

Principles and Best Practices for Stakeholder Involvement in Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning

Coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) is one of nine priority goals established in the National Ocean Policy (NOP) that was promulgated in an Executive Order signed by President Barak Obama in 2010. The NOP emphasizes the importance of frequent and robust stakeholder, scientific, and public engagement throughout the CMSP planning process. To assist planners and stakeholders with this task, the Udall Foundation's U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute) has developed seven principles that highlight best practices for effectively engaging stakeholders in CMSP processes. The principles shown in this document were developed by the U.S. Institute following a thorough review of current and past CMSP stakeholder processes in the United States and internationally, analysis of academic literature and reports on stakeholder engagement best practices, and a review of surveys and white papers about desirable stakeholder involvement mechanisms from various interest groups. Interest groups consulted during the development of these principles include government, tribal, environmental and ocean user groups. The principles and best practices also reflect the U.S. Institute's experience in developing similar guidelines for a range of complex federal and regional conflict resolution and stakeholder involvement efforts.

All citizens have a stake in the management of ocean and coastal resources. However, defining stakeholders with respect to ocean management is particularly challenging due to the varying degrees of interest and capacity that different interest groups may have to participate in CMSP-related processes. The principles in this document relate to the ongoing, consistent involvement of the three groups defined below:

- Obviously affected governmental and non-governmental economic, cultural, and environmental interests that are organized and motivated to participate in stakeholder meetings and interactions;
- Loosely organized or non-organized affected interests that may not participate in all stakeholder interactions but that have an interest in participating in the planning process in areas that affect them; and
- Members of the public who may or may not participate but need to be informed along with all other stakeholders about the CMSP process, goals, and products.

This document provides a brief snapshot of the stakeholder principles and best practices that are described in more detail in the "Principles for Stakeholder Involvement in Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning", which can be found at:
www.ecr.gov/pdf/StakeholderPrinciplesCMSP.pdf.

Principles and Best Practices for Meaningful Stakeholder Involvement in CMSP

1. Clear Goals and Avenues for Stakeholder and Public Participation

Desired Outcome	Goals and Avenues for meaningful engagement are defined and clearly communicated.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage stakeholders in stakeholder involvement planning and implementation 2. Communicate goals and schedule of the planning process 3. Identify and communicate roles and responsibilities for stakeholders and planners 4. Institutionalize stakeholder engagement for the life of the project
Tools and Techniques	Outreach tools (website, information sheets, media articles, webinars/public meetings), Planning/Implementation Process Maps, Neutral Stakeholder Needs Assessment

2. Inclusiveness and Accessibility

Desired Outcomes	There are adequate and appropriate opportunities for stakeholders to participate. The full range of diverse stakeholder voices, ideas and information is incorporated.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure participation by the full range of interests 2. Identify and address barriers to participation, such as funding, timing, capacity, accessibility, information
Tools and Techniques	Situation Assessment/Stakeholder Analysis, Support for participation (financial, geographically appropriate meeting locations, etc.), Stakeholder Advisory Group, Outreach Tools

3. Transparency and Openness

Desired Outcomes	There is a demonstrated openness to learn from stakeholders. Planning and decision making is communicated to stakeholders.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make information available for public review and comment 2. Provide feedback on how stakeholder/public input is used
Tools and Techniques	Situation Assessment/Stakeholder Analysis, Resource Support for participation, Stakeholder Advisory Group, Outreach Tools; Meeting Summaries; Research Summaries

4. Informed Engagement

Desired Outcome	There is a shared understanding of issues and the decision making process between decision makers and stakeholders.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish high quality, informed discussions2. Engage in mutual education about process and subject matters3. Include stakeholder knowledge and data in CMS plan
Tools and Techniques	Impartial Facilitation, Technical Experts, Presentations tailored to stakeholder needs and skills, Technical Tools (e.g. GIS, models, decision support tools), Data Collection Tools (e.g. surveys, comment forms, etc.)

5. Timeliness

Desired Outcomes	Sufficient notice and lead time is provided to stakeholders to assure adequate participation.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide sufficient notice of meetings and deliverables (3 weeks minimum), and provide advance materials for review (one week minimum)2. Schedule stakeholder participation to allow time for inclusion of input in final product
Tools and Techniques	Process schedule/timeline, Advance materials for meetings, Outreach Tools

6. Process Integrity

Desired Outcome	Trust and credibility in the process is established through the development of an equitable and reliable process.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Take actions that create stakeholder confidence in the value of the process (share information, leaders participate in stakeholder meetings, etc.)2. Make an obvious commitment to meaningful stakeholder participation and follow through on commitments
Tools and Techniques	Ground Rules/Operating Protocols, Impartial Meeting Summaries, Realistic Agendas, Stakeholder Advisory Group, Facilitated Dialogue

7. Adaptability and Flexibility

Desired Outcome	Planners remain flexible to changing circumstances, and adapt stakeholder engagement to unique regional/local features.
Implementation Best Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Monitor and evaluate stakeholder processes, and modify engagement processes as necessary2. Develop engagement methods that match regional/local issues, cultures, information needs and collaboration history
Tools and Techniques	Performance measures/goals for stakeholder engagement, Measurement tools (surveys, comment forms, assessments), Impartial Process Assessment, Mid-course corrections made in consultation with Stakeholders