensions. Nevertheless, armed conflict continues throughout the world, from Armenia and Afghanistan to Somalia and Zaire.

*Arms competition and armed conflict create major obstacles to sustainable development. They make huge claims on scarce material resources. They pre-empt human resources and wealth that could be used to combat the collapse of environmental support systems, the poverty, and the underdevelopment that in combination contribute so much to contemporary political insecurity.*

Our Common Future, p. 294

It is clear that all of these issues involve environmental, economic, political, and social factors. None of these issues can be dealt with successfully by any individual, group, organization, corporation, or government acting alone. These problems transcend national boundaries, and there are few international organizations with the authority to mediate disputes or the power to impose solutions.

Obviously, finding solutions to these problems is not an easy task. Nevertheless, it is increasingly clear that past practices cannot continue, and past attitudes can no longer prevail.

**Failures to manage the environment and sustain development threaten to overwhelm all countries. Environment and development challenges are not separate challenges; they are inexorably linked. Development cannot subsist on a deteriorating resource base; the environment cannot be protected when growth leaves out of account the costs of environmental destruction.**

Our Common Future, p. 37

(For a fuller discussion of these concerns, see **Preserving Our World**)

## CHANGE IS NECESSARY / PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE

Since 1900 the world's population has increased more than three times, the gross world product 21 times, the consumption of fossil fuels 30 times, and industrial production 50 times.

The Gaia Atlas of Future Worlds, p.21

The "killer smogs" are no more in London; there are edible fish, again, in the Thames. The industrial nations are taking the lead out of gasoline and paint.

Preserving Our World, p. 13

We are the first generation to have to face the fact that not all natural resources are endlessly plentiful. Given our rising numbers and our rising demands, we must abandon our traditional "throughput" economies, which consume vast quantities of raw materials and generate vast quantities of waste as a by-product of production and consumption. We must shift from the cowboy economy (always more "West out there") to the spaceship economy, where we operate with a fixed stock of supplies and nothing is wasted.

The Gaia Atlas of Future Worlds, p. 64

As a leading importer of natural resources worldwide (99% of its oil, 92% of its iron, and 100% of its copper), Japan makes exceptionally efficient use of its materials. It recycles more than 50% of its garbage, as compared with West Germany's 30%, and the U.S.'s 10%. Japan consumed 6% less energy in 1988 than in 1973, even though its GDP grew by 46%.

The Gaia Atlas of Future Worlds, p. 106

The modern economist is used to measuring the "standard of living" by the amount of annual consumption, assuming all the time that a man who consumes more is "better off" than a man who consumes less. A Buddhist economist would consider this approach excessively irrational: since consumption is merely a means to human well-being, the aim should be to obtain the maximum amount of well-being with the minimum amount of consumption.

E.F. Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful*, p. 57

In the time since 1950, in the developing world, the percentage of children dying before age five has been reduced by half. In 1970, just thirteen of every hundred rural families had access to safe drinking water; today the proportion is forty-four percent. Adult literacy, world-wide, has rocketed to 72% from 55% in thirty-six years.

Preserving Our World, p. 13

# SECTION

THE ROUND TABLE PROCESS

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## THE ROUND TABLE PROCESS

The round table process is an approach to economic-environmental issues that brings together all the affected parties to find areas of agreement, to identify common ground, and to work collectively towards the goal of sustainable development.

Round tables are designed to reflect different backgrounds and experiences, different perspectives and insights, and different values and beliefs. They may be used to advise governments on policy matters or to advise the community at large. A round table may provide:

- a forum in which community residents share concerns and ideas;
- a public hearing to develop principles of sustainable development appropriate to the community;
- an inquiry into a major community issue;
- the method by which a decision is made with regard to a specific local issue.

In all cases, the round table process is designed to find solutions that are based on consensus rather than confrontation, on compromise and agreement rather than protest and power.

IN SIMPLE TERMS THE PROCESS OF ACHIEVING CONSENSUS IS AS FOLLOWS:

### **1. All parties affected by a particular conflict or issue agree to meet in a round table discussion of the issue.**

These parties are called stakeholders. They may be individuals, groups, organizations, companies and corporations, or government agencies and ministries. They have a stake in the resolution of the issue —

FOR EXAMPLE: one may wish to protect existing jobs, one may find opportunities for creating new jobs, another may wish to protect some aspect of the natural environment, another may have to enforce whatever decision is made. Having all the key stakeholders — the ones whose actions may have the greatest impact or whose interests may be most affected by the resolution of the conflict — at the round table is a crucial element in the overall process.

All participants come to the table as equals. This can be an important factor for participants with different and competing viewpoints, and it is important to have competing views — if they exist in the community — at the round table. Working towards a consensus that embraces all points of view reduces the likelihood of two opposing “sides” being formed.

## **2. Participants discuss and define the nature of consensus.**

Consensus may be defined in a number of ways. Some common options are: agreement by a large majority of participants, or all but one or two participants; lack of dissension, in which silence means acceptance; unanimous agreement.

Unanimous agreement does not necessarily mean complete accord and harmony among participants. Some may be enthusiastic proponents of the course of action agreed upon; others may be unhappy about certain aspects of the decision but generally satisfied about the general approach; and still others may accept the decision as simply being better than nothing (or better than any other suggested alternatives).

At this stage it is also very useful for participants to consider what should be done if they fail to reach consensus. They may choose to vote on a particular proposal, in which case they should decide ahead of time whether a simple majority is sufficient, and if not, what size of majority is needed. Or they could decide to refer the conflict to an outsider for a decision, or, more likely perhaps, refer to a higher authority, usually at the appropriate level of government. Often, awareness of the agreed-upon "fallback" position is a powerful incentive for participants to persevere with the consensus process as long as possible.

## **3. Participants present their positions.**

They indicate their particular interests and concerns, how they would like to see the conflict resolved, and why they favour that resolution.

## **4. Participants engage in debate, bargaining, and negotiation.**

In the debate, different opinions are expressed, facts might be challenged, and new information brought to light. Some participants might put forward alternative solutions that they could accept; others might indicate which solutions are totally unacceptable.

Bargaining occurs when two or more participants agree to a certain course of action. A number of participants might reach some sort of compromise amongst themselves.

Negotiation usually involves direct trade-offs between opposing stakeholders as they try to find an acceptable outcome.

## **5. Participants arrive at consensus.**

This happens when all participants agree upon a specific course of action to be taken by one or more, or all of the stakeholders. In practice, consensus is more often achieved on certain aspects of an issue, and the remaining areas of dispute are referred to an agreed-upon authority for a unilateral decision.

The round table approach is not the ultimate solution to all environmental and economic conflicts. Nor is it a substitute in any way for legislation and the proper enforcement of laws and regulations. But it does offer a practical and long-term alternative to confrontation and protest, and to the imposition of political will and economic power that has in the past so often led to confrontation and protest. It provides a more positive approach to current issues and promotes the development of attitudes and values that are likely to become more and more important in the future.

#### **ADVANTAGES OF THE ROUND TABLE PROCESS**

- Involving the stakeholders in the decision-making process almost invariably leads to greater commitment to the decision.
- Stakeholders bring knowledge and expertise to the decision-making process, and with more resources and creativity, a broader range of solutions can be considered.
- It focuses on the real needs and interests of the participants, not on the strength of their opinions nor the differences between them.
- There are no "winners" and "losers".
- Further modification of a decision is easier when all participants are aware of the initial assumptions and the basis for change.
- Participants are less likely to appeal or protest the final decision, since they have all been able to take part in the negotiating process.
- Competing stakeholders learn more about each other's points of view, needs and concerns.
- It facilitates the development of working relationships among different participants that would not occur in a climate of confrontation.
- All participants soon become aware of the dilemmas and hard choices that resource managers face.

#### **DISADVANTAGES OF THE ROUND TABLE PROCESS**

- It can be quite time-consuming.
- It can also be costly, in time and effort.
- It can be frustrating to those who are used to exerting their power to get their way.
- Not all issues lend themselves to consensus. For many day-to-day policy matters and routine decisions it is more practical and efficient to combine consultation and authority to make effective decisions.

## STAKEHOLDERS IN THE ROUND TABLE PROCESS

Stakeholders are individuals, groups, or institutions whose interests, concerns, or responsibilities involve them in economic-environmental issues. Clearly, the actual stakeholders in any one issue will vary according to the nature of the issue, and few issues will involve all the stakeholders listed below.

### **PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

People who are directly or indirectly affected by certain development or environmental projects. They may be concerned about expropriation of homes or property, possible pollution problems; the health and safety of their children; employment, business, and real estate possibilities; the character of their neighbourhoods; or the quality of life in the future.

### **USER GROUPS**

Clubs, associations, and organizations based on a variety of outdoor activities such as boating, fishing, hunting, hiking and climbing, and birdwatching. They may provide expert advice to government decision-makers, and often lobby governments to protect the interests of their members.

### **CITIZENS GROUPS**

Groups whose members may be directly affected by a specific development or project, for example, a neighbourhood or community residents association. These groups are often formed in response to a particular issue. They may be in favour of some types of development and opposed to others.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS**

Groups of people with a wide variety of concerns about the natural environment (locally and globally), current industrial and agricultural practices that may harm people and the environment, and conventional attitudes to consumption and "progress". Most groups aim to inform and educate the public on environmental matters, and try to raise public awareness of possible threats to people, wildlife, and the natural environment. They pressure governments, industries and businesses to change current attitudes, practices, and policies.

### **NATIVE GROUPS**

Representatives of local residents, for example, band councils, and representatives of larger tribal groups and native peoples across Canada. They draw attention to land claims, the social and economic impact of certain types of economic development on the native way of life, and the impact of logging, mining, and hydro development on traditional territories and livelihoods such as hunting and fishing.

### **LOCAL INDUSTRIES**

Industries whose operations are a factor in any economic-environmental issue. Almost every kind of industrial activity has an impact on the natural environment, from extraction and processing of raw materials to transportation of finished products and disposal of waste material and by-products. Industries are set up to make a profit for the owner or owners. Industries of all kinds contribute to local, provincial, and national economies; they provide employment, pay fees and taxes, and in most cases, use local goods and services.

**INDUSTRY GROUPS**

Groups established by corporations and companies in a particular industry, for example, Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Council of Forest Industries of B.C. They collect and share data on all aspects of the industry, may do other industry-related research, and present industry views and interests to governments, the media, and the general public.

**LOCAL BUSINESS**

Businesses of any kind whose operations may be affected by the outcome of an economic-environmental conflict. They may be suppliers to a local industry or retailers serving employees of the local industry. Almost all businesses are established to make a profit. They provide employment, pay local taxes and business fees, and contribute in many ways to local communities.

**BUSINESS GROUPS**

May represent businesses in a community, such as, Chamber of Commerce, or may represent certain types of businesses, for example, a small business association. They have much the same purpose and functions as industry groups: to do research and present members' views to governments, the media, and the general public.

**WORKERS**

Anyone whose job security or employment prospects may be affected by the outcome of an economic-environmental conflict. They may be concerned about health and safety on the job, possible long-term affects of industrial activity on their personal health or on the health of other family members.

**UNIONS**

Organizations formed to represent workers in negotiations with management on pay and working conditions. Like industry and business groups, they do research into work-related topics, and make members' views known to governments, the media, and the general public.

**SCIENTISTS - RESEARCHERS**

Anyone whose scientific or academic knowledge, experience, or research could be helpful in resolving an economic-environmental issue.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Village, county, municipal, town, or city officials whose responsibilities and jurisdiction are relevant to an economic-environmental issue, e.g., in matters relating to town or urban planning, zoning bylaws, sanitation and waste disposal, parks and recreation, and certain aspects of health and safety.

Government officials at all levels have to consider policy directions and philosophy, the costs and benefits of development projects; and the probable cost of implementing and enforcing a particular policy or decision.

**PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

Ministries and officials whose responsibilities and jurisdiction are relevant to an economic-environmental issue. While there is not always a clear line between the jurisdiction of each level of government, major areas of provincial responsibility are agriculture, ecological reserves, economic development, education, energy, environmental protection, freshwater fishing, forestry, health and safety, mining, and provincial parks and recreation areas.

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

Ministries and officials whose responsibilities and jurisdiction are relevant to an economic-environmental issue. Principal federal responsibilities include agriculture (notably grain production and sales), the Arctic, coastal fisheries, the Coast Guard (oil spills), economic development, environmental protection, international trade, job creation and training, native land claims, and unemployment.

**FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS**

Representatives of nations whose people, resources, and territory are subject to pollution originating elsewhere, for example, industrial activity in the U.S. contributes to acid rain in Canada; similarly, industrial activity in Canada affects the northeastern U.S. With no direct power over decisions made in another country, these representatives rely on compromise and negotiated agreements to settle disputes.

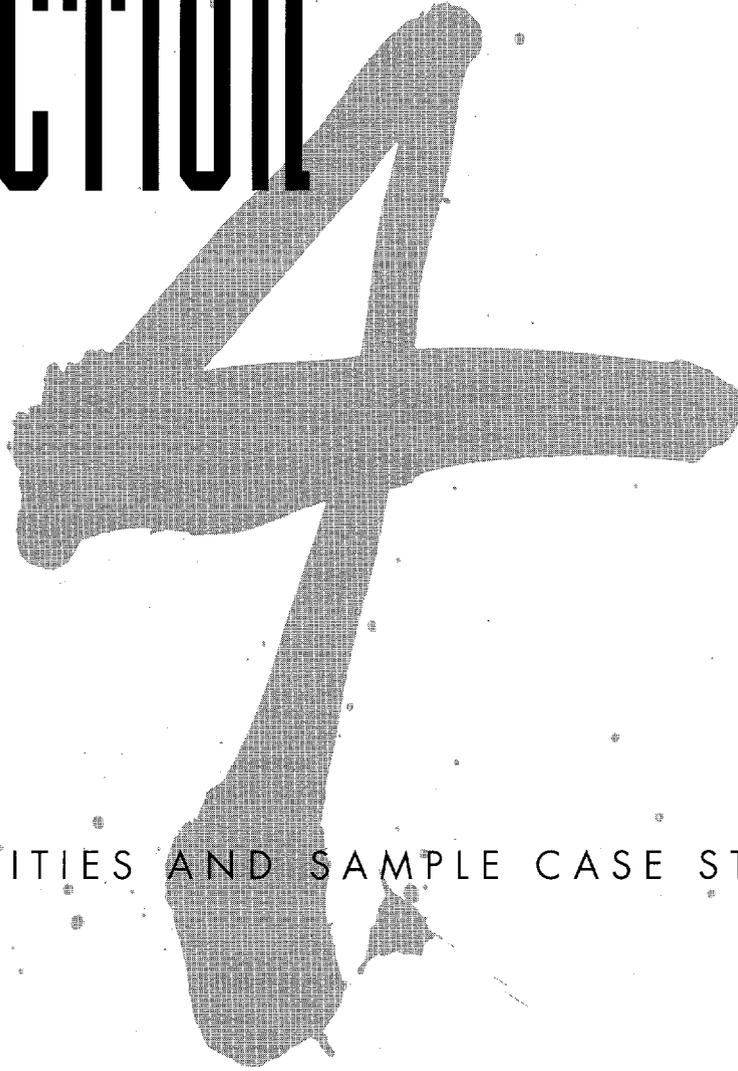
**THE 'SILENT' STAKEHOLDERS**

People for whom there is no official representative nor practical channel of communications to decision-makers:

the young people of Canada who will live with the long-term consequences of present economic and environmental policies;

all living creatures that live with the consequences of economic-environmental decisions that affect the global distribution of food and wealth, that influence the spread of acid rain and ozone depletion, and that have an impact on the natural environment that sustains us all.

# SECTION



ACTIVITIES AND SAMPLE CASE STUDIES

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## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

### **INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR:**

These activities require no special materials, skills, or knowledge beyond a basic understanding of one's local community or region. They may be done by individuals, by small groups of three or four people working together, or by a large group or class.

At the simplest level, they are brainstorming exercises intended to heighten awareness of the many factors that apply not only to current economic activities, but which also have to be taken into account when planning for sustainable development. Each of these exercises may take as little as 15 minutes or may last for an hour if the discussion is lively.

These activities could also be used as "warm up" exercises for young people getting ready to set up their own round table or to carry out a round table simulation. Again, each activity may take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour.

In a more formal classroom setting, these activities could serve as the basis for research activities and assignments designed to increase knowledge of one's local community and region.

You can photocopy the activity sheets and distribute them to participants, or you may want to adapt or modify the sheets to suit the needs of your group.

As with all elements of this kit, select and/or modify the activities to suit your own needs and priorities.

# ACTIVITY ONE:

## THE PRACTICAL MEANING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. Consider the phrase "development that meets the needs of the present". Apply it to a local situation, for example, a fishing community in Newfoundland, an industrial area of Quebec or Ontario, a farming community on the Prairies, or a logging town in B.C., by outlining what development would be best for each community.

MAKE A LIST OF SIMPLE PHRASES THAT DESCRIBE YOUR VIEW OF AN "IDEAL" SITUATION:

Example A:

large catches of fish  
high prices to fishermen  
high world prices  
new, modern processing plant  
plenty of job opportunities  
good job security  
happy, thriving community

Example B:

new agricultural chemical plant  
lots of job opportunities in the plant  
high demand for herbicides/pesticides  
good job security  
business opportunities in trucking  
strong community economy  
happy, thriving community

2. Now consider the phrase "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". How might that apply to the situations you have just outlined?

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER MIGHT BE:

Can fish stocks last forever? What has happened in Canada and elsewhere around the world to suggest that abundant catches don't last forever?

Can the community alone take action to ensure that the fishery remains viable well into the future? If not, why not? Who else might be involved in decisions that affect the fishery?

If, after some years of production, workers and former workers at the chemical plant are becoming ill at an unusual rate, does the plant still represent a worthwhile development? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?

If it is found that waste discharges from the plant have affected the air quality and water supply of the community, does the plant still represent a worthwhile development? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What would represent sustainable development in these examples?

# ACTIVITY TWO:

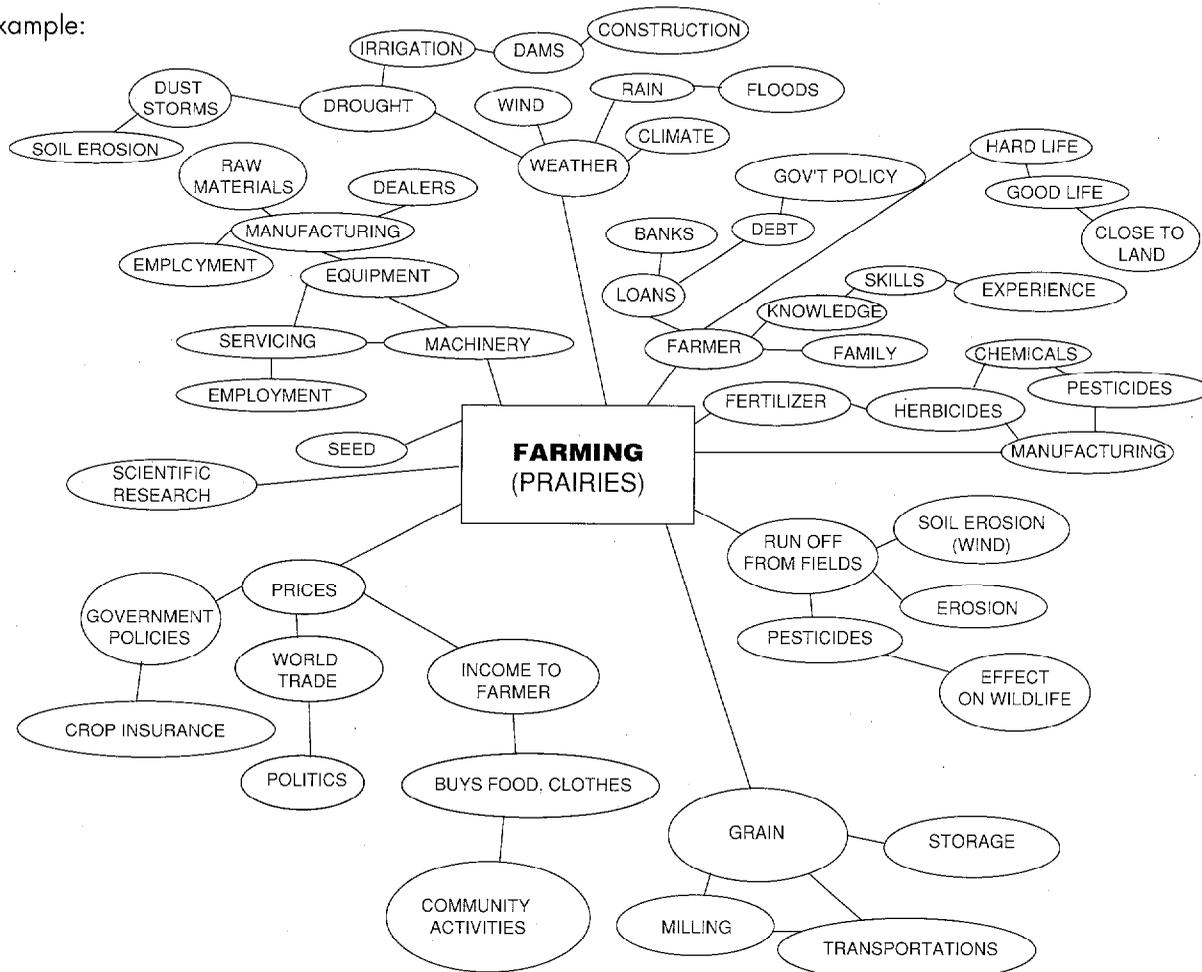
## CONNECTIONS

Select one major element in the economy of your community or region, e.g., farming, manufacturing, fishing.

Then do a webbing exercise showing the economic, environmental, social, and political factors that affect that activity and the economic, environmental, social, and political impact of that activity.

Write the subject you have chosen in the centre of a large sheet of paper and record as many factors and connections as you can think of; keep them simple, and don't make value judgements or worry about logical order or organization of ideas.

Example:



If you end up with a diagram that looks something like this you'll have a visual image that reflects the complexity and interconnectedness of almost all the economic activities in your community or region.

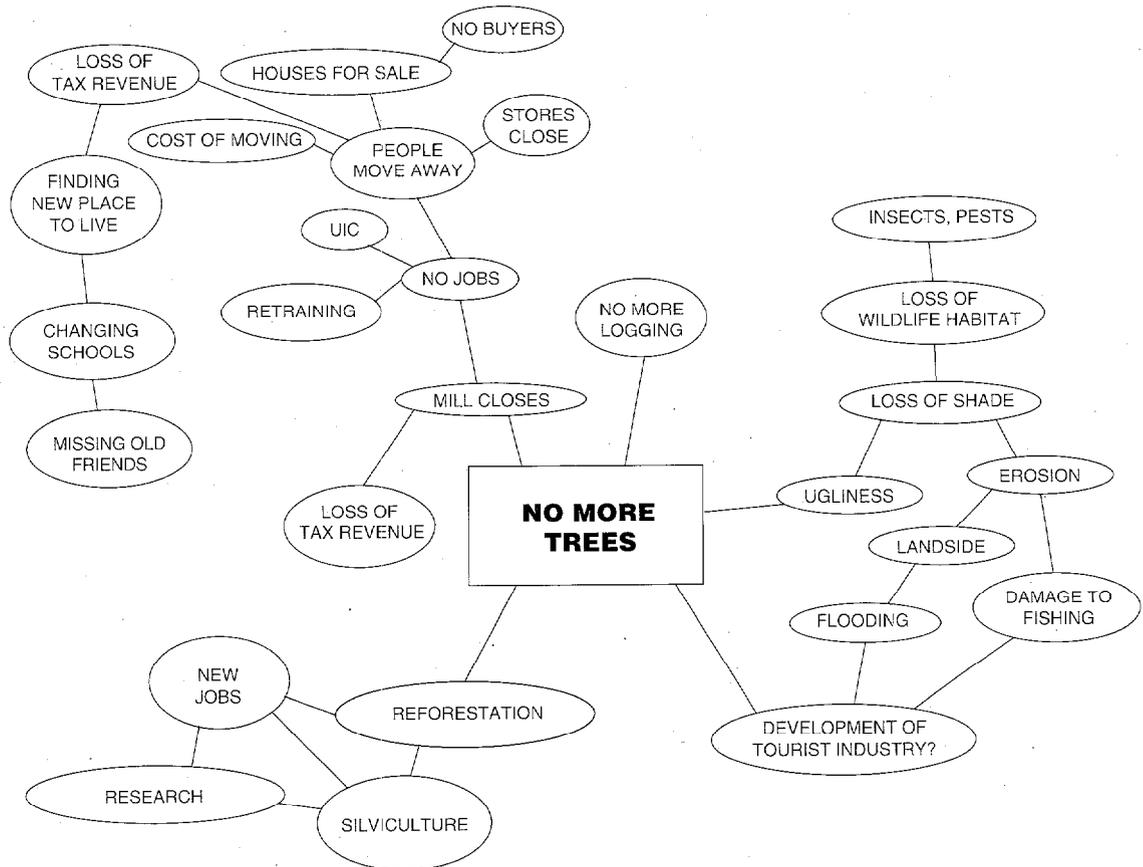
# ACTIVITY THREE:

## WHAT IF ?

Imagine what would happen if an important aspect of everyday life in your community was threatened by economic or environmental changes, for example, there were dramatically fewer fish in local waters, or no more trees suitable for logging.

Do a webbing diagram to indicate some probable effects of these changes, and some possible new developments. It might be useful to include in the diagram as many stakeholders as possible.

EXAMPLE:



Changes like these have already occurred in more than one community across Canada. One of the goals of sustainable development is to find ways to maintain a healthy economy without damaging or destroying the natural resources on which so many Canadian communities depend.

# SAMPLE CASE STUDY:

## HEIGHT-OF-THE-ROCKIES WILDERNESS AREA \*

This case study is based on an actual conflict which was resolved through the round table process initiated by the B.C. Ministry of Forests. It is not presented as a shining example of how well the round table approach to issues works. Rather, it indicates the key steps in the approach, reflects the time and effort involved, and highlights some of the major factors contributing to the successful resolution of economic-environmental issues.

### **THE ISSUE:**

Protection of a wilderness area threatened by expansion of logging activities.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Height-of-the-Rockies area is located in southeastern B.C. close to the B.C.-Alberta border. It was part of two Timber Supply Areas, as defined by the B.C. Ministry of Forests, and two companies had cutting rights in the area.

In 1977, the Palliser Wilderness Society, comprised of local outfitters and residents, proposed that the area be designated as a Wilderness Conservancy. Shortly afterwards, one of the forest companies applied for a permit to carry out logging operations in the White River watershed, a section of the area that conservationists felt was crucial to their proposal. Twenty-five environmental groups opposed the application.

The Ministry of Forests and Lands called a public meeting to discuss the issue and the Upper Kootenay Public Advisory Committee was established. It included representatives of wilderness advocacy groups, the forest industry, the mining industry, guides and outfitters, trappers, and the native community. Representatives of provincial government ministries attended meetings but were not on the committee.

The committee carried out a series of meetings over the next two and a half years, and presented a report recommending that logging proceed under carefully managed conditions at lower elevations in the White River valley, and that the upper portion of the valley be preserved as wilderness.

In 1980, The Ministry of Forests approved the logging plan for the lower valley and placed a five-year moratorium on logging in the upper valley in order to gather additional information for a decision on the wilderness conservation issue.

In the next five years, little research was done and logging proceeded. The promised "sensitive" logging practices were not carried out, partly due to a beetle infestation that resulted in a timber salvage program instead. Forest fires raised industry concerns that cutting rights would be reduced.

When the moratorium expired in 1985, the forest company applied to log the upper White River. The following year, the Palliser Wilderness Society again proposed a wilderness area, this one being about half the size of the earlier proposal. The new proposal received increased support from guides and outfitters, and from other environmental groups in the province.

The Ministry of Forests decided to bring together the wilderness advocates and industry representatives to try to find a mutually acceptable resolution to the conflict.

### **SETTING UP THE HEIGHT-OF-THE ROCKIES TASK FORCE:**

The first priority was to decide what entities and interests should be represented, and who should be the representatives. It was felt that the Task Force should be kept to the minimum size that could adequately represent the major interests, and that each member of the Task Force should have policy and decision-making authority. Ministry of Forestry officials contacted a wide range of possible stakeholders, and in late 1986 the Task Force was established.

The two forest companies with cutting rights in the area had two representatives each, and a special consultant to the industry also attended meetings. The Palliser Wilderness Society had three representatives. The Ministry of Forests was represented by four local officials, and the Ministry of Environment was represented by a Regional Wildlife Biologist. A Ministry of Forests official (not a forester) was accepted by all parties as the facilitator.

### **THE NEXT PRIORITY WAS THE DISCUSSION OF PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS:**

- what information was available?
- in what order would specific issues be addressed?
- what was to be the time frame?

It was decided that decisions would be made on the basis of negotiation, not voting.

### **THE NEGOTIATIONS:**

A series of meetings and discussions were held between January and July 1987. While there was general agreement that the wilderness area was a good idea in itself, there was a variety of contentious issues: the actual boundary of the area, the data on which cutting rights were based, the amount of commercial timber that might be lost to the forest companies, and the specific values assigned to different sections of the proposed wilderness area.

The participants used maps, slides, and graphs to present their points of view. Both wilderness advocates and the forest companies made concessions, and by April there was agreement on all but a small part of the wilderness area. A sub-group of the Task Force inspected the disputed locations by helicopter and on foot, and while some issues were resolved, the final position of the boundary across the White River was still a source of conflict.

In July, the Ministry of Forests representatives on the Task Force reviewed all positions, and in accordance with an agreed-upon procedure, made the final decision on the location of the boundary.

In August 1987, the B.C. legislature passed an Order in Council establishing the Height-of-the-Rockies Wilderness Area.

#### **FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUCCESS OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS:**

- Logging interests were focused primarily in the lower areas of the watershed, while recreational/wilderness areas were located in the upper areas.
- Managers, resource users and residents of the Kootenay region had considerable experience in dealing with land use disputes, and were determined to resolve them at the local level.
- The expertise and attitudes of local and regional government staff supported rather than hindered a negotiated solution.
- All parties understood the environmental issues, and appreciated the recreational and wilderness values of the area.
- All parties had realistic expectations of what could be achieved.

#### **SUMMARY:**

Three years after the establishment of the official wilderness area the participants had different opinions on the amount of agreement achieved by the negotiations. The forest companies felt that the process had been long and time-consuming, and to some extent wondered if the final decision was much different from one the Ministry of Forests might have made unilaterally. The Wilderness Society felt the boundary should have been further down the White River, but the existing location was acceptable.

The Ministry representatives felt that both sides recognized the need for a decision to be made, and had a pretty good idea of what that decision would be.

\* This description is based on a synopsis and fuller case history of the Height-of-the-Rockies Wilderness Area in REACHING AGREEMENT: Volume 1 Consensus Processes in British Columbia, published by the British Columbia Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 1991

# SAMPLE INFORMATION PACKAGE:

## PULP MILLS AND WATER POLLUTION

### **INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR:**

This information package is designed for use in situations where there is neither time nor resources available to carry out extensive research on a local issue. It describes an issue relevant to most provinces, outlines key stakeholder positions, and includes some bargaining points that could be used in a round table simulation. It provides the basis for a number of activities.

1. A group discussion of the issue and the different points of view of the stakeholders. The discussion could focus exclusively on the issue described or it could relate that issue to similar situations in the local community or region. New stakeholder positions could be brought into the discussion.
2. A round table simulation in which young people take the roles of stakeholders, present those positions in a round table meeting, and try to formulate a statement advising the provincial government on what action to take.
3. A round table simulation designed to find a resolution to the conflict based on negotiation and agreement between all the parties involved.

The information in the Manual for the Teacher/Facilitator may be helpful in setting up and carrying out these round table simulation activities. The participants in the simulation could begin at the presentation stage of the round table process, using the stakeholder positions as described in the accompanying pages. Or participants could use the issue as the starting point and add or delete stakeholders and modify positions as they see fit.

Participants can draw upon their own experiences and knowledge to “create” stakeholders who are real people, with personalities and character. With greater personal involvement in the round table process, participants gain a deeper understanding of what sustainable development means and how we need to work together to achieve it.

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IN ALL ROUND TABLES, THE FOLLOWING BASIC PRINCIPLES APPLY:

1. The participants, as stakeholders, have full power to do everything possible (to negotiate and make decisions) to reach an agreement based on the principle of sustainable development.
2. Sustainable development includes social and cultural considerations, not just economic and environmental factors.
3. Every effort should be made to identify the key stakeholders in the issue and make sure that they are part of the round table.
4. The debate and negotiating process is NOT a competition to see who can be the most persuasive, or to see who can give up the least (or most). This is a time for co-operation, for compromise, for a positive approach to the task of reaching a solution that all stakeholders can accept.
5. Participants should use their initiative, imagination, and creativity at all stages of the round table process.
6. Participants should not feel discouraged if they do not arrive at consensus within the time available for the activity. In complex issues with many competing interests, few decisions please everybody. Whether consensus is achieved or not, the round table simulation can provide valuable insights into the real world of economic-environmental decision-making.

**THE ISSUE:**

For many years, pulp mills throughout the province have been discharging liquid waste into rivers, lakes, and coastal waterways. Recently, studies done by marine biologists in the waters near one pulp mill have revealed abnormalities in some fish species and unacceptable levels of pollutants in shellfish. As a result, large areas of the inlet are now closed to commercial fishing.

Environmental groups are concerned that certain substances in the discharged material are harmful not only to aquatic and marine life, but to humans as well. They have begun a campaign to stop the industry-wide practice of discharging liquid wastes into surrounding waters.

The pulp industry states that it is simply doing what has been an accepted and allowed practice; it claims that this presents no danger to humans, and the effluent meets all current pollution standards.

The provincial government now proposes new legislation intended to gradually reduce and eventually eliminate the discharge of potentially dangerous substances into waters near pulp mills. The proposed law would, by the end of 1995, impose a 1.5 kilogram per tonne limit on chlorinated organics in the effluent flowing from pulp mills into nearby waters, and chlorinated organics would have to be eliminated completely by the end of 2002.

The pulp and paper industry claims the new regulations are unnecessary because the effluent is not harmful to humans, and if implemented, will mean the introduction of new technology and new equipment costing millions of dollars at a time when the industry is suffering the effects of a general economic recession.

Environmental groups feel that the proposed legislation is a step in the right direction, but are still concerned that pollution levels will stay too high for too many years.

Pulp mill workers, and their union, are concerned about the possibility of layoffs and pulp mill closures if the companies cannot meet the new requirements.

The provincial government has set up a round table to discuss the issue and provide advice on what action to take to resolve the conflict.

**STAKEHOLDER:** PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for making the final policy decision on this issue.

The Ministry has to consider its overall responsibility to maintain a safe natural environment for the people of the province, and its specific responsibility in this case to protect the health of consumers of fish and shellfish.

The Ministry also has to consider the priorities of the Ministry of Economic Development to promote and maintain a sound economy.

The Ministry is aware that the forest industry is a major contributor to the provincial economy. It does not want to force forest companies to close down their pulp mills and move somewhere else. Neither does it want to scare away potential investors.

Nevertheless, it is concerned that some pulp mills still exceed current pollution limits, and realizes that the general public, and environmentalists in particular, have not forgotten election campaign promises to protect the natural environment.

The Ministry feels that the time frame of the proposed law reflects a middle position between industry and environmentalists. It seeks to assure environmentalists that toxic substances will not be released into the natural environment, and it is giving industry plenty of time to make the necessary investment and changes.

**STAKEHOLDER:** FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

This represents all the major forest companies operating in the province. These companies have considerable economic power. They earn millions of dollars in profits (in good years) and employ several thousand people in pulp mills and related occupations.

Developing new "cleaner" technologies to meet these new standards will be expensive and take time. Investment in research and equipment will increase production costs and make it more difficult for the province-based industry to compete in international markets.

The industry has already spent a lot of money on equipment and practices to meet current pollution standards. In many mills, the discharge of dioxin and furan (the most toxic of the chlorinated organics) has been reduced considerably.

The Association can present graphs showing lower pollution standards in other parts of the world, and it questions why the standards should be so high here.

The Association wants the legislation removed entirely.

**STAKEHOLDER:** FOREST COMPANY A

This company has been based in the province for many years. It has several operations in different locations. Its only pulp mill is quite old and it will be very expensive to upgrade the mill to meet the proposed standards.

The company questions the credibility of the research studies and the need to close the area to fishing. Company officials, and workers, have eaten fish and shellfish from nearby waters for many years with no ill-effects.

The company wants the legislation removed, or alternatively, for its mill to be exempt from the law. It threatens to shut down the mill if the government proceeds with the legislation. This would mean the loss of many jobs and would be a severe blow to nearby communities.

**STAKEHOLDER:** FOREST COMPANY B

This subsidiary of a large foreign corporation plans to build two pulp mills in the province. It has worked closely with provincial and federal economic development agencies to obtain harvesting rights to a large area of forest.

IT IS CONSIDERING SEVERAL FACTORS:

- Lower pollution standards mean lower costs and higher profits.
- The province has the large area of forest necessary for a long-term supply of raw material to the mill.
- Few other countries have the same abundance of raw materials.
- The provincial economy is in recession; this is a good time to bargain for investment incentives because the province badly needs the income and jobs that come with this type of investment.
- The company could bargain for even better incentives, e.g., province-funded road and rail links to port, tax breaks for the early years of operation.
- There is still the possibility of investing in another province or another country.

The company is concerned that the new law will affect the profitability of its investment. It has not taken a public stand on the issues so far.

**STAKEHOLDER:** MARINE BIOLOGIST

Works for provincial Ministry of Environment.

Carried out major study on fish and shellfish. Has consulted and exchanged data and information with colleagues in other provinces and countries.

Is aware of political pressures affecting many researchers in the field of environmental science: politicians want hard numbers, absolutely foolproof cause-and-effect relationships between specific toxins and specific illnesses or threats to health and life.

Is confident that the levels of pollutants found in the fish and shellfish are accurate and the fish from waters near the pulp mill had significantly more abnormalities than fish caught in more distant waters.

Has considered other possible causes for the abnormalities and other possible sources of pollutants, but has found none. The Ministry does not have the funds for further large-scale research.

Cannot say with absolute certainty that levels of pollutants in the fish and shellfish are a serious threat to human life.

Recommends that present fishing closures be maintained until further evidence provides reasons for lifting them.

Is in favour of the new legislation. Thinks monitoring of effluent and water quality should be intensified. Favours more research into the impact of the pollutants on aquatic and marine life.

**STAKEHOLDER:** ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

Has more than one thousand members across Canada.

It has carried out its own study of waters near pulp mills. The results are similar to those of the Ministry of Environment study, but the group interprets them differently. It feels that the levels of pollutants are unacceptably high and represent a real threat to human health and the overall health of the waterways.

The group is concerned about birds and mammals that feed on the fish and small creatures in the waters around pulp mills.

It is concerned about pulp mill effluent going into rivers from which downstream towns and villages take their drinking water and water for irrigation.

The group is also interested in the larger issue of consumption and consumerism. It feels that bleaching paper (the process that involves most of the pollutants) is largely unnecessary; people can do very well with paper that is grey or brown or creamy, but not white. The group wants pulp mills to reduce or eliminate the production of bleached paper.

The group wants the new law brought in right away and wants the higher standards introduced much sooner than scheduled. It feels that mills can comply, since they have already reduced the amount of pollutants in their discharges.

**STAKEHOLDER:** COMMUNITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The community provides services and supplies to a large pulp mill. Most of the mill's workforce lives in the community. There is also a small but growing tourism industry in the area, based on sport fishing, boating and sailing.

The Chamber is concerned about the impact on the community if the local mill is shut down. Local people who provide a variety of goods and services to the mill would be hard hit. Retailers would face business reductions if mill workers are unemployed.

The Chamber also sees a brighter future if the mill is upgraded. Local businesses might well be involved in the upgrading, and more workers may have to be brought in to do the work.

The Chamber is trying to find alternative types of economic development in order to reduce the community's dependence on the mill.

At this point, the Chamber wants to delay implementation of the new legislation. It proposes more studies be done to prove the harmful effects of the pollutants. It wants less publicity about the issue and wants the provincial Ministry of Tourism to increase its promotion of the area.

**STAKEHOLDER:** SHELLFISH HARVESTING ASSOCIATION

The Association represents 45 individuals and businesses who carry out harvesting operations in coastal waters near several pulp mills.

Association members have seen their catches diminish with the imposition of the fishing closures. The closed areas have traditionally been very productive. Sales have also decreased since the research studies raised consumer concern about the safety of eating local shellfish.

The Association is concerned about the study results, and would like a clearer definition of a safe level of pollutants in shellfish.

It is in favour of the new legislation and would like to see a faster implementation schedule so that fishing could resume sooner in the closed areas.

**STAKEHOLDER:** PULP AND PAPER UNION

The union represents workers at pulp and paper mills across Canada. Its top priority in this issue is protection of workers' jobs.

It is concerned that mills will close down if environmental standards are set too high. It is aware of lower standards in effect in other provinces and is concerned that those provinces may raise their standards to match the levels established by this new legislation.

It is not convinced that the present levels of pollutants are dangerous to aquatic and marine life, or to humans.

It knows what is involved in upgrading mills, and sees some opportunities for extra jobs. It also knows that technological improvements are often used to justify the replacement of workers by machines.

The union would like the new legislation to be shelved until further studies are done to prove that current levels of pollution are dangerous.

**POSSIBLE NEGOTIATION POINTS**

These could be introduced by the facilitator at any time during the round table meeting when negotiations seem to slow down. They should not be used to distract stakeholders the moment a conflict arises, but only when serious bargaining fails to suggest a way forward.

1. The forest industry association announces that a new process has been developed to produce white paper without using toxic chemicals. It involves new technology, requires fewer workers, and will increase pulp mill productivity.
2. The government decides to use only unbleached paper (as it becomes available) in all regular day-to-day applications, e.g., correspondence, memos, computer and fax printouts, and publications.
3. A pulp mill announces that it has found a way to extract the toxic chemicals from the effluent before it is discharged into nearby waters.
4. The foreign-owned forest company changes its plans to invest in the province; it is now negotiating a deal with another province.
5. A Chamber of Commerce survey indicates that the community now receives almost as much revenue from boating, fishing, and tourism activities as it gets from the pulp mill and related economic activities.

# SECTION

MANUAL FOR TEACHER/FACILITATOR

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a round table, with suggestions for guiding and monitoring the process, debriefing the participants, and evaluating the experience.

It is designed for use by groups of young people and school classes with the time, and the access to information and resources in order to carry out the process.

This manual is designed for the person or persons who take on the role of facilitator in the process. You may be a member of the group, a student or a teacher. Your role is not to lead or instruct the group, but rather to act somewhat like the moderator of a discussion panel, and to guide and monitor the process. You do not need any special knowledge or academic skills. You should try at all times to act in accordance with the wishes and decisions of the participants.

The Model Round Table described in the following pages is a role-playing activity in which participants attempt to reach consensus on an economic-environmental issue or conflict. But the stages and activities described below could help you to set up a real-life round table to deal with issues in your own community.

THERE ARE FIVE MAJOR STAGES IN THE SIMULATION:

1. Select the issue to be resolved and identify the stakeholders.
2. Organize the participants to represent stakeholders; allocate research tasks.
3. Stakeholders present their positions in a round table meeting.
4. Participants discuss, bargain and negotiate to achieve consensus.
5. Debrief participants and evaluate the experience.

These stages are the same regardless of where and how the simulation is used.

Most groups and classes in major cities will have a range of local issues to deal with and a full range of active research possibilities: local libraries (school, city, university); daily newspapers, two or more television news broadcasts, several radio news broadcasts; university and college scientists; industry and business groups, company and union officials; spokespeople for environmental, native, user and citizens' groups.

Groups and classes in smaller towns and rural areas may have fewer local issues to choose from, but there are many regional or national issues that are relevant to local economies and environments throughout Canada. Although research opportunities may be limited, there are local stakeholders to be interviewed — that is, people and businesses affected by particular economic-environmental

issues.

Clubs, organizations and groups are likely to have less time to devote to the simulation than school classes. Instead of individual or group research into an issue, try organizing a field trip to the site of a conflict, or inviting guest speakers on various sides of an issue. Activities like these can make issues come alive for participants.

A school class could spend as many as four weeks on the activity, paying particular attention to research skills, organizing information, presenting material, and effective discussion and debating skills — all aspects of learning and communication that are increasingly important in today's world.

Another class might review the Sample Case Study and use the Information package as the basis of the activity, and take only one or two class periods to introduce students to the complexities of current economic and environmental issues. A group might use the Information Package to carry out the simulation in a one- or two-day workshop setting.

In all settings and situations, be sure to adapt and modify the process to fit your group's needs and priorities.

## CURRICULUM LINKS

The round table process requires skills in:

- research
- communication
- critical thinking
- negotiation
- consensus decision-making.

These skills are also fundamental elements of the curriculum in Social Studies, Geography, History, Economics, Law, and Ethics. Teachers of senior secondary students in these, and related, fields can use the Model Round Table both for the opportunities it presents for skill development, and for the new understandings it provides about decision-making techniques and economy-environment interactions.

Here are some of the specific ways in which the Model Round Table activities can develop these skills:

- **Research:**  
Students collect information about an issue by reading newspapers, magazines, and other print materials; by listening to radio news and watching television news; by interviewing members of the community; by analysing charts, diagrams, and statistics.
- **Organizing information:**  
Students use the data from their research to identify stakeholders, to define stakeholders' priorities, and to provide other stakeholders with that information in a clear and concise manner.

- **Presenting information:**

Students present the positions of various stakeholders at a round table meeting, and provide appropriate information to support those positions.

- **Evaluating information:**

Students evaluate the presentations (according to their perceptions and understandings of the facts presented) in order to modify their own positions and work towards consensus.

- **Problem-solving:**

Students agree on an operational definition of consensus, and bargain and negotiate in order to reach it.

As well as these opportunities for skill development, the kit can also build students' understanding in the following areas:

- decision-making techniques
- the role of government in dispute resolution and consensus decision-making
- the role of values in economic decisions
- the economic consequences of environmental damage
- the potential economic benefits of environmental protection

# MODEL ROUND TABLE:

## A LEARNING UNIT

The following schedule is appropriate for a teacher with four weeks to devote to the simulation. It indicates the range of possible activities for the Model Round Table.

### **WEEK 1** (2-3 CLASS HOURS)

Class does one or two of the activities in the Activities and Sample Case Study folder. These help participants to understand the links between the environment and the economy, and to analyze the interests at stake in economic-environmental issues.

By following news stories in local newspapers, participants identify a local economic-environmental issue that can serve as the focus of the simulation. They identify the “stakeholders” in this issue and, through class discussion, identify the potential responsibilities, interests, and/or jurisdictions of these stakeholders.

They then choose or draw from a hat the stakeholder they will represent. Depending on the size of the class, they may work in small groups or as individuals. The teacher acts as facilitator throughout this phase of the simulation. The kit provides guidance and materials to enable the teacher to do this.

### **WEEK 2** (2+ CLASS HOURS; COULD BE DONE AS HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT)

Participants receive Information Sheet 1: Research. Research is one of the most important elements in the simulation. During this phase of the project, participants contact the individuals or organizations concerned; they conduct interviews and collect and analyze documents relevant to the issue.

The task of the participants is to develop an understanding of the stakeholder’s interests so they can effectively represent them in the simulation. As well, the participants need to understand the stakeholder’s view of sustainable development.

#### *LINKS TO OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM:*

The various research activities in this stage of the process help students develop information handling and critical thinking skills useful in further academic work. Interviews introduce interpersonal skills useful when students enter the workforce.

**WEEK 3** (2 CLASS HOURS PLUS HOMEWORK)

Participants receive Reference Sheet 2: Organizing Information, and Reference Sheet 3: Presenting a Position Paper. Participants prepare and present position papers on behalf of the stakeholders they represent.

*LINKS TO OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM:*

As participants evaluate the information they have collected, they apply basic critical thinking skills to distinguish fact from opinion, to weigh the relative importance of different factors, and to recognize differing points of view. Presenting position papers may seem daunting to some students, but with careful preparation and organization (guided and assisted by teacher and classmates), the presentation can be a positive and confidence-building experience for students.

**WEEK 4** (2 CLASS PERIODS)

Participants receive Reference Sheet 4: Debating, Bargaining and Negotiating. Participants try to find a solution to the local issue, based on the principle of sustainable development. Their aim is to arrive at a consensus about what should be done. The kit suggests various ways to structure and guide this process of dialogue and debate.

*LINKS TO OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM:*

Critical thinking skills are involved in the give and take of negotiations.

# THE MODEL ROUND TABLE

## 1. Preparation

Go through the kit and become familiar with its various elements. Choose the materials that will be appropriate for your group. Photocopy the materials you want to distribute to participants.

Next, ensure that all participants understand the concept of sustainable development and the purpose of the round table process (Refer to materials in the kit: Sustainable Development and The Round Table Process, if necessary), and are aware of the roles and responsibilities of participants in the round table simulation.

Then, in collaboration with the group, decide how to carry out the simulation. The process you choose will depend on:

- the number of participants
- the research possibilities
- access to local resources
- space and facilities for the round table meeting
- time available for research, presentations, debate, debriefing and evaluation.

## 2. Selection of the conflict to be resolved

- a. Participants suggest possible issues — some local, some national and international. Encourage participants to phrase the issue in fairly specific terms. A phrase like “air pollution in the city” is too broad and general; a better statement of the issue would be something like: “The reduction of air pollution in the city by limiting the use of cars and trucks”.

You may want to suggest that participants do some research before making a final decision on the conflict to be resolved. You can use the sample newspaper clipping (see following page) to show students what to look for. The clipping describes the issue, includes several quotes from people who could be stakeholders in the issue, and indicates several other stakeholders.

- b. Participants look for possible issues in recent newspapers and magazines (in the school and local library). They listen to radio news and watch television news. They record the appropriate information in note form.

They then bring forward ideas and information based on their research. Your role is to help participants evaluate the possible issues on the following criteria:

- What information do we need to discuss this issue? Is that information available?
- Could we get access to the people and organizations involved in this issue?
- Could we get access to the site of the conflict?

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., Jan 3, 1992-3

# Crucial vote nears in Murray River

## River pollution mounting environmental timebomb

By Gary Dimmock  
Montague Bureau

MURRAY RIVER-If residents here vote against a central sewer system they could be faced with a 50 per cent drop in shorefront property value, legal prosecution and a poor excuse for a tourism industry.

"Some of the residents in Murray River have told us they are dumping sewage into the river, but we would still have to investigate each case individually and if proven they could be charged under the Environment Protection Act," says Don Jardine, director of the Environmental Protection Branch of the P.E.I. Department of Environment.

### NO CENTRAL SYSTEM

Presently, the village divided by the river has no central sewer system and 40 per cent of local raw sewage and human waste is filtered directly into the river.

Some locals here contend this "primitive situations" is becoming increasingly detrimental to both the shellfish and tourism industries as pollution levels rise.

"The future for Murray River is not going to be fishing nor farming, it is going to be tourism and if our river stays polluted there won't be a tourism

industry," said one local. "You can't swim in the river, you come out smelling like raw sewage. There are no tourists that will like that"

### SITUATION TERRIBLE

P.E.I. Tourism Marketing Board representative Jean Shumate calls the situation terrible and outrageous. She admits local tourism operators will be affected by the crisis, but contends residents should vote for the sake of year round residents.

Cutting through all the heated arguments pro and con, the issue of implementing a central sewer boils down to a tradeoff between cost and the environment.

"It hurts us as citizens," said one concerned resident. "Let's face it, Murray River is a pretty affluent community and certain people can give a portion of the earnings towards the cleaning up of the river."

### VALUES MAY DROP

In an interview with a world-wide real estate corporation, one official claimed shorefront property value would drop by at least 50 percent as values are closely associated with recreational use of the water.

Although some fishermen claim increasing pollution levels threaten the

mussel industry, others contend the bacteria boosts mussel growth and size. Some say they can't draw a comparison of proper growth as sewage has been dumped in the river since the founding of this tiny village.

After two decades of debate, a private study has now been drafted and residents will take to the ballot booth on Jan. 20 to determine whether to fund the project.

### REJECTED IN 1971

In 1971, a similar system was offered to the village for \$75 a unit, but development was rejected. Today the proposed system will cost approximately \$1.3 million with a user fee of \$420 per unit

If approved by residents, the three phases of construction are assumed to be government-funded (50 per cent) under the Environmental Servicing Assistance Program (ESAP). But some locals question the reality of these assumptions.

In reference to these accusations, Department of Environment officials note government's interests in Murray River and say the time and money spent on information sessions is a "very good" indication they will fund the project.

Environment officials understand local frustrations over the costs, by say the system is essential for future land use.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS  
AFFECTED BY DECISION  
FOR OR AGAINST  
SEWER SYSTEMS

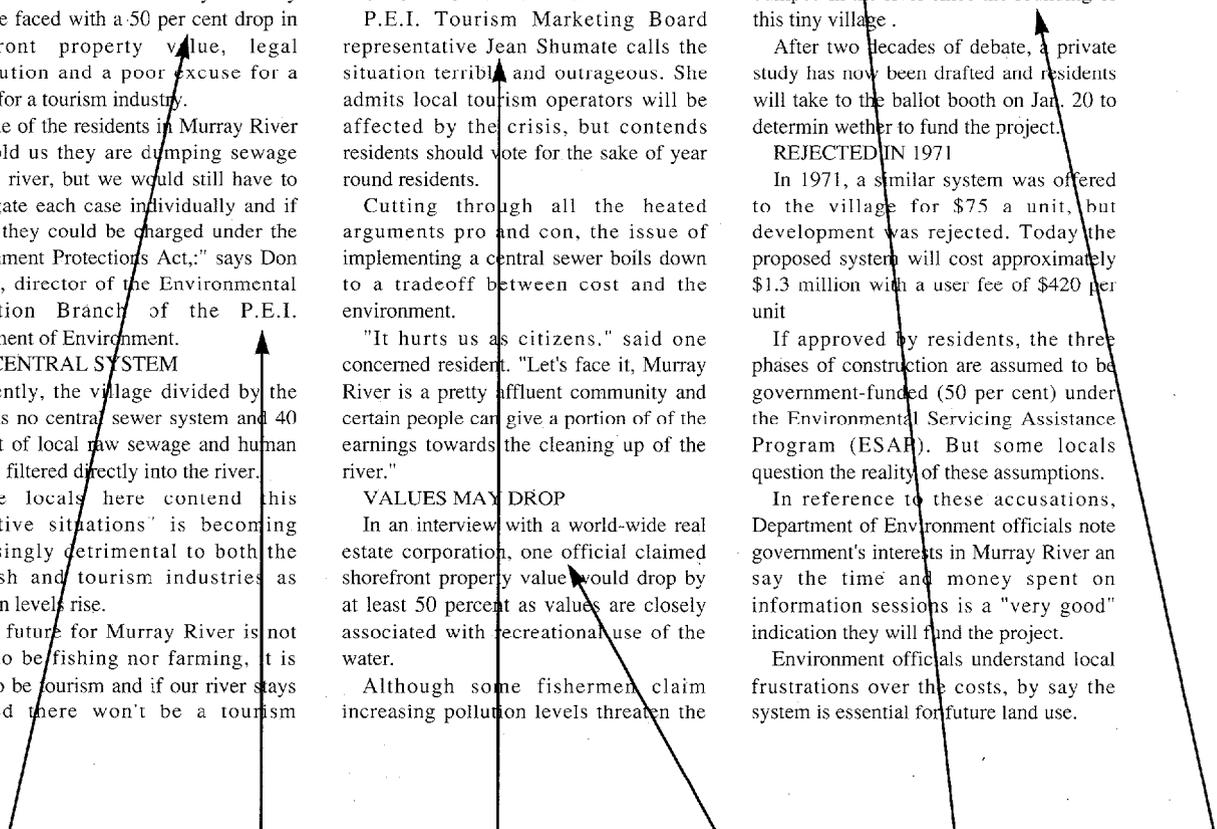
PROVINCIAL  
GOVERNMENT  
REPRESENTATIVE

INDUSTRY  
ORGANIZATION  
(MAY BE LINKED TO  
PROVINCIAL  
GOVERNMENT)

LOCAL BUSINESS

INDIVIDUALS AND  
BUSINESS AFFECTED  
BY THE DECISION

OPPORTUNITY FOR  
SCIENTIST INPUT



### 3. Identification of the Stakeholders

The principal parties in an economic - environmental conflict are frequently identified in the news stories. Deciding who else has a stake in the resolution of the conflict can be a lively brainstorming process.

By asking questions like these, you can help participants to identify the "hidden" or unnamed stakeholders:

- Who is affected by the actions of the principal parties?
- Who can provide useful information to the decision-makers?
- Who will have to enforce the decision or monitor the results of the decision?
- Could a decision made in this conflict affect future conflicts?
- Who might be involved in those future conflicts?

You may refer to the list of stakeholders in The Round Table Process, so that participants can check that they have identified all the relevant stakeholders.

### 4. Organization of participants and allocation of roles and responsibilities

- a. Your immediate task is to help participants decide how the stakeholders will be represented at the round table meeting. Remind participants of what representing a stakeholder involves:
  - Research into the stakeholder's background, reasons for involvement in the conflict, possible goals and priorities, particular concerns
  - Presentation of the stakeholder's position at the round table
  - Bargaining and negotiating to achieve consensus

You can match the number of participants with the number of stakeholders in various ways. There are advantages to keeping the number of stakeholders small by, for example, selecting only the major stakeholders, or perhaps representatives of major sectors (for example, government, industry, environmental groups or citizens' groups). The round table process seems to work best with smaller numbers of stakeholders. A small group of participants can work together to represent a single stakeholder. By sharing roles and responsibilities, they can speed up the process. All members of the group could do research; one person might be responsible for organizing the information, another for presenting, and a third for bargaining and negotiating in the later stages.

- b. The next task is to finalize the formation and setting of the round table. Factors you need to consider include:
  - number of stakeholders and participants
  - length of presentations (e.g., 5 minutes or 10 minutes per stakeholder)
  - facilities and equipment (display areas for maps and charts, overhead projects, videocassette player and monitor)

Deciding on these points will help you and the participants determine how much research to do and what kind of information they should gather. At this point, you should also establish a time frame for each stage of the activity.

## 5. Carrying out the research and preparing position papers

You need to be available during this stage to answer questions, make suggestions, and ensure that the research is efficient and relevant.

Reference Sheets 1: Research and 2: Organizing Information can help participants to focus effectively on these tasks.

Reference Sheet 3: Presenting a Position Paper can help prepare participants for the actual round table meeting. It might be helpful at this point to review basic listening and note-taking skills. Rehearsing the presentation of a position paper with a small stakeholder group contributes to a smoother, more confident delivery in the meeting. Be sure that participants know the time limit for their presentations.

## 6. The Round Table Meeting: Defining Consensus

- a. All the participants convene at the Round Table Meeting. As facilitator, you should begin by outlining the importance of defining consensus. You can suggest various options (see The Round Table Process), and guide participants in selecting an appropriate definition of consensus. Remind participants that the decision arrived at by consensus is one that will be applied in law or in regulations that everyone must abide by, whether they agree with the decision or not.

Discuss with the participants what options they may have in case they cannot arrive at agreement on all aspects of the issue.

- b. Once those matters have been settled, you should discuss the practical details of the meeting, for example, the order of speaking, procedures for asking questions and providing more information.

## 7. The Round Table Meeting: Presenting Positions

Encourage listeners to take notes during presentations. Monitor presentations so that they do not go over the time allocated for each stakeholder. After each presentation, there should be a question period, in case clarification is needed of specific statements. From time to time, members of a stakeholder group may have to consult among themselves to find the best answer.

## 8. The Round Table Meeting: Debating, Bargaining and Negotiating

This is the crux of the whole process. Remind participants that the simulation is based on a very important assumption: participants have full power to act on behalf of the stakeholders they represent. They are empowered to do everything possible to reach an agreement based on the concept of sustainable development, an agreement that may bring certain costs to various stakeholders, but one that in the long term will bring benefits to most, if not all, of the stakeholders. As stakeholders, participants have to consider both the principle of sustainable development, and:

- their own values and priorities
- areas in which they may be able to compromise (economic, environmental, political, social)
- practical steps they can take to reach the middle ground in this conflict
- how far they can go without abandoning their responsibilities
- the possible consequences if consensus is not reached

It may be helpful if from time to time you summarize the various positions by writing them down on the blackboard or chart paper. This can help stakeholders see new possibilities for compromises. It may also be helpful to have a break so that there can be informal contact and discussion between stakeholders.

Be sure that stakeholders keep in mind that this is not a competition to see who can get the most support through persuasion or influence. The goal of the round table meeting is to find a long-term solution to the conflict that all or most of the stakeholders can accept.

If negotiations seem to stall, you can make suggestions that have not occurred to the participants. It is sometimes easier for someone who is not totally involved to see trends or possible courses of action (See the Information Package in the **Activities and Sample Case Study** section for examples of suggestions you might make).

## 9. The Round Table Meeting: Arriving at Consensus

A possible solution could arise at any stage of negotiations. If someone proposes a solution that could lead to consensus, write it down on the blackboard or chart paper so that all participants understand what they are agreeing to, and what their responsibilities might be in carrying out or abiding by the decision.

If, on the other hand, the allotted time for discussion seems likely to expire without a solution, you need to intervene before time runs out. Summarize the state of negotiations, and try to focus stakeholders' attention on the aspects of the conflict that remain in dispute. If it is impossible to achieve consensus, the participants will need to submit to the decision-making process decided upon earlier (for example a vote, or an imposed decision).

Participants should not feel discouraged if some areas of dispute remain after many attempts at negotiation. It is rare that one solution makes everyone happy. In practice, consensus is usually achieved only on some aspects of an issue, and the remaining aspects have to be referred to an agreed-upon authority for an imposed settlement (See the Sample Case Study in the kit).

## 10. Debriefing

Evaluation of the simulation is an important part of the learning experience. Reference Sheet 5: Evaluation has a list of questions for participants to consider. There is room on the sheet for you to add any additional comments or questions that may be appropriate for participants.

## 11. Evaluation of the Simulation and the Participants

If you are a classroom teacher, you may want to evaluate both the simulation and students' participation in it. Some questions you may want to consider:

### *EVALUATING THE OVERALL PROCESS:*

Which steps went most smoothly?

What difficulties arose during the simulation?

How might they be avoided in future?

Did all participants play an active role in the simulation? If not, why not?

If consensus was achieved, did the decision reflect a balance of economic, environmental, political, and social factors?

Was the decision a practical one? If not, why not? Will it be difficult or impossible to enforce?

### *EVALUATING INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS:*

Contribution to research?

Quality of research?

Well-organized information?

Quality of presentation: clear, to the point, based on fact more than opinion?

Active contributor to debate and bargaining?

## ALTERNATIVE ROUND TABLE ARRANGEMENTS

1. Participants divide into two groups and set up two round tables on different issues. They follow the steps described above to work towards consensus. At the end of the activity, the participants discuss the similarities and differences between the two experiences.
2. Participants divide into two groups and set up two round tables on the same issue or on similar issues. It might be interesting to compare the round table approach to the deforestation of the Amazon with the same approach to logging practices in Canada. At the end of the activity, the participants discuss the similarities and differences between the two experiences.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER ARE:

Did local priorities prevail in both the Amazon and Canada? If so, why? If not, why not?

Was an international group such as the World Wildlife Fund a stakeholder in either of the round tables? If not, why not?

Were native groups represented at both round tables? If not, why not?

3. Participants organize themselves into several small groups. Each group carries out a round table process. At the end of the activity, the participants discuss the similarities and differences between the various experiences.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you are interested in doing further research or other activities relating to sustainable development and the round table process, the following materials may be helpful:

British Columbia Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, **Reaching Agreement, Volume 1: Consensus Processes in British Columbia**, and **Volume 2: Appendices 1,2, and 3, 1991.**

Myers, Norman, **The Gaia Atlas of Future Worlds**, Doubleday, 1990.

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy,  
**On the Road to Brazil: The Earth Summit**, 1991.

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy,  
National Round Table Review (quarterly newsletter).

Schumacher, E. F., **Small is Beautiful**, Harper and Row, 1973.

World Commission on Environment and Development, **Our Common Future**, Oxford University Press, 1987.

# REFERENCE SHEET 1:

## RESEARCH

### RESEARCH TO IDENTIFY AN ISSUE:

1. Look in newspapers and magazines in the school library, at a local library, and at home.
2. Watch television news and listen to radio news; watch television programs like **The Nature of Things, Venture, and The Fifth Estate.**
3. Look for pamphlets and brochures. These are sometimes found in libraries, but more often obtained directly from companies, industry groups, environmental groups, and government departments.

### SOME LEADING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ISSUE:

1. What is the crux of the issue? What is it all about? Are there political and social aspects to be considered along with the economic and environmental concerns?
2. Who are the major stakeholders? Why are they involved in this issue? What do they have to say about it? Whose interests are being served or harmed in this matter? Who else might be concerned about this?
3. What level of government, and what departments or agencies are responsible for making a decision on this issue?
4. Who could provide some authoritative, or expert, information about this issue?

### RESEARCHING A STAKEHOLDER:

Make a note of the full name of the company, organization, group, government department, agency, and the name and position of any person (stakeholder's representative) quoted in a news story, magazine article, pamphlet, etcetera.

What is their position on this issue? How would they like to see it resolved? Why? How would their proposal affect other stakeholders?

**INTERVIEWING A STAKEHOLDER:**

Tell the stakeholder who you are and why you would like to talk to them.

## SOME QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK:

How would they like to see the issue resolved?

Why do they favour that resolution?

Does it represent a long-term solution?

Does it fit their definition or idea of sustainable development?

If not, what sort of resolution might fit their idea of sustainable development?

If possible, use a tape recorder in the interview so you can refer back to particular statements later. If appropriate, include in your round table presentation one or two verbatim quotes (the exact words spoken) from the interview.

At the end of the interview, make sure you have the correct name and title of the person you have interviewed, and their permission to use the information in a round table simulation.

## PHOTOGRAPHY OR VIDEOTAPING - SOME SUGGESTIONS:

Take a wide shot of the location or site of the issue.

Take a wide shot of the natural environment that might be affected by a development project or policy decision.

Get closeups of special or unique features of a place.

Take shots of examples of economic-environmental interactions in other locations, for example, how well an industrial plant protects the environment, or how industrial activity has harmed the environment.

Take pictures that show good or bad examples of development.

## REFERENCE SHEET 2:

### ORGANIZING INFORMATION

**A POSSIBLE OUTLINE FOR YOUR POSITION PAPER** (which serves as a guide for your research efforts):

1. Who you represent, that is, the stakeholder.
2. Some background information about yourself (as stakeholder), for example, principal activity, where you are based, where you operate, how long you have been active in this field.
3. The reasons for your involvement in this issue.
4. Your basic priorities (economic, environmental, political, or social).
5. Your position on this issue, that is, the action that should be taken to resolve the issue.
6. The reasons for your position.
7. Possible compromise positions (to be used in negotiations after you have heard the positions of all the other stakeholders).

#### **ANALYSING THE INFORMATION YOU OBTAIN:**

What is fact and what is opinion?

Does the information come from a sound authority: someone with the professional training or experience to support the statements they have made.

Is it possible that the source of information is biased, that is, the information serves a particular purpose or supports a particular point of view, but is not based on verifiable facts?

Is the information contradicted by other sources?

Do you need to find an impartial source of information about this issue?

#### **USING DIFFERENT MEDIA:**

Use pictures from newspapers and magazines or your own photos to illustrate the type of environmental damage you are concerned about or the type of development you would like to see in this case.

Use a map to show the relationship between certain activities and population centres, sensitive natural areas, etcetera.

Use graphs to show trends, for example, population growth in a region, changes in production costs, increases in numbers of people using an area, etcetera.

## REFERENCE SHEET 3:

### PRESENTING A POSITION PAPER

#### **PREPARATION:**

Write, type, or print out your position paper in double-spaced format. This makes it much easier to read aloud.

Keep paragraphs as short as possible.

Highlight key points in each paragraph.

Read your paper aloud ahead of time. You may want to change any awkward phrases or expressions.

Have photographs, charts, maps, etcetera, set out in the proper order and within easy reach, so they are ready to display during your presentation (if they are not already on display as you begin).

#### **PRESENTATION:**

Speak firmly and clearly, with your head up. Talk to your listeners, not to your paper!

Don't rush through your presentation: pause slightly after mentioning major points; give listeners time to absorb or note the information you have presented; give listeners time to look at photos and maps, etc.

Point out specific features in photos and maps that you want to draw attention to; don't assume your audience will notice them automatically.

#### **POSSIBLE OPTION:**

Once you have finished speaking, hand out copies of the presentation (print material, not necessarily maps and photos) to the other stakeholders.

## REFERENCE SHEET 4:

### DEBATING, BARGAINING, AND NEGOTIATING

This is the most important stage in the entire round table process, and two important facts should be clear from the beginning:

1. You, as a stakeholder in this debate, have full power to do everything possible to reach an agreement based on the concept of sustainable development.

That agreement may involve certain costs to various stakeholders, including yourself, but it should, in the long-term, bring benefits to most if not all of the stakeholders. You are free to go beyond the priorities in your position paper. You do not have to get any further authorization for your actions.

2. The debate and negotiating process is NOT a competition to see who can be the most persuasive, to see who can give up the least (or the most). This is a time for co-operation, compromise, and a positive approach to the task of reaching a satisfactory agreement. Take the initiative. Use your imagination and creativity!

#### **LISTENING TO OTHER SPEAKERS:**

Be prepared to make quick notes - key words or phrases - as you listen to other speakers outline their positions.

Listen for their main priorities and their major concerns.

Listen for facts that might support your position, or statements that suggest possible areas of compromise.

#### **IN THE DEBATE AND NEGOTIATIONS:**

Look for any small areas of agreement first.

Think in terms of long-term benefits, not short-term profits and costs.

Look for an acceptable authority to make a final decision on difficult aspects of this issue.



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