**Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement**

**LTER All Scientists Meeting**

**Monday, August 31, 2015, 1:30pm**

*Organizer*: Julie Doll (KBS)

*Moderator*: Michael Nelson (AND)

*Panelists*: Phil Robertson (KBS), Tiffany Troxler (FCE), David Iwaniec (CAP), Kathy Fallon Lambert (HFR) via webconference

*Co-organizer/notes*: Clarisse Hart (HFR)

**Overview**

A panel presented 4 examples of stakeholder engagement, then were asked questions about lessons learned, who to engage, how to navigate co-generation of science, navigating mis-use and mis-communication of data, and building a network of stakeholders to engage.

**Considerations for the LTER Network**

* Progress metrics are difficult to measure. Is funding available for evaluation?
* Is training available for early career scientists? What are the needed skill-sets for this work? Once people have the skill-sets, where's the support within the scientific community for this kind of work?
* The LTER Guiding Principle seems very one-way – it’s about reaching out rather than co-generation. Is it time to revisit this language?

**Take-Home Points**

* *Engagement Context*
* The context of the issue being discussed matters:
  + *Scale*: large point-source or dispersed disturbance
  + *Decision-making framework*: centralized authority, multiple authorities; regulatory/legal action or behavioral change
  + *Science framework*: well-established science or no existing science
* Co-development is a particular type of engagement; it’s not citizen science to collect data, it’s not interviews/surveys, it’s not gathering information and analyzing it. The scientists and participants at the table are equal partners.
* Tip: front-load all shared goals in the conversation, and roles and expectations.
* Tip: When working with new stakeholders, build up to landscape models slowly. Focus first on systems thinking (qualitative systems maps, narratives, day-in-the-life stories).
* Tip: When prioritizing outputs, remember to consider what the stakeholders think is important.
* Tip: When prioritizing stakeholders/audiences, determine who are the influencers and deciders, and the groups who are affected. Prioritize those, or prioritize groups who can reach out to them. Groups who are looking to use your information to harass you/science, do not engage at all, or manage the engagement through a mediator, with clear ground rules.
* Tip: When co-developing scenarios, you will lose some control over the process, although strong facilitation can ensure your process don’t get used to advance someone else’s agenda.
* Tip: To build a network of stakeholders, try:
  + Going to interdepartmental meetings to present or listen.
  + Frequenting the bar across from City Hall.
  + Making sure that what you’re doing is coming to the attention of stakeholders (some of this is serendipity).
  + Interviewing several contacts and asking them for 3 or 4 names.
  + Sending a formal but accessible email introducing the project and the kind of interaction you’re looking for, and ask to follow up with a phone call.
  + Seeing that scientists at your institution coordinate among themselves to ensure that we as a community are not making repetitive requests of stakeholders.
* Tip: To maintain a network of stakeholders over time, try:
  + Using people’s time efficiently.
  + Giving something back (i.e. a scenarios workshop could include a short presentation on recent trends).
  + Going to them instead of having them come to you.
* Tip: Because fed/state agency employees often need to get a lot of external review for projects they’ve co-authored, leaving the possibility of authorship removal at the last minute, suggest they be advisors to the project, rather than authors.





