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CONSULTATION TOOLBOX

>> A Guide to Undertaking Consultations

Canada

Consultation Toolbox

>> A Guide to undertaking consultations

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Introduction to the Toolbox

The purpose of the *Toolbox* is to provide practical guidance and tools for planning and evaluating consultations. This *Toolbox* supports the DFO *Consultation Framework*, which outlines a departmental consultation policy, principles, and guidelines for encouraging and facilitating involvement in decision-making processes.

The *Consultation Framework* creates a foundation to build a **common understanding and coordinated approach** to consultations undertaken by the department. The *Framework* is composed of nine principles, grouped into three broad themes:

Planning and Evaluation	Building Mutual Respect	Improving Consultation Culture
Commitment	Inclusiveness	Accountability
Evaluation	Accessibility	Transparency
Timing	Clarity	Coordination

Used together, the *Consultation Framework* and the *Toolbox* can help support consultations as an aspect of good business practice, and can help determine the appropriate nature and extent of public involvement. In particular, it is recognized that special considerations might be required to address the culture of Aboriginal groups and the uniqueness of the relationship of the Crown to Aboriginal people. A discussion of these considerations is contained in Appendix C of the *Consultation Framework*.[1]

[1] Based on its fiduciary relationship with Aboriginal peoples, and the recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the federal government has legal obligations to consult with Aboriginal groups. Courts continue to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of those obligations. Consulting with Aboriginal groups and individuals is, to a large extent, no different than consulting with other people and communities affected by decisions of DFO. Depending on the circumstance, there may be special considerations, and along with reference to Appendix C of the *Consultation Framework*, those undertaking consultations with Aboriginal groups are advised to contact colleagues and experts with experience in this area.

The department uses a wide range of consultation methods to achieve a variety of objectives arising from a broad mandate. This *Toolbox* provides the following guidance and tools to direct DFO officials who are undertaking consultations:

- Who can plan the consultation? (p. 6)
- How can the objectives of a consultation be developed (p. 8)?
- Who might be consulted? (p. 9)
- How can the most effective consultation method be identified? (p. 15)
- Who should facilitate the consultation? (p. 20)
- What should be done with the feedback gathered from participants? (p. 22)
- What can be done to show that views are being considered in the decision-making process? (p. 25)
- How can consultations be evaluated? (pp. 23 and 27)

Individuals bring their own unique skills and expertise to consultations. It would require a lengthy document to describe and give advice for every logistical detail in every consultation process. Accordingly, the *Toolbox* provides **general guidance** on consultations in DFO. It concludes with a list of contacts and sources of further information and training material. DFO officials should also note that many experts, including facilitators, writers, and technical experts are available for hire. They can help in areas such as developing consultation plans, preparing documentation, assisting with communications, writing reports, developing on-line consultations, and conducting evaluations.

How to Use the *Toolbox*

This *Toolbox* is designed to provide an overview of the steps in a consultation process, from preparation to implementation to evaluation. This document can be used by DFO officials with a wide-range of skills and experiences with consultations, and can be applied to consultations that are conducted both internally and externally. There are three elements to the *Toolbox*: the consultation process, tools and templates, and references and resources.

> Consultation planning should be objective-driven, not technique-driven. In other words, decide the objectives for the consultation first, then choose the techniques.

Sections 1 through 5 offer guidance to a consultation team by outlining the considerations for each phase of the consultation process. Consultations might not always include every aspect described here, but understanding the entire process will strengthen the efforts of those who prepare for, implement and evaluate consultations. This *Toolbox* helps officials to anticipate challenging issues so that desired outcomes can be reached.

The *Toolbox* also contains a number of tools to assist with the phases of the consultation process:

- A description of consultation methods and their characteristics;
- Templates for planning, documenting, and evaluating consultations; and
- Information on a code of conduct for participants, translations, and funding.

Finally, there is a list of other sources of information on consultation, including academic literature, government guides, and training resources.

Throughout the *Toolbox* there are some considerations for a planning team: helpful hints, some things to think about, references to tools and resources, and links to the *Consultation Framework*. Look for the icons in all sections.

Helpful Hints

The helpful hints can be viewed as minimum requirements for effective consultations.

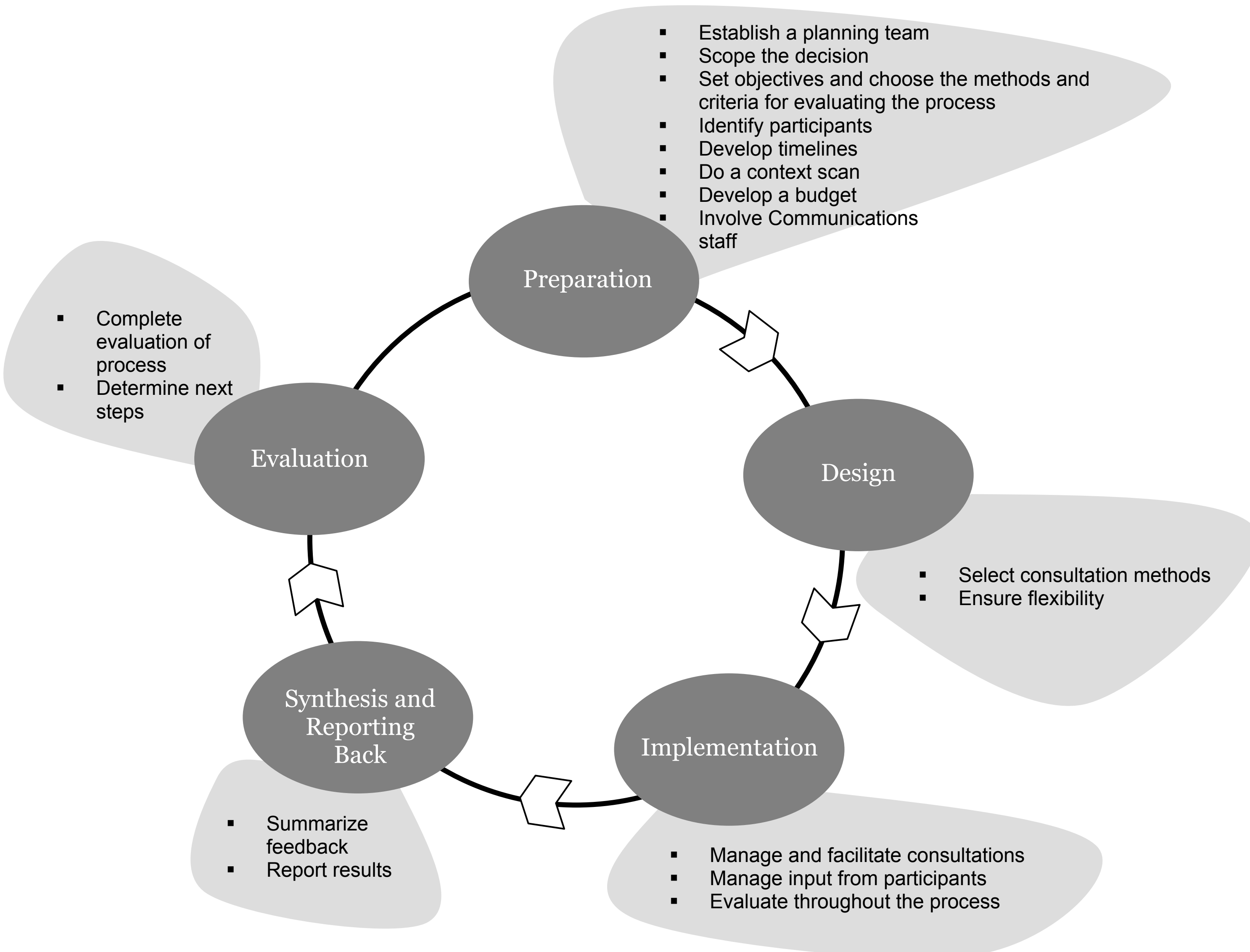
Things to think about

The things to think about vary to a greater degree depending on the consultation.

Tools and Resources

References to tools and the *Framework* provide additional assistance and context.

PHASES OF CONSULTATION



1 Preparation

Managing a consultation requires strategic planning so that the process can remain consistent with consultation objectives. An early assessment will help identify potential issues and the levels of interest of stakeholders and participants. Informal discussions with internal and external partners can provide guidance and insight in these areas.

> Planning helps to create understanding of the objectives and the process for the consultations so that everyone involved has similar expectations.

The preparation of a consultation plan gives the planning team an opportunity to:

- examine the process and its resource requirements;
- set strategic objectives for the consultation process that are clear, feasible and measurable, and set specific goals throughout the process;
- assign roles and responsibilities;
- agree on time constraints;
- anticipate areas of concern and outline possible solutions;
- identify areas for coordination within the department and with other departments; and
- establish criteria for evaluation.

Tools and Resources

Use Tool #1, Strategic Planning Worksheet, to outline the major considerations for the consultation.

It is important to note that consultation planning is an always evolving process. Steps are not necessarily taken in the order they are presented here, and this is the reason that the Strategic Planning Template is not a step-by-step document. The sections should be filled in as information is gathered and decisions are made about planning the consultation process.

The plan is a structure for ongoing monitoring throughout the process, and should therefore be modified as circumstances and feedback require.

1.1 Establishing a planning team

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principles of **Accountability** and **Coordination**.

An effective consultation team should consist of key individuals with diverse and complementary skills in areas such as planning, organization, and implementation. The team can make recommendations on what kinds of consultation methods to use, have established reporting relationships, and have specific required skill sets such as planning, organizing and implementing activities. The team can also include other governments or departments who might be able to identify factors that might influence the consultation. For citizen engagement exercises, consideration can be given to including external stakeholders in the development of the consultation process. Stakeholders can assist with identifying critical issues and can provide information for the context scan.

Helpful Hints

Who should be on the team?
The planning team might include:

- sectors,
- regions,
- administrative staff,
- Legal Services,
- Communications staff,
- facilitators and other experts, and
- external stakeholders, in some cases.

Things to think about

Responsibilities of team members can include determining:

- human and financial resources;
- skills and support needed;
- linkages with other sectors or regions;
- federal government and departmental policies and procedures on communications and consultations;
- who speaks on behalf of DFO;
- who manages and evaluates the consultation; and
- who the decision-makers are.

1.2 Scoping the decision

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Clarity**.

Clarifying the scope of the decision is important for ensuring that the proponents of the consultation and the participants know what type of decision is being made at the end of the process. The scope of the decision is a simple definition or statement of what has to be decided. In some cases, key stakeholders might be asked for assistance in scoping the decision.

Depending on the type of consultation, the decision scope can be broadly or narrowly defined. The more wide-ranging the decision scope, the more opportunity there is for the development of creative solutions. If it is important for the consultation to stay focused on a particular area, then a more precise decision scope will be required. In either case, decision scopes that elicit Yes-No responses, without asking "why" that answer is being given or "how" such a conclusion was derived, contribute little to the consultations and the decision-making process.

Helpful Hints

What is a decision scope?
A decision scope is a simple definition or statement that describes the goal of the decision-making process.

For example:

- How to protect the marine mammals and their habitat by improving regulations for vessel approach, viewing, scientific research, and eco-tourism.
- How to develop a clear and consistent policy framework for the fisheries, which includes a vision, objectives and principles in order to provide the foundation for the management of these fisheries over the long term.
- How to determine which fleets will fish particular stocks on which days and times of year using which gear.

1.3 Setting objectives

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principles on **Evaluation, Timing,** and **Clarity**.

It is important for participants to know the overall objectives of the consultation, and the sub-objectives if there are any. Clearly defining the objectives of the consultation can reduce the potential for conflict that might arise when participants are left to make assumptions about objectives. In clarifying realistic and feasible objectives, it is useful to determine how feedback will be used in the decision-making process, and to establish performance indicators for evaluating the success of the consultation process.

Tools and Resources

Refer to Tool #7, which is a Sample Evaluation Table. This template can guide the development of the objectives.

Helpful Hints

What are the objectives?
The following are some examples of primary and secondary objectives and indicators to be used in an evaluation:

Primary objectives:
- Identify values important for the development of a policy/program
- Identify changes needed to update an Act

Evaluation Indicators:
- Consensus or agreement developed on values that are the foundation for further development of policy/program
- A range of feasible options has been identified to update the Act

Sub-objectives:
- Increase awareness among stakeholders and participants on issues
- Build relationships with stakeholders
- Partnerships are developed with stakeholders

Evaluation Indicators:
- Surveys indicate greater awareness
- Stakeholder relationships improve throughout the consultation process
- Permanent advisory committees are set up or agreements for further cooperation are signed

Objectives describe, in a very specific way, what change or impact the consultation process should have. They help to focus the consultation, and provide a basis for evaluating the activities and the overall consultation process.

To develop good objectives, start by answering question: “What change is to be achieved as a result of this consultation?” Possible answers include:

- increasing knowledge of the regulatory process;
- increasing the public’s understanding of issues; and
- improving the capacity of participants to contribute to the decision-making process.

1.4 Identifying participants

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle on **Inclusiveness**.

Decision-makers need to consider the contributions of people with a wide variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise. The extent of participants’ involvement will depend on the level of their interest, and the extent to which the decisions are likely to affect them. It is also a matter of seeking input and involvement from those who can make a “meaningful” contribution to the decision-making process.

Helpful Hints

Who should be consulted?
Given various obligations and requirements, if there is no established process, then consultation planning can consider the following external groups in this order, although it might vary depending on the issue:

1. The Minister and staff
2. Other federal departments and agencies
3. Provinces, territories and local governments (see, for example, the *Agreement of Interjurisdictional Cooperation with Respect to Fisheries and Aquaculture*)
4. Aboriginal groups
5. Stakeholders and the general public

When dealing with representatives of associations, do not let the consultation process out of the team’s control. Ask the representatives for: lists of who they sent information to, what information was sent, and what feedback was requested. Participants often want to know who else is being consulted.

The quality of the information collected and the overall effectiveness of the consultation will depend on who is selected to participate, and how they are consulted. Intensive consultations target specific clients and stakeholders; jurisdictional issues, for example, might require consultation with provincial and territorial partners. In other situations, participants might be selected on the basis of technical or local knowledge, their expertise about the subject being discussed, or the level of impact on their activities. It might

Tools and Resources

A code of conduct, Tool #4, can be distributed to participants to provide guidance on the responsibilities of participants in consultations. This code can also help in the selection of participants.

be necessary to ensure that the diversity of interests is represented in order to gather the full range of opinions. When consultations are broad-based, as in town hall meetings and open houses, assessing and determining representation can be difficult. In these instances, it might be hard to predict what issues will be raised, or to gauge the level of understanding or knowledge of participants; some people might even raise issues peripheral to the consultation.

Helpful Hints

How should participants be selected?

Consider the need to:

- develop criteria to select the participants;
- determine stakeholder availability for consultations;
- research past consultations to understand the positions and interests of stakeholders;
- determine how the consultations fit into stakeholder availability;
- identify relevant mandates/jurisdictions of other governments and departments;
- determine whether stakeholders require specific knowledge to participate;
- identify DFO staff and their role in the consultations (e.g. as experts, facilitator, legal/scientific background etc.); and
- talk to key stakeholder groups to get advice on who should participate.

1.5 Developing the timelines

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Timing**.

The amount of time allotted for a consultation depends on the complexity of the issue and the consultation methods selected. This means weighing many factors and it is easy to underestimate the length of time that will be required for planning, implementation and evaluation. Consultation plans can identify activities and milestones at all stages of the process. Where desirable, involving participants in the development of timelines can be an important part of building relationships and trust. Whether or not they are involved in setting time frames, participants should always be aware of a schedule. This will keep them focused and allow for monitoring throughout the process, as well as for any adjustments that might be required in objectives and plans.

Helpful Hints

How is a timeline developed?

Take into consideration:

- deadlines for decisions;
- development of background materials and their translation;
- coordination with Communications Branch to develop a communications strategy and materials, if necessary;
- the need for participants and stakeholders to understand material, consult with constituencies or members, and prepare input;
- the effect of the time of day or year (such as fishing seasons, industry activities, and business hours);
- the location of consultations and time requirements for travel and set-up; and
- the length of time required to analyze results and report back to participants.

Things to think about

Tell participants about the milestones, timelines, and pressures!

1.6 Doing a context scan

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Inclusiveness**.

A context scan can reveal opportunities and barriers that might affect the consultation. For example, a scan could identify past stakeholder relationships and even relationships affected by specific socio-economic or political contexts. Research on the social, economic and political contexts surrounding an issue might reveal potential areas of agreement, likely sources of conflict, or factors that could make participants more or less willing to take part in consultations. Communications Branch can be involved in reviewing public opinion polling and analyzing media coverage. A broad perspective is especially important if the scan is to gather information on relevant issues. Assessing the internal environment might identify the level of understanding with which DFO staff are likely to approach the issue.

Helpful Hints

Where can information for a context scan be found?

- Policy Sector website: Environmental scanning
- Communications Branch and its resources
- media clippings
- meeting minutes from established consultation mechanisms, such as advisory groups
- websites of stakeholders and newspapers
- contact stakeholders directly

Things to think about

Research can:

- identify stakeholders' interests from past consultations;
- show which messages stakeholders have participated in previous consultations;
- reveal the nature of the department's relationships with stakeholders, and relationships among stakeholders;
- identify the general concerns of potential participants;
- explain how stakeholders prefer to be consulted; and
- identify initiatives and mandates of other departments, agencies and government.

1.7 Developing a budget

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Commitment**.

Developing the budget can help to anticipate the likely costs required for the design, implementation, and evaluation stages of the consultation. The budget should make allowance for the location and method of consultation, and the level of participation required.

Helpful Hints

What goes into a budget?

Some costs that might be included in a budget are:

- development of background documentation;
- translation costs (whether required or discretionary) of written background documents, meeting summaries and reporting, and simultaneous interpretation, if required;
- communications products and advertising;
- rental of appropriate facilities, technical services, equipment and administrative needs;
- costs for information technology and specialists;
- administrative costs (office supplies, note-taking);
- provisions for participants with special needs; and
- external specialists.

If the consultation methods or extent of participation identified exceeds the level of available funding, there is an opportunity to redefine the key objectives to be more focused, or to better select the stakeholder participants. In this regard, budget planning can ensure consideration of what is essential to ensure the consultations are valuable.

Things to think about

Think about which costs are required, and which are discretionary. For example, legal requirements for translated materials for minority language communities under the *Official Languages Act* should be factored into budget planning.

It is also important to consider conducting research on existing consultation mechanisms and initiatives, such as stakeholder boards and advisory committees, which might offer a cost-effective opportunity to present questions or gather opinions.

1.8 Involving Communications staff and the media

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Coordination**.

In the consultation process, Communications staff can help establish and maintain relationships with the media that can benefit the department and participants as well as the general public. It is important early in the process to determine what type of communications strategy is required, identify the types of communications products to be used, and to define the role Communications staff can play. In some cases, legislation or regulations outline requirements for publishing notices in the media. Communications has the mandate to manage publicity activities and is responsible for the department's communications products. This role includes ensuring that communications activities respect the Communication Policy of the Government of Canada. Some consultation processes will require a communications plan, and all products written for public distribution must go through formal approval processes.

Things to think about

Communications products can include the following:

- News releases
- Backgrounders
- Media lines, including questions and answers for the spokesperson
- Information (educational) packages
- Brochures or pamphlets
- Fact sheets
- Media advisories
- Advertising
- Websites

The Communications Branch also monitors public opinion polling and media activity on issues related to DFO, and can help make the best use of the media. Media relations can be crucial to the success of a consultation, as the media can influence the process directly.

Helpful Hints

What can the Communications Branch do?

- help determine its role in the consultation process;
- coordinate media relations;
- help identify the amount and type of information for the general public;
- help develop information in plain language for consultation participants;
- clarify issues at stake and determine the message, especially for complex issues; and
- work with spokesperson for media activity.

2 Design

The design of the consultation process is about setting the stage to achieve the expectations laid out in the consultation objectives. Selecting the consultation method is a major component of the design, as is ensuring flexibility in the process. When selecting consultation methods, it is important to pay attention to key elements, such as:

- the issue and its urgency;
- availability of resources, human and financial;
- time and skills available;
- geographic scope (national, regional, or both);
- range of stakeholders;
- decision-makers' desired level of participation; and
- how stakeholders prefer to be consulted.

2.1 Selecting methods of consultation

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Accessibility**.

There are many consultation methods available. No single method or process is appropriate for all situations, as each has inherent strengths and weaknesses. The most effective consultations use a variety of techniques to meet the needs of stakeholders and to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the consultation process.

Tools and Resources

Refer to Tool #2, Description of Consultation Methods, which contains descriptions of many methods, along with their pros and cons.

Refer to Tool #3, Consultation Plan Template, which is an outline for a more detailed consultation plan. The plan should build on the strategic planning prepared earlier in the process.

New methods of consultation are continuously being developed and tested throughout the world. They include new methods of working with people in face-to-face settings as well as the incorporation of electronic and Internet technology. Most government officials and private sector consultants are familiar with "conventional" consultation methods that are generally used to gather input and feedback on issues, proposals, or options. However, there are methods, such as consensus conferences and policy dialogues, that try to create higher levels of engagement between citizens, experts, elected officials and government. Other new methods of citizen engagement, such as deliberative dialogues, can help build relationships among various stakeholders. It can be useful to research new methods and to determine when and how they can be used. Tool #2 provides a brief description of various consultation methods, which could be a starting point for research.

Once the objective of the consultation has been determined, it can be helpful to ask the following questions:

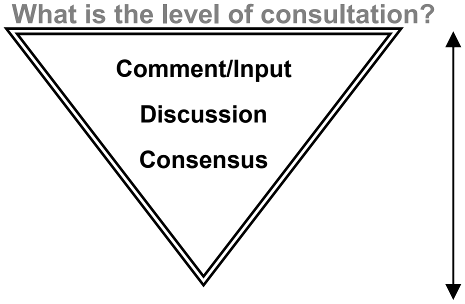
- Which methods are usually used for consulting on this issue and with these stakeholders? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using that method?
- Are stakeholders to be involved in establishing the consultation process?
- Have the same stakeholders participated in past consultations? Are there other participants who should be involved? How can they be involved? Should different interest groups be invited to the same table or not?
- What is the expected outcome? Is consensus the goal of the consultation? If the goal is not consensus, how should general agreement be reached? Is stable disagreement an acceptable outcome?
- Are participants expected to provide feedback on alternatives?
- Are participants expected to develop the alternatives and identify potential solutions?
- Are participants expected to make a decision that the department will implement? Will participants own the decision?

By considering these questions, and by reviewing the consultation methods in Tool #2, DFO officials can be in a better position to select the method takes into account the many different factors that can affect the consultations.

Helpful Hints

How are consultation methods chosen?
These are some of the questions to ask:

What is the level of consultation?



Lower interaction among more participants

How many participants will there be?

How sensitive are the issues?

More interaction among fewer participants

What are the timelines?

Do stakeholders have access to new technologies for participation?

Where are the stakeholders and participants?

Table 2.1 briefly lists some methods of consultation, how they relate to different types of public involvement, and the channels that can be used to consult and engage people.

2.2 Ensuring flexibility

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Evaluation**.

When designing the consultation, the process should be flexible to allow for change as necessary. For example, the objectives might have to be reassessed, the goals or some participants might change over time, or priorities might change. Developing plans for each consultation activity within the process can create flexibility. These plans can include how each session will be organized and facilitated, depending on the participants, location, and other variables. In addition, options can be developed for an alternate discussion leader, facilitator, or location. In all cases, changes should be shared with participants for greater transparency.

Helpful Hints

How can it be determined how and when to make changes?
Ongoing evaluation and monitoring is an important element of the consultation process. Refer to section 3.3 and the tools for evaluating the consultation.

Table 2.1 Methods of Consultation

Descriptions of these methods of consultation can be found in Tool #2.

Type of public involvement	Methods of Consultation	Medium
"Conventional" consultations	interviews	in person
	toll-free lines / hotlines	telephone
	questionnaires / surveys	hard copy, on-line
	open houses / public information centres / public meetings	in person, video link
	conferences / workshops	in person, video link, on-line (synchronous and asynchronous)
	bilateral meetings	in person, teleconference
	focus groups	in person
	advisory boards / committees	in person
	comment forms / workbooks	hard copy, on-line
Citizen engagement	consensus conferences	in person
	roundtables	in person, video link
	task forces	in person, video link
	electronic meetings (group decision support software)	in person, video link
	citizen juries	in person
	citizen panels	in person
	study circles	in person
	search conferences	in person
	think tanks	in person
	charettes	in person
	deliberative polling and dialogues	in person
	the Delphi process	in person

3 Implementation

In the implementation stage, there is a shift from planning and designing, to actually carrying out the consultation. The success of this stage depends on the management abilities of the consultation team and the skills of the facilitator.

At the implementation stage, the main tasks are:

- managing and facilitating the consultation;
- facilitating the exchange of input and encouraging meaningful participation; and
- evaluating throughout.

Helpful Hints

What about the logistics?
Identify requirements for the planning team, facilitators, experts, DFO staff and participants' needs based on:

- venue location within the community;
- physical security and access;
- literacy;
- technical knowledge;
- computer access;
- location (travel and access to documents); and
- linguistic and cultural differences.

The details of logistics can affect the success of a consultation activity, and the integrity of the process as a whole. Consider the characteristics of those who will be at the consultations, including the DFO representatives, media, stakeholders, along with the targeted participants. Details can include:

- choosing the location for the consultations;
- deciding on room set-up, and security and access arrangements;
- determining the level of media attendance and their requirements.
- providing particular types of food and refreshments; and
- choosing attire that is suitable to the participants (e.g., social or cultural preferences for casual or business attire).

The planning team should consult colleagues and others who have experience with the logistical preparation for consultations. Designating someone on the planning team to focus on the details of logistics can be beneficial.

3.1 Managing and facilitating the consultation

Management and facilitation require:

- a clear understanding of the objectives of the consultation;
- definition of the boundaries of the decision-making process; and
- knowledge of the issues that might be raised by participants.

Things to think about

Some knowledge and skills required for public consultations:

- assured listening;
- consensus building;
- understanding of group dynamics;
- facilitation;
- negotiation; and
- conflict management.

Managing the consultation process and facilitating consultation activities are two different tasks. Managing the process requires supervising details, dealing with unexpected situations, and modifying the process as required. Facilitation is the process of helping participants to articulate their opinions and encouraging the exchange of ideas. As it is not always possible to hire an outside facilitator, DFO staff must sometimes play the roles of both manager and facilitator for the consultation.

Helpful Hints

Who should facilitate?

	DFO official	Third-party neutral
Pros	▪ Has in-depth knowledge of issues	▪ Has professional training ▪ Is considered impartial
Cons	▪ Might not be perceived as impartial ▪ Might lack facilitation and conflict management skills	▪ Might lack specific knowledge of issues, history and relationships ▪ Might not be able to interpret information accurately
Potential solutions	▪ Co-chair with another party to provide balance ▪ Discuss process and expectations with facilitator in advance	▪ DFO staff can act as experts to provide information, as required ▪ A member of the planning team can co-facilitate

Good planning and management can identify potential areas of conflict. During consultations, conflict might be hard to avoid. The best way to deal with it and respond appropriately is to recognize the different levels, types, and sources of conflict. Understanding how to manage conflict, and how to help others manage conflict, can reduce its overall impact.

Things to think about

Find out what participants expect from the process and share expectations from the department with participants.

The decision scope helps to identify the limits and the constraints that are not available for discussion. Each consultation process cannot address every problem that might exist in a community. However, a good process can be a model for how to address those other issues. Participants can be encouraged to find other avenues of participation for the other issues they might raise.

Things to think about

Some conflict management strategies in advance of the consultation:

- take courses on developing communication skills;
- take conflict management training to understand types of conflicts, personalities and strategies; and
- try to define the nature of potential conflict by asking why certain positions are held (e.g., conduct a context scan).

Some conflict management strategies during the consultation process:

- outline the mandate and authority for consulting;
- validate objectives and problem definition with participants;
- describe the level and type of participation and consultation process to participants;
- share expectations for the consultation process with participants and encourage participants to share their expectations;
- determine the potential for a satisfactory resolution of the problem;
- let participants express their points, without telling them what they think, know or feel (e.g., do not say “I know how you feel”, but rather say “I can see this is something that concerns you”);
- understand how important the issue is for participants, and whether the conflict needs to be resolved or can be set aside momentarily;
- separate the problem into components and develop solutions for each;
- see if participants should be directed to the proper authority, such as in another government department or a provincial agency;
- determine whether the department has made a commitment to work with the other authorities on the issue; and
- determine whether participants are willing to explore alternative solutions.

3.2 Managing the input from participants

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Transparency**.

Participants can provide feedback in a variety of ways. It is important to inform participants of when, the kind of feedback that is expected from them, and the follow-up that can be anticipated from the department. An appropriate procedure to gather and record information from participants can contribute to a decision-making process that is open, transparent, and accessible. It might sometimes be useful to return to participants for more information or to verify that their feedback was interpreted properly. Project databases, document management and process updates all contribute to creating greater transparency. Trust is built if information is available openly.

Tools and Resources

Refer to Tool #5, Meeting Summary Template, for an example of how summary information can be provided to participants after each meeting or consultation session.

Summaries, where feasible and appropriate, can be made available online, at a local resource (e.g., a library), or sent to individuals or organizations by e-mail or mail.

Things to think about

Examples of different forms of feedback include:

Verbal

- Note-taking of comments during consultations
- Audio and video taping of consultations
- Interviews and discussions
- Telephone hotlines

Written

- Completed workbooks, surveys and questionnaires, online or hard copy
- Letters and e-mails
- Voting
- Hard-copy or on-line input and feedback

3.3 Evaluating throughout the process

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principle of **Evaluation**.

Evaluating through ongoing monitoring is important for the consultation process. It is important to track success at different stages and to adapt the process, as necessary, in order to keep the consultation focused on the decision scope and the objectives. By following a planning process, the objectives, goals, and expected outcomes become the baseline for monitoring the process. It is important to remember that there are two perspectives to consider when monitoring and evaluating consultations: external and internal.

Tools and Resources

Keep in mind Tools #6 and #7, for an Evaluation Checklist and Sample Evaluation Table referred to in section 5.

Helpful Hints

What can be used to monitor and evaluate the process?
Some examples are:

- Questionnaires
  Participants provide their comments through a form (hard copy or online) depending on the type of consultation
- Interviews
  Participants provide their comments verbally
- Focus groups
  Small groups of participants provide in-depth feedback and information concerning specific aspects of the process
- Media scans
  News clippings are monitored for information and reactions to the consultation process

From the perspective of participants, monitoring provides an opportunity to gather feedback on the process, including logistical preparations, and the outcomes of the consultations. In this regard, Communications staff can be contacted for assistance with setting up focus groups, developing surveys, and conducting media scans, if necessary.

Things to think about

These are some examples of how monitoring can be important for ensuring that the objectives are being met:

- If one objective is to improve the participants' level of understanding for a particular issue, but this is proving difficult, then it might be due to a lack of continuity of participants, and another consultation method should be chosen. Alternatively, perhaps technical experts need to be invited to the consultations to support this objective.
- If another objective is gathering advice from participants, and the advice is not addressing the identified problem, then the decision scope or the questions in a background document or workbook might need to be revised.
- If the objective is to reach consensus among participants, but this is not being reached, then the planning team might need to re-examine: whether this remains a feasible objective; whether there are other consultation methods that should be used; or, whether the decision scope is too narrowly or too broadly defined.

At the same time, internal evaluation throughout the process provides an opportunity for the planning team to ensure that the consultations are meeting the objectives, and that quality advice and information are being provided. The planning team can meet regularly to review participants' input and to review the feedback gathered through monitoring activities.

4 Synthesis and Reporting Back

Synthesis of the feedback from participants is required in order to understand how to assess the information collected and use it for decision-making. To assess the contributions of participants:

- summarize all feedback;
- examine quantitative and qualitative data; and
- examine the content and nature of the feedback. It might be necessary for specialists, such as scientists and translators, to help integrate information from various sources.

Helpful Hints

What types of reporting back can be used?

- Meeting summaries
- Interim reports, which can be provided to decision-makers on the status of the consultation throughout the process
- A consultation report, which can describe what was heard

Depending on when decisions are made and by whom, the same consultation report, or further reporting, can describe how input was, or will be, used in the decision-making process.

Reporting back to participants might be required at different stages of the process as well as at the end of the consultation. As reporting back can take many forms, it should be determined early in the process how, when and to whom it will be presented, and in which forms.

The planning team will also have to determine what types of reporting documents and mechanisms should be followed internally. It is important to understand when decisions, approvals and regular updates are required, and who within the department need to be involved.

4.1 Reporting back to participants

This section supports the *Consultation Framework* principles of **Clarity** and **Transparency**.

It is useful to summarize the comments, opinions and information received so that participants and decision-makers can understand themes raised, gauge trends and strengths of opinions, and know who participated. This documentation can then form the basis for reporting back to participants. A timely report might include the results of the activities throughout the consultation process or the conclusion of the process (such as agreement, consensus, and points of contention). It might be important to inform the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Secretariat of the release of information and reporting documents, so that they are aware of the ongoing consultation process and can effectively respond to ATIP requests.

Things to think about

Reports for external audiences should keep scientific, policy or bureaucratic terms to a minimum, and should avoid acronyms and "coded" language.

Helpful Hints

There is no decision yet. Should there be reporting back?
Yes.
Even if a decision has not been made, reporting back should be timely. Complete the synthesis and evaluation – and let people know to stay tuned for a decision.

The process and the analysis of data are linked. The process of consulting and gathering input and engaging citizens affects the type of information and data that are gathered. Observations about how participation in the process affected the results of the consultation should be reported as well.

Things to think about

These are some questions to ask when reporting findings or results. Some of these questions are related to the evaluation of the process and it should be noted that an evaluation can be included as part of the consultation report:

- When and where were the consultations held?
- Who participated? Did those who were invited contribute?
- What consultation methods were used?
- What was the feedback? How did opinions differ, agree or vary?
- Is it necessary to attribute sources of feedback? Will value be added by attributing comments?
- How did the environmental scan influence the consultation?
- What was the level of input: local, regional or national?
- What other new types of information, ideas and issues were received? Should this information be distributed to other regions, sectors or governments?
- Has a decision been made?
- How did the input affect the decision-making process?
- Were the consultation objectives met?
- How will negative feedback be treated? How did it affect the process?
- Was there ongoing evaluation of the process? How did results of these evaluations affect the process?

5 Evaluation

Evaluation is a way to learn from experience. The consultation process can be evaluated at any point by monitoring the activities throughout the consultation process (formative method) and after the consultations have concluded (summative method).

Tools and Resources

Refer to Tools #6 and #7, for an Evaluation Checklist and Sample Evaluation Table.

It is important to determine in the planning stages those aspects of the consultation that will be assessed, the information that is required to make the assessment, and how performance will be measured. An evaluation will be more successful if *all* parties have a clear understanding of the objectives of the consultation process.

The evaluation can:

- inform the department and the public of the value of the consultation;
- ensure that DFO consultation practices are consistent with the DFO *Consultation Framework*;
- measure how successfully DFO is able to meet its consultation objectives, as defined by the department or as outlined in legislation or agreements;
- document best practices and lessons learned that will inform future consultation initiatives;
- monitor the effectiveness of DFO efforts to increase participation of clients, stakeholders, and partners in departmental decision-making processes.

As DFO identifies lessons learned, the department demonstrates its commitment to improved relations with its stakeholders. Evaluation is an essential element of the consultation process, and steps should be taken early in the process to ensure that it is not left out or completed as an afterthought.

Things to think about

Ongoing documentation and reporting throughout the consultation process provide an important foundation for evaluation.

Next Steps

The documentation of consultations, sharing of information and evaluations can help the learning process, ensure continued relations with stakeholders and improve the department's practices. Relationship building is important, especially if groups are formed as a result of the consultation. The objectives and outcome of the consultation will determine whether it remains an *ad hoc* process or develops into an ongoing initiative.

Things to think about

These are some questions to help determine if next steps are required:

- Are any issues still unresolved?
- Is follow-up required for issues that participants raised during the consultations that were unrelated to the objectives of that process?
- Is more information gathering required?
- Was a suggestion made to formalize the relationship with participants?
- How have the participants and other stakeholders evaluated the consultations? Is there a desire to work on other related issues?

It can be important to maintain contact with participants for continued information sharing, to keep the lines of communication open, and to allow future relations to develop. Continued contact with participants can be maintained through mail or e-mail updates, by providing documents or by indicating where documents (hard-copy or on-line) can be found. It is usually not a good idea to use media for feedback unless it is one of many tools used to reach a larger audience.

Things to think about

Things to consider for maintaining contact:

- Provide contact information, such as phone number, e-mail address and mail address to participants on consultation documentation;
- Develop clear policies and procedures for dealing with comments, complaints and suggestions that are submitted after the consultation process is complete; and
- Tell participants and stakeholders of the decision and explain how the input affected the decision taken, even if the decision had not been made at the time of reporting back.

Tools and Templates

#1: Strategic Planning Worksheet for Consultations

#2: Description of Consultation Methods

#3: Consultation Plan Template

#4: Sample Participants' Code of Conduct for Consultations

#5: Meeting Summary Template

#6: Evaluation Checklist

#7: Sample Evaluation Table

#8: Translation

#9: Funding

Tool #1: Strategic Planning Worksheet for Consultations

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHEET FOR CONSULTATIONS

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Mandate/Authority to conduct consultations:</td><td colspan="3" rowspan="3">Decision-Maker(s):

Facilitator(s):

Note-taker:

Others:</td><td rowspan="3">Budget:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Decision scope:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Objective of consultations:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Key Issues Anticipated:</td><td colspan="2">Internal Stakeholders</td><td colspan="2">External Stakeholders</td><td>Communications/ Media:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Information
What material is being provided?

What information is expected to be received?</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="3">Strategies for involvement and managing conflict:</td><td colspan="2">Expected Outcomes:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Consultations methods:</td><td colspan="2">Reporting options:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Key areas for evaluation:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Consultations milestones:
Beginning: Middle: End:</td></tr>
</table>

Tool #2: Description of Consultation Methods

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Gathering Input and Feedback		
INTERVIEWS: Pre-selected individuals are asked a series of questions to gather information on a specific topic – such as a project or policy – by a trained interviewer.	**Pros** - are good way to obtain both factual and impressionistic information; - can help in building understanding of issues; - can be helpful in dealing with complex issues; - are usually done on a one-to-one basis; - can quickly collect in-depth data; and - can be used in the preparation phase for consultations.	**Cons** - do not build common ground because participants are usually only interviewed individually and there is no exchange of views with other stakeholders; - are time-consuming; - need a skilled interviewer; - introduce bias of the interviewer.
TOLL-FREE LINES / HOT LINES: A designated phone number to collect comments, or opinions. This method can also be used for voting.	**Pros** - are impersonal, so people can make input without fear; - can be time-efficient; and - are useful for long periods of time and can change roles as issues develop.	**Cons** - require expertise to ensure responses are accurate; and - need monitoring and attention for language and messages that are not constructive.
QUESTIONNAIRES / SURVEYS: A process for collecting information and opinions (and sometimes advice) where a list of questions requires the recipient to provide responses, through rankings, multiple choice, or open-ended questions.	**Pros** - are especially useful for a large segment of the public; - include the participant who wish to remain anonymous; - can be tailored to reflect local nature of issues; - can be done through mail, on-line, or by telephone; and - provide data.	**Cons** - can be difficult to analyze statistically; - need statistical advice to ensure validity of the survey tool; - require expertise to develop valid questions; - can have a low return rate without adequate promotion; and - does not necessarily allow for interaction/ feedback between participants.
OPEN HOUSES/ PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRES/ PUBLIC MEETINGS: A planned event that allows stakeholders and the public to meet with staff/ organizers to review, discuss and/or debate one or several issues of concern and interest.	**Pros** - give the public the chance to speak on issues of interest to them; - provides an opportunity to explain and give information in-person; - can allow informed discussion and hearing the views of the public; - are more effective in small communities; and - can focus on concerns that are not necessarily issues-related.	**Cons** - can invite off-track issues being raised; and - can risk low attendance if not supported by a plan to advertise and invite specific groups/ participants to attend.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Gathering Input and Feedback		
CONFERENCES / WORKSHOPS: A (usually) large-scale meeting taking place over one or more days with key issues or themes to be discussed through sub-topics.	**Pros** - provide a useful forum for small group discussions, presentations, questions and answer sessions and discussion and reporting back; - are seen as the most open forum; - exposes participants to others' views; - provide access to a wide range of participants; and - help to build consensus.	**Cons** - can be costly; - can be dominated by a vocal minority; and - need good facilitators.
BILATERAL MEETINGS: Generally composed of one-on-one meetings between government to representatives. They provide an opportunity to identify and define issues and increase the knowledge base for the process.	**Pros** - can allow greater in-depth understanding of specific stakeholder issues; and - can be an opportunity to educate stakeholders on mandate and direction of department.	**Cons** - can be limited by a focus on group's agenda; - do not bring together multiple stakeholders to discuss issues and learn; - might be seen as not being transparent; and - can appear to not be transparent or fair.
FOCUS GROUPS: Structured process for collecting information where pre-selected participants provide reaction to specific policies projects or issues. This process tends to be issue focused.	**Pros** - can explore questions of particular interest; - can allow participants to hear others' ideas and test their thinking against the reaction of other participants; - can allow more detailed responses to be produced; - provide an opportunity to determine the range of views on a specific issue proposed changes; - can be very useful for conducting background research prior to consultation and/or for testing clarity of options at the end of the consultation; and - can be relatively inexpensive.	**Cons** - can be subject to groups wandering off topic unless clear questions articulated; - depend on careful background research and preparation; - cannot be used to generalize from findings of small focus group – views are not representative of general public; and - are usually mediated by an outside facilitator.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Gathering Input and Feedback		
ADVISORY BOARDS / COMMITTEES: Members participate in ongoing discussions and/or discussions for a defined purpose.	**Pros** - are useful when ongoing feedback or technical expertise are essential to decision-making processes; - can enhance the understanding of nature and impact of problem is crucial to policy, program or service development; - are good for relationship-building; and - are easier to schedule than public/ large meetings.	**Cons** - can be highly structured, requiring effort in planning, participating in and managing of process details; - can be taken over by vocal minority; - can be criticized for under-representative; - might give the impression that advisors are decision-makers; and - need clear direction on the expectations for them, their mandate and their role in decision-making processes.
COMMENT FORMS / WORKBOOKS: A publication produced in print or electronic form or both that provides contextual information and invites stakeholders to suggest solutions to a set of problems or challenges.	**Pros** - are useful for expressing the departments mandate, commitment and goals; - are a good way to state a problem or challenge, particularly if different aspects of the issue require careful consideration or specific knowledge; - allow stakeholders to think about issues and respond to directed questions/statements.	**Cons** - need up-to-date distribution list for mail-outs.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Bringing People Together		
CONSENSUS CONFERENCES: Two panels are set up: one expert panel and one lay-panel, composed of concerned citizens. The demographically representative lay-panel debates an issue and publishes a report that outlines its expectations, concerns, and recommendations. The lay-panel prepares in advance by reading information and developing key questions. The expert panel makes presentations and answers questions. The conference is open to the public.	**Pros** - open up dialogue between the public, experts, politicians, and government; - can be used for local or national issues, either technical or scientific in nature; - provide citizens with the opportunity to write a document with recommendations; and - can become a media event.	**Cons** - can be expensive and time-consuming to set-up panels; - require a lot of preparation by member of both panels; and - can become a media event.
ROUNDTABLES: Industry representative, government agencies and non-government organizations meet to discuss specific issues in which they have a common interest.	**Pros** - allow experts to discuss issues and develop strategies; - can provide the opportunity for an in-depth debate on specific issues; - expose people to diverse opinions; and - give experts and industry an opportunity to work with government representatives.	**Cons** - might favour recommendations from special interest groups due to lack of general public involvement; and - might be criticized for under-representativeness
TASK FORCES: A group of experts or representative stakeholders study a specific issue. The task force prepares a report with recommendations for action.	**Pros** - provide experts the opportunity to lead the discussion; - are useful when visible and public third-party advice is necessary; and - are suited to controversial issues with broad social implications.	**Cons** - place heavy demands on administration and are time-consuming; - can be seen as biased towards special interest groups; and - can result in a mismatch between recommendations and demands and therefore recommendations made are not implemented.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Bringing People Together		
ELECTRONIC MEETINGS: A computer network using group decision support software is used to facilitate face-to-face meetings for consensus-building, problem-solving, strategic planning, conflict management, and priority setting.	**Pros** - allow comments to be provided anonymously thereby improving equal participation; - allow greater focus on issues rather than personalities - do not require ideas to be transcribed – input is recorded during the process; - can produce ideas simultaneously, from many different participants at once; - can produce ideas in more than one language simultaneously; are highly structured and are therefore more likely to stay on track; and - can be used in the preparation phase for consultations.	**Cons** - rely on facilitators who are familiar with the software; - require a facilitator who can balance talk vs. technology overload; - need ground rules for participation and interaction; and - require typing skills, or assistants need to be provided to help enter input.
CITIZEN JURIES: A small, randomly-selected group of a dozen or so representatives of the community listen to experts present evidence and then deliberate over a period of time. The group recommends actions to an authority, which takes the final decision.	**Pros** - are good for involving citizens in significant decisions; - can be useful for complex or highly-technical issues; and - can be a valuable example for connecting commitment and obtaining informed opinions.	**Cons** - are not necessarily representative of the community as a whole, due to small numbers; and - are costly and therefore issues should be chosen carefully
CITIZEN PANELS: A large group (hundreds) of demographically representative people responds to proposals by government. The group can be randomly selected or selected based on knowledge and interest.	**Pros** - can be used over a long period of time as a source for quantitative and qualitative information; and - do not have to meet face-to-face.	**Cons** - can be expensive to set-up if not used regularly; - might not allow for mutual trust, common language and confidence to be developed among members.
STUDY CIRCLES: A small group (5-20) of selected participants who meet regularly to address issues, usually with a trained facilitator and basic ground rules for discussion.	**Pros** - allow responsibility and control of discussion by participants to increase over time; - are simple and easy to manage; and - are inexpensive; - rely on access to local resources and ideas.	**Cons** - are not necessarily representative of the community as a whole, due to small numbers.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Bringing People Together		
SEARCH CONFERENCES: Consisting of a large group of invited individuals (60 to 70) who have diverse perspectives. The purpose is to create a desired future by sharing information, and develop mutual understanding. Conferences consist of working sessions with a wide range of parties such as government, industry and users.	**Pros** - are a good process to use at a community level in addressing local issues; - are helpful in building common understanding; and - are most useful when there is limited time and participants do not need any prior training.	**Cons** - are challenging to organize to ensure representation; - might lead to additional requests for research.
THINK TANKS: Brings together large or small groups of individuals with knowledge and expertise to develop solutions to current issues and problems. The process can take one to three days.	**Pros** - provide an opportunity to think creatively; - are most useful when issues are complex; and - are useful if recommendations from a third-party are needed.	**Cons** - depend on the selection of participants; - cannot rely on expert-only opinion to represent the broader public's views; and - can be influenced by expert biases that might not be supported by the general public.
CHARETTES: A problem solving workshop that brings together all interest groups, however diverse their opinions.	**Pros** - allow for diverse groups to come together to solve issues; - are useful when agreement needs to be reached in a short time; and - allow participants to gain a better understanding of different and opposing positions.	**Cons** - might develop into a longer process than initially planned; - depend on consensus and it might be hard to get all participants to commit to resolve differences and determine appropriate plan that is acceptable to all; and - can force the authority to accept the results or lose credibility.

Description of Consultation Methods		
Methods for Bringing People Together		
DELIBERATIVE POLLING AND DIALOGUES: Aspects of polling, conferences, and roundtables are combined. A randomly selected and demographically representative group of people (40-100) completes a questionnaire at the beginning of the process. Participants are then provided with documents on various scenarios, including arguments for and against each scenario. Participants debate the pros and cons. Finally, participants complete a second questionnaire to assess any changes from the initial perceptions and why those changes occurred.	**Pros** - allow issue to be quite specific; allow formal and informal interaction; - can include experts who serve as a resource; - provide an opportunity for participants to become informed on issues; - requires participants to say "why" they support a particular viewpoint; and - can track changes in participants' positions, if any.	**Cons** - can be expensive and time-consuming to plan, implement and produce final reports; - are relatively new techniques and require facilitators who are experienced; and - rely on representative samples of the population, which can complicate planning for travel and accommodation.
THE DELPHI PROCESS: A group is selected that represents different points of view on an issue. Participants give comments and discuss the issues. After discussion, group members provide responses to the issues and viewpoints anonymously. Discussion and sharing continue until the group reaches consensus or stable disagreement.	**Pros** - encourages understanding of different viewpoints and compromise; - focuses on finding mutually-agreed upon solutions.	**Cons** - can be time-consuming; - might result in participants changing their thinking and adopting the popular view; and - is not appropriate for groups not interested in compromise or consensus.

Description of Consultation Methods	
On-Line Consultations	
E-mail Lists –A group of participants (subscribers) communicate with each other through a single e-mail address. Original e-mail sent to the main address as well as all the replies are distributed across all participants.	**Bulletin Board** – A Web-based application where users can post messages to a website. This is a relatively simple tool that allows participants to post responses to each other's messages but doesn't provide true discussion threads.
Web-Forum – Online applications such as this combine the basics of web-based discussions with aspects of live chat. This type of online collaboration tool includes real time white boarding, chat, file sharing with asynchronous discussion area.	**Web-based discussion** – Similar to a bulletin board, it allows participants to post messages and respond to messages. In addition, it includes basic document sharing, discussion threading and password protection.

Pros	Cons
- allow specific questions and issues to be discussed; - can allow those less publicly vocal to provide input; - provide easy and cost-efficient access to background information and documents; and - allow opinions to be expressed without issues of location.	- depend on internet access and computer literacy; - require communication skills for the internet - need ground rules for participation and interaction; - require expertise / training to develop and manage, and facilitate or moderate, if required.

Tool #3: Consultation Plan Template

CONSULTATION PLAN TEMPLATE

1.0 OBJECTIVES:

2.0 BACKGROUND:

3.0 ISSUES:

4.0 INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CONTEXT SCAN:

- Internal DFO
- Other Federal Government Agencies
- Provincial Governments
- Local Government/Communities
- Aboriginal groups/communities
- Eco-Tourism Industry
- Ocean-related Industries
- Aquaculture Industry
- Recreational Fishers
- Recreational Boaters
- Commercial Fishing Industries
- Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs)
- Academics
- Others (See the *Consultation Framework* for other examples)

5.0 CONSULTATION STRATEGY:

5.1 Planning Team:

5.2 Funding/budgetary needs:

(Attach spreadsheet of estimated costs)

- Notification/advertising of consultations
- Facilities to hold meetings
- Facilitation services
- Translation services
- Distribution of materials
- Travel/logistics for meetings

5.3 Consultation materials:

- Presentation materials
- Consultation workbooks/ surveys/ questionnaires
- Web
- General information
- Notification/advertising
- Consultation workbooks for internet based feedback
- Reports/background documents

5.4 Recommended Approach

5.4.1 Preparation:

- Identify Key Stakeholders/Meeting Opportunities
- Identify tasks, responsibilities and deadlines for the planning team
- Develop Consultation Tools
- Identify products, responsibilities and deadlines

5.5 Consultations with Aboriginal groups:

5.6 Monitoring Consultations:
- Questionnaires/surveys/feedback

5.7 Implementation:
- Launch Consultations
- News release announcement
- Other notification/advertising
- Hold meetings, consultation activities, and web-based activities

Proposed Meeting Schedule:

Area	Type	City	Venue	Date

- Managing/Exchanging Information
- Exchanging information with participants

5.8 Documentation of Process

6.0 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY:

- Attach a communications plan, if necessary

7.0 EVALUTION OF CONSULTATION:

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

Approved by:

Tool #4: Sample Participants' Code of Conduct for Consultations

SAMPLE PARTICIPANTS' CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONSULTATIONS

Individual and stakeholder rights to participate in consultations are accompanied by responsibilities. Parties that participate in consultation processes should do so in good faith and with the public interest, as well as their own interest, in mind. Participants also have a responsibility to engage in effective, balanced and civil communication. All representatives have a responsibility to ensure that they are accountable to their constituents, that the government gets the information it needs to make a well-informed and balanced decisions, and that consultation processes operate as efficiently as possible.

Participants in consultation processes should:

1. Maximize the exchange of information among parties and minimize misunderstandings, by:

   - speaking clearly, listening carefully and asking for clarification if a point is not understood;
   - sharing information related to the issues at hand;
   - stating concerns about other participants, the issues or the process openly and directly;
   - clearly explaining what is important to them, what their interests are and why; and
   - stating their perspective as concisely and briefly as possible.

2. Ensure that all participants have the opportunity to speak and all perspectives and interests are taken into account, by:

   - seeking the participation of all participants; and
   - providing opportunities for affected parties to be heard before making a decision.

3. Maintain a respectful atmosphere, by:

   - respecting each others' values and interests;
   - separating issues from people;
   - avoiding accusatory or critical language, rude behaviour, and stereotyping;
   - listening to what others have to say without interrupting;
   - beginning meetings on time; and
   - seeking a better understanding of other perspectives with an open mind.

4. Ensure accountability to constituencies, if applicable, by:

   - making every effort to attend all important consultation meetings, or sending an alternate as agreed upon by participants;
   - establishing clear lines of accountability with those they represent, and with other representatives;
   - acting in accordance with the authority granted by constituents and ensuring that other representatives understand this authority;
   - sharing pertinent information with their constituencies regularly and seeking support for areas of agreement; and

- acting quickly to raise and resolve any concerns regarding the accountability of the process or any of the representatives to protect the integrity and trust of the group.

5. When negotiating in a consultation process, facilitate agreements across the full spectrum of interests, by:

   - negotiating in good faith, building as much agreement as possible;
   - avoiding participation in activities that might undermine the consultation process;
   - focusing on underlying interests or objectives rather than positions and seek to understand the interests of others;
   - acknowledging agreement on mutual interests, values and principles, as a basis for fostering positive relationships;
   - recognizing the legitimacy of all interests;
   - treating issues as problems to be solved not as personal or sectoral conflicts;
   - allowing participants the freedom to be creative, brainstorm, and test ideas without prejudice to future discussions; and
   - positively supporting consensus agreements once they have been reached.

6. Engaging in appropriate communications activities and media involvement, by:

   - ensuring that descriptions of the process and the views of other representatives are accurate and acceptable to all representatives before communicating them to the general public or the media; and
   - ensuring that contact with the media is respectful of others.

Tool #5: Meeting Summary Template

MEETING SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Date:

Location:

Purpose of Meeting:

Group/Advisory Committee:

Attendees:
(List the participants, the groups, or the types of groups, depending on the level of attribution desired.)

Materials/Documents Distributed (list):

Key Issues Discussed:

Action Items:

Recommendations/Decision(s) Made/Deferred:

Next Steps:

Contact:

Tool #6: Evaluation Checklist

EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Preparation

- Was the need for consultation confirmed?
- Was a planning team established and roles and responsibilities assigned?
- Were objectives of the consultation and expected outcomes identified?
- Was a timeline for the consultation process developed?
- Were the potential benefits and disadvantages of the consultation identified using a context scan?
- Were anticipated costs, resources and required skills identified?
- Were the roles for communications and the media identified?
- Were criteria for monitoring and evaluation established and related to the objectives?

Design

- Were consultations method(s) identified for various circumstances and participants?
- Were participants given enough time to prepare input for consultations?
- Were plans developed for each consultation activity?

Implementation

- Were expectations shared with and among participants?
- Were conflicts anticipated and managed?
- Who facilitated? Was the facilitation successful?
- Were participants prepared to participate in activities? Was enough information provided? Was the information understandable?
- Was monitoring incorporated in the consultation process? Were modifications necessary (in methods, timetable, resources or participation) to advance the consultation objectives?

Synthesis & Reporting

- Was feedback sought on the process and progress of the consultation?
- Were participants kept up-to-date on the process?
- Was it determined in advance how to report back, when and to whom?

Evaluation

- Was there ongoing documentation and reporting throughout the consultation process?
- Was the evaluation based on the performance indicators established earlier in the process?
- How was the feedback used in the decision-making process?
- Can best practices and lessons learned be shared with others?
- Is follow-up required for next steps in the relationship with participants and stakeholders?

Tool #7: Sample Evaluation Table

SAMPLE EVALUATION TABLE

This evaluation table can be used to outline the objectives, success indicators, and evaluation throughout or at the end of the consultation process. This sample provides examples of how this template can be used.

Objective	Success Indicator	Possible Evaluation Technique(s)
Identify changes needed to update an act	• One or two new and innovative ideas developed and explored	• Observation
Increase knowledge of the regulatory process	• 75% of participants will be able to describe the regulatory process	• Surveys/Questionnaires/Interviews
Increase the diversity of participants who are involved in the process	• New organizations representing particular areas/issues will be represented • Representation from minority language communities will be doubled	• Participants sign-in at sessions
Increase knowledge of ecological issues	• 60% of participants will be able to describe pre-determined ecological issues	• Surveys/Questionnaires/Interviews
Increase understanding of issues among participants	• 15% of participants indicate new appreciation for others' concerns	• Pre-polling and post-polling exercises conducted
Hold procedurally fair meetings	• 80% of participants felt meetings were well-managed	• Surveys/Questionnaires/Interviews
Encourage more feedback online	• Number of responses online doubled	• Compare past online consultations on same subject • Specific promotion of online consultations done through website, number of letters, etc.

Tool #8: Translation

TRANSLATION

This section provides information on translating with respect to the requirements under the *Official Languages Act*. As well, this section provides some information on translations into third languages.

Translation into Official Languages

The *Official Languages Act*[2] outlines the responsibilities for government departments and agencies with regard to providing information and services in both official languages. In order to respect the *Act*, the consultation plan should identify the need for translations and the type of translations required (for documents or simultaneous services or both) for the purposes of developing timelines and the budget.

Of particular importance are Parts IV and Part VII of the *Act*, which relate to service to the public and linguistic minority communities, respectively. Through the general business of fulfilling their mandates, federal departments are responsible for a number of processes related to the *Act*, including:

- determining whether policies and programs have an impact on the promotion of linguistic duality and community development;
- consulting the affected publics, in particular representatives of minority official language communities, in developing and implementing policies and programs; and
- planning activities accordingly where impacts have been identified.

If consultations are being conducted in areas where there are linguistic minority communities, then advertising of the consultations, background documentation and meetings have to be done in both official languages. Timelines, budget and resources should be planned accordingly.

[2] http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/O-3.01/index.html

Translation into Third Languages

Consultations are sometimes conducted in languages other than English or French. This section provides guidance on how to do this, should it be appropriate, as there is no legislation or policy addressing this issue. The decision whether to translate into a third language is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Things to think about

Beluga is important to the local communities in northern Quebec; it is subsistence harvesting. Beluga management plans in Quebec Region are usually translated into the local language.

Consultation documents in Pacific Region have been translated into Mandarin, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Korean and other languages. For example, rockfish consultations involved an Asian lobby group representing fish processing and sales. A special effort was made to reach this group by providing documentation in their language.

Third languages fall into two categories: Aboriginal languages and international languages.

Aboriginal languages include Inuktitut, Mi'kmaq, Ojibway, and Cree and their dialects, and other languages spoken by the Aboriginal people of Canada. Any language spoken by an immigrant population in Canada can be considered an international language. These two categories are distinct, as they imply cultural and other considerations. These are outlined in the sections that follow.

Translations into third languages can be expensive and require additional time. Before deciding whether to translate into a third language, DFO officials would need a clear understanding of the expected outcomes of the translations and how translation would benefit the final product. Benefits can then be weighed against the cost and time required for translating.

An overriding consideration for translations into third languages is patience. The DFO officials drafting the documents will usually not be familiar with the language, and will have to rely on the expertise and goodwill of others for translation services. It is not merely a case of translating the words; providing equivalent cultural concepts is often not an easy task.

Determine the need for the translation

A first step is to determine any obligation to translate into a third language. For example, some agreements might include requirements for translation into languages of Aboriginal groups.

Translating into a third language can be considered if the policy, program or service for which consultations are being undertaken directly affects a population that does not communicate primarily in English or in French. Third-language translations can also be undertaken as a matter of good business practice, to support the principles of the *Consultation Framework*. A community leader or president of a local association might be able to advise how to consult a particular group. If the issue is urgent and time is a concern, DFO officials might be able to deal directly with a representative for that community who speaks either English or French.

Once it is decided whether or not to translate, it is important to agree on an appropriate language for communication and consultation, as regional dialects might have to be considered. For example, the Labrador Inuit Association prefers to be contacted directly for translation services because the Labrador dialect of Inuktitut is different from the other dialects across Canada.

Translation costs

The resource requirements for translation into third languages, in both financial cost and time, might be prohibitive. If consultation documents are translated into third languages, then the budget should also include the cost of translating the comments received and of reporting back, and in some cases, even translations of information transmitted verbally. Public Works and Government Services Canada can provide resources and estimates of translation costs.

Another effective option is to contract a local person to speak to the participants in their language in small discussion groups, rather than translate documents. This reiterates the importance of determining how participants want to be consulted.

Things to think about

Are you translating to provide information or are you going to consult and receive input in that third language?

In an effort to provide messages consistently, efficiently and accurately, it is advisable to develop a standard vocabulary for recurring phrases (such as "fisheries management plan" and "sustainable development") and to provide these phrases to translators. This can be helpful for both oral and written translations.

Translators

Finding translators for Aboriginal groups often poses more of a challenge than for international languages.

Texts are generally translated into Aboriginal languages by individuals, rather than by companies or organizations. Therefore, it is important for DFO officials to build relationships with the leaders in these communities, and to ask the people they meet about local translation services. Community leaders and heads of Aboriginal associations can also provide contacts for translations.

Local immigrant associations often have lists of certified translators for international languages. The Translation Bureau of the Government of Canada is also a good source of translators.

Quality control

Before publishing the translated documents, it is advisable to review them. The reviewer could be a DFO staff member, a community leader, or an academic.

Technology

Some translators use e-mail, while others can be contacted only by fax. If time is limited, DFO officials should clarify the method of contact with the translator at the outset, and account for these time requirements in the consultation plan. Some languages, such as Inuktitut, have characters that are not generally supported by Microsoft Word and other standard office software. Documents in these languages might be available only in hard copy or as a PDF (portable document format) file that can be read only with Acrobat Reader. The format of the translation should be confirmed, as this might change how the document is distributed.

Tool #9: Funding

FUNDING

It is not the policy of the Department or of the Government of Canada to fund participation in consultations. However, if DFO officials determine, and exceptional circumstances warrant, that the participation of certain individuals could benefit a consultation and that they could participate only with funding, Treasury Board policies would be in effect. In developing the consultation plan and identifying the participants, DFO officials could consider the benefits and costs (including precedent) of funding certain participants. An analysis of this situation would include identifying the alternatives, assessing the financial costs and balancing these costs with the benefits of a person's participation in the consultations.

If their participation could benefit the consultations on policy, program, and service development, then there are alternatives to face-to-face consultation that might be considered:

- Provide information and gather feedback through the mail, by phone or through the Internet.
- Use new technologies, such as timed e-mail and on-line discussions.
- Hold bilateral discussions with participants by phone or through a visit.

There is no standard for determining whether to provide financial support to consultation participants. The decision to provide funding or other in-kind support should be transparent and applied fairly to all possible participants. In all cases, whenever allocating resources for consultations or providing financial support for participants, DFO officials must remain mindful of the effective management of public funds.

Guidelines for participant funding

Once it is decided whether or not to provide participant funding, this might include providing financial or in-kind support to help local organizations prepare for consultations. Refer to the following documents for more detail on Government of Canada policies for funding travellers on government business, and for hospitality and other funding. Policies are reviewed regularly, so officials would need to ensure they are familiar with the most up-to-date versions[3].

Travel Directive	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/travel/travel_e.html
Policy on Using Travellers' Cheques, Travel Cards and Travel Accounts	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/TBM_142/travcheqcardsacc_e.html
Hospitality Policy	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TBM_113/hosp_e.html
PWGSC Car Rental Directory	hotel.publiservice.gc.ca/ehcd_e.htm
Volunteers Policy	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/vp-pb/vp-pb_e.html
Contracting Policy	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/Contracting/contractingpol_e.html
Risk Management Policy	www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/riskmanagement/riskmanagpol_e.html

What participant costs can be considered for funding?

Treasury Board policies relate to those travelling on government business or otherwise supporting government activities. Funding might include honoraria, travel and related costs, and other support.

Honoraria

Managers might consider awarding an honorarium to a participant for contributions, leadership, and commitment beyond the scope of normal participation in consultations. Depending on the amount of the honorarium, a "letter of invitation" might be used, or a separate service contract might be required. For details, consult Treasury Board policies.

Travel and related costs

The Treasury Board travel directive governing travel for public service employees, exempt staff and other persons travelling on government business might cover consultation participants when they are travelling to participate in federal government business. The following summary gives general information. For more detailed information, consult the documents and links in the list above.

[3] Links were verified March 2004.

The following are discussed in the travel directive:

- Transportation to and from the location of the consultations by air, rail, bus, rental car or personal motor vehicle, including local ground transportation;
- Accommodations, whether commercial or private;
- Meals and incidental allowances during the consultations, up to Treasury Board allowance limits; and
- For participants with disabilities, reasonable costs related to special assistance while travelling.

If DFO officials agree to fund travel expenses for participation, then Treasury Board policy prefers that arrangements be made by a department and charged to an appropriate travel account. This minimizes risk to the government and reduces out-of-pocket expenses to travellers.

Other support

Requests for in-kind support (such as access to expertise or facilities) might be considered when they could result in more effective participation in the consultations.

References and Resources

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Training

Managers and staff of Fisheries and Oceans Canada are encouraged to take training in consultation. Staff should become aware of the variety of existing and emerging consultation techniques/tools. Consultation training will improve individual skills and department capacity. Ideally managers and staff should to be trained in the areas of listening, communicating, negotiating and consensus building. Specific training in the practical aspects of facilitating the design and delivery of consistent, effective and efficient consultations should also be accessed. Training resources for consultation are available on a local, regional and national level. The following list offers the training options available:

Government of Canada

Fisheries and Oceans
Building a Harassment Free Workplace

This 1-day workshop is offered to all DFO staff. The session focuses on harassment prevention and early conflict resolution as identified in DFO policy.

Learning Objectives:
- Techniques to identify harassment;
- Methods of early conflict resolution;
- Recourse mechanisms for discrimination; and
- Roles and responsibilities of employees and managers.

Fisheries and Oceans
Conflict Management Skills Workshop (Office of Early Conflict Resolution)

Early Conflict Resolution (ECR) is specifically targeted at providing additional tools for the resolution of grievances and other complaints and at introducing mechanisms which can help to prevent conflict or resolve it long before a formal complaint has been filed. Its basic aim is to resolve conflict through consensus, searching for a form of justice that repairs harm and restores human relationships as opposed to one of retribution. ECR provides more in your tool kit to resolve disputes.

Privy Council Office
Communications and Consultation Secretariat

http://publiservice.pco-bcp.gc.ca/comcon/default.asp?Language=E&Page=home

The Secretariat provides advice and support to the Prime Minister, the Clerk and to departments on matters relating to communications and consultation, as well as citizen engagement issues, and facilitates the co-ordination of the Government of Canada's activities in these areas. The Secretariat also supports meetings of the Cabinet Committee on Government Communications.

The site is intended for all federal public servants interested in government communications and public consultation. It can only be accessed through the Government of Canada's Intranet and therefore cannot be accessed from home through a basic Web connection.

Public Service Commission

http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca

The Public Service Commission has courses on public consultations and citizen engagement from time to time.

CCMD – Canadian Centre for Management Development

http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca

The Canadian Centre for Management Development has courses on public consultations and citizen engagement from time to time.

Private Sector and Non-Government Organizations

IOG – Institute on Governance
Listen Up: Effective Practices for Engaging Citizens

http://www.iog.ca

- One-day workshop held on request for departmental groups of employees and can be tailored to meet specific needs.
- Features interactive sessions on various aspects of citizen participation and how to go about in an effective manner, including application of information and communication technologies.
- The course covers the basics of engagement, reviews various approaches, and ends with participants developing an action plan for their organization.
- Workshops are held upon request.

IAP2 – International Association for Public Participation

http://www.iap2.org

The IAP2 has a set curriculum of courses, which are given around the world and at its annual conference:

- IAP2 Planning for P2 (required pre-requisite)
- IAP2 Tools & Techniques for Effective Public Participation
- Effective Communications for Public Participation

Other modules include:
- Collaborative meetings
- Stakeholder values
- Group facilitation methods
- Evaluating P2
- Issue Mapping

The Centre for Innovation in Management

http://www.cim.sfu.ca/sed/

The three-day "Stakeholder Engagement and Dialogue Workshop" is part of the Executive Development program at Simon Fraser University. Workshops are held across the country.

Workshop participants will gain the insights, knowledge and skills necessary to:
- Build high-trust stakeholder relationships;
- Understand and engage networks for greater impact;
- Create 'safe spaces' for learning with stakeholders; and
- Convene productive multi-stakeholder dialogues.

Notes: