Building Capacity for State and Regional Councils

½ day workshop at the Third National Monitoring Conference, Madison, WI, May 2002.

Facilitated by Fred Banach, Charlie Peters, & Abby Markowitz
Prior to workshop

- Planning committee created
  - Composed of Fred, Charlie, Abby and people associated with Councils who had already submitted abstracts

- Two conference calls
  - To develop agenda and structure of workshop
Workshop Agenda

- Introduction to workshop
- Panel introductions and presentations
  - 4 panel members gave 3 minute introductions to themselves and their Council
  - 4 panel members gave longer, 10 minute presentations (from abstracts)
- Small group breakouts
- Small group report-backs
- Discussion and recommendations
Panelists

- Beth Card, CT River Forum
- Stephen Fischer, KY Interagency Monitoring Workgroup
- Bill Horak, CO Water Monitoring Council
- Ric Lawson, Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordination Council
- Tim Asplund, WI Groundwater Coordinating Council (10 minute presentation)
- Elizabeth Moran, South Shore Estuary Reserve Management Conference (10 minute presentation)
- Peter Tennant, OH River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (10 minute presentation)
- Jane Walker, VA Water Monitoring Council (10 minute presentation)
Small group breakouts

Three small groups-- Each group focused on a step in the process of building functional collaborative bodies

1. Getting to the Table
2. Defining Objectives
3. Making it Happen
Small group breakouts

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 Step 1. Getting to the table

 - how do we get everyone to the table? How do we build relationships and begin to think and act collaboratively?

 Step 2. Defining objectives

 - how do we identify specific collaborative issues and goals? How do we develop technical strategies?

 Step 3. Making it happen

 - how do we develop sustainable consensus building strategies? How do we find the resources (funding, people, etc.) for implementation? What are the other nuts and bolts issues?
Charge to the groups

- Identify some of the barriers and challenges involved in this particular step of the process

- Develop some initial ideas and recommendations for meeting challenges and removing barriers
Challenges & Barriers

 Turf battles

– hard to create a collaborative “hat”

– sometimes seemingly contradictory customers or constituencies

– data sharing vs. data hoarding

– Different technical approaches

 Time constraints

– need a parallel 24 hour day

– takes time to motivate others
Challenges & Barriers

- Identifying the right people
  - how do you find the right contact...someone who is motivated, has time, and is used to working collaboratively
  - Need to get buy-in from management

- Disconnect between “technical” and “management”
  - As you move up the ladder, process is more political
Challenges & Barriers

 Obstinance, resistance
  – *this is the way we’ve always done things*
  – narrow vision

 Different languages & culture
  – *Nomenclature and jargon not always consistent*
  – *Expectations and goals may differ*
Meeting Challenges & Removing Barriers

 dévelop tools that answer WIFM for different audiences

  - Success stories illustrating economic, political, scientific, educational, environmental benefits
  - Collaboration leads to reduction in effort, duplication, cost through combining expertise & resources

 Identify what’s needed for and create an atmosphere for WIN-WIN collaboration
Meeting Challenges & Removing Barriers

Before anything else, identify, address, and document issues and goals

- expectations and goals of each partner -- VA needs survey is example

- collaborative objectives and goals—Why are we here?

- collaborative technical strategies including COMPARABILITY
Meeting Challenges & Removing Barriers

- Develop collaborative technical strategies (network design, field & lab protocols, Meta data, QA responsibility, training, certification)

- Integrate flexibility into strategies to allow for differences among agencies

- Look forward, not backward
Meeting Challenges & Removing Barriers

- Formalization of process, entity (legislation, bylaws)

- Stable funding
  - Direct appropriation, seed money
  - Fees on potential polluters

- Engage interest groups
  - Volunteer monitors
  - Communicate results
Meeting Challenges & Removing Barriers

- Dedicated staff and administrative resources
- Partner agencies and organizations retain autonomy
- Need to develop and maintain a strategic framework
  - Standards for data collection
  - Specific uses for data
  - Feedback to monitoring groups
Recommendations

We need ways to articulate

What's in it for me?

Specific to different audiences
- Managers
- Technical
- Public
WIFM

- We need real-life examples to demonstrate
  - Successes, savings, efficiencies
  - Value added
  - Unexpected benefits
  - What we can do together that we can’t do alone

- We need tangible tools to take to various constituencies
  - Examples need to be framed for specific audiences
Recommendations

Need to find

Common Ground

- build long-term trusting relationships among people and organizations
- Getting to know you time
- What can we do together that none of us can do alone?
Recommendations

- Develop and use a Common Language

- Develop and enhance glossaries

Recommendations

❖ Increase comparability and confidence
  – Certification (field & lab)
  – Proficiency checklists
  – Building trust
Recommendations

- National Council should become warehouse of tools
  - Needs assessment form
  - Examples, success stories, lessons learned, models for collaboration
  - Key contacts
  - Examples of goals, objectives