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Chapter 20

SUSTAINABILITY GOVERNANCE: SURFING THE WAVES OF TRANSFORMATION

Anthony H. J. Dorcey

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand how conflict and uncertainty in resource and environmental management have increased with the adoption and pursuit of ecological, economic and social sustainability goals.
- To assess how participation in Canadian governance processes has evolved in three waves of innovation over the last 50 years in pursuing sustainability goals.
- To define approaches to citizen involvement and conflict resolution employed in sustainability governance and their use of techniques of negotiation, facilitation and mediation.
- To explore how experimental development of participatory approaches, including multi-stakeholder processes and electoral reform, might contribute to improvements in sustainability governance.

For more than three decades it has been recognized that increasing demands, complexity and uncertainty are increasing conflict in resource and environmental management in Canada and around the world (Dorcey, 1986). The emergence in the late 1980s of sustainability principles integrating ecological, economic and social imperatives has heightened these conflicts and stimulated a search for new forms of governance to avoid and resolve them (Dorcey and McDaniels, 2001). In this chapter, I examine the increasingly diverse and fundamental changes in governance being considered and implemented in Canada. First, I define some key terms and concepts of sustainability governance focusing on citizen involvement, the avoidance and resolution of conflict, and consensus-building. I then discuss how well we understand the efficacy of these governance innovations and argue for a strategy of explicit experimental development. I conclude by examining the application of such a strategy within Greater Vancouver. I suggest that a third wave of transformation in governance is urgently required and perhaps building, one that has the potential to be more far-reaching than the two that have preceded it during the last half-century.[i]

SUSTAINABILITY: NEW PRINCIPLES, HEIGHTENED CONFLICT

Since the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), resource and environmental management has increasingly been viewed within the larger concept and decision context of sustainable development and sustainability. The report of the United Nations World Commission on Economic Development (1987, 43) defined sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. While there has been great controversy about the definition of sustainable development and sustainability in the academic literature and discussion forums around the globe, there has been gradual clarification of the differing interpretations of the terms, which have fueled and become central to policy debates from the local to the global level.[ii] In the process, resource and environmental management issues such as depletion of forest and fishery resources and air and water pollution have come to be seen as both cause and consequence of other major economic and social problems such as poverty, health and corruption. This has led to resource and environmental management issues being viewed as integral components of almost every area of policy. For example, transportation policy choices are recognized as needing to consider implications for not only pollutant emissions and energy conservation but also land use development and urbanization patterns with all of their associated far-reaching economic, environmental and social consequences.

As expected, but more than was perhaps anticipated, this has led to increasing conflict in resource and environmental management generated by the compounding interactions of increasing demands, complexity and uncertainty (Dorcey, 1995). Driven by growing populations, economic development, technological innovations and shifting preferences, demands on the resource base have multiplied and diversified worldwide and proliferated conflict. Disputes have become not only more frequent because of the expanding numbers of stakeholders and their interactions but also have become more difficult to avoid and resolve as they come to be expressed in terms of the multiple dimensions and values of economic, environmental and social sustainability. While resource and environmental management issues have long been recognized as involving value-laden decisions and ethical choices, the sustainability perspective has elaborated these in yet more comprehensive terms, often science intensive, appearing to threaten traditional power relations, and thus heightened the potential for conflict. Illustrative of this are the questions raised about whether global resource and environmental problems can be resolved as long as North America is committed to its current model of a consumer society and others seek to emulate it.[iii]

Increasing complexity further enhances the likelihood of conflict. Expansion of complexity results from the exponential growth of biophysical and socio-economic interactions accompanying population increases, economic development and technological innovation. Institutional and governance innovations both mirror and compound the complexity. Conflict escalates not only because of the expanded numbers of interactions but also because of the challenges in understanding them. The sustainability perspective again is still more comprehensive in that it demands consideration of systems' behaviours and boundaries stretching from the local to the global, among all natural and human systems, and over past, present and future time. The expansion of conflict that has resulted from the growing concerns about the implications

of climate change for sustainability illustrates this challenge only too well. Consider the debate that raged over the last decade around the extent to which observed climate extremes result from natural dynamics, comparable to those known to have occurred in earlier times, or from changes induced by the immense increases in human activity in the recent past, and the controversy about whether or not to take mitigatory actions from the local to the global level with implications for almost all sectors of human activity and their governance (see Chapter 5).

Increasing uncertainty enhances the likelihood of conflict still further. Despite immense growth in knowledge from research relating to resource and environmental systems and their management, uncertainty has continued to expand. This results from the discovery that the behaviours of key systems are inherently unpredictable and from research frequently generating more questions than answers. The more comprehensive perspective of sustainability with its greatly expanded demands for understanding of environmental, social and economic systems has exasperated this difficulty and hugely heightened the likelihood of conflict. The challenge of acting on issues relating to climate change, where continuing uncertainties about science and values are all-pervasive and at a time of unanticipated collapse of global financial and economic systems, demonstrates these difficulties only too well.

Escalating demands, complexity and uncertainty thus feed on each other, proliferating the likelihood of conflict as illustrated by the climate change example. In extreme, some analysts grimly predict the consequent proliferation of war (Homer-Dixon, 1999).[iv] Putting resource and environmental management into the more comprehensive and demanding perspective of economic, social and environmental sustainability has greatly heightened the likelihood of conflict and thus poses daunting challenges for governance systems.

GOVERNANCE: THREE WAVES OF INNOVATION

Over the last 40 years and particularly with the development of the sustainability perspective, the management of resources and the environment has increasingly been seen in the larger context of governance systems and the varied potential roles within them of governments, business and civil society (Dorcey, 1986; 1995; Dorcey and McDaniels, 2001).[v] Citizen involvement in the management of resources and environment from this broader governance perspective potentially includes roles as varied as voter in elections and referenda, elected representative, political activist, buyer and seller in markets, volunteer producer, petitioner in the courts, or participant in government or business processes. During the last four decades there have been two major waves of experimentation with innovations in these governance roles and a third wave, upon occasion, appears as if it might be building. These experiments were initially concentrated in North America but the waves have rippled around the globe and each new one builds on those preceding it. The desire to avoid and resolve environmental and resource management conflicts has stimulated many of the innovations but they have also

been developed in social and economic areas of decision-making, particularly with the emergence of the sustainability perspective over the last decade.

First Wave

The first wave of innovation occurred from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s, originated in the United States, was quickly followed in Canada and more slowly rippled around the globe. The emergence of widespread environmental and social concerns was a principal catalyst for policy and associated citizen involvement innovations in the second half of the 1960s and first half of the 1970s. In Canada there were three foci for innovation, involving governments at the federal, provincial and local levels: planning for urban development, river basin management and assessments for project development. Experiments involved the use of a variety of communication and participatory techniques, including information brochures, media releases, citizen surveys, public hearings, workshops, task forces and advisory committees. By the mid 1970s, however, enthusiasm for the ambitious experiments in citizen involvement began to wane as they were perceived to be unsuccessful in resolving issues, time consuming and costly. At a time when the Canadian economy was weak, negative perceptions overwhelmed the positive aspects and for the ensuing decade much less attention was paid to environmental policy and citizen involvement in environmental governance.

Second Wave

In the second half of the 1980s, environmental concerns re-emerged as priority issues in the new context of sustainable development and generated a second wave of innovations in policy and citizen involvement in Canada that have been influential around the world as countries responded to the Brundtland report. Building on the lessons from the earlier experiments and the emerging experience with the use of negotiation, facilitation and mediation, a new generation of techniques involving multi-stakeholder, conflict resolution and consensus-building processes characterized the second wave. The processes were initiated not only by governments at all levels but also by business and civil society and commonly they involved stakeholders from all three sectors. They have been utilized in making decisions on every kind of environmental, economic and social issue and as part of governance processes from the global to local level seeking agreements on everything from constitutions, to legislation, policies, regulations, plans and project implementation. However, by the mid 1990s, the hugely ambitious innovations were once again being questioned as they were perceived to be too lengthy and costly and of limited value in terms of reaching and implementing agreements that met the interests of the diversity of stakeholders. Again, as at the end of the first wave, the need to address economic crises in Canada resurfaced at the top of the agenda and governments and other stakeholders retreated from the vigorous pursuit of innovations in environmental and social sustainability policy and citizen involvement.

Third Wave

At the beginning of the new millennium, and in the lead up to events surrounding and immediately following the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, it appeared that a third wave of innovation might be in prospect (Dodds, 2001; Knight, Chigudu and Tandon, 2002). Preparatory reports and debate during the Summit emphasized that while there have been notable areas of progress since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 on its Agenda 21, overall, intertwined environmental, social and economic problems were growing more grave and seriously threatened global sustainability. Revitalizing democratic governance processes was seen to be of fundamental strategic importance in fostering both improved understanding of sustainability problems and choices and forging willingness to act. In Canada, there had been a notable increase in the discussion, particularly in the media, of the need for governance reform to address the diversity of pressing economic, social and environmental issues. As in the case of the second wave of experiments, the governance innovations under discussion incorporated those included earlier but also were more far-reaching and fundamental. But, as discussed below, the third wave has built only slowly in the years following the Johannesburg Summit until now when multiple crises around the world appear to have it surging forward once again.

If the first wave of experiments was about whether citizens should be involved in resource and environmental management and the second wave was about how negotiation-based techniques of dispute resolution, consensus-building and multistakeholder processes might enhance involvement, then the third wave is emerging to be about whether the techniques and processes introduced during the first two waves can ever be expected to achieve their goals without much more fundamental changes to the governance systems within which they are employed.

ASSESSING GOVERNANCE INNOVATIONS: READING THE WAVES

It is not easy to assess the citizen involvement and conflict resolution innovations in governance during the first two waves because of problems in the literature relating to inconsistent terminology, implicit goals, and limitations of existing research. Nevertheless, there is a basis for guiding the strategies necessary for more productive experimental development in a third wave (Dorcey and McDaniels, 2001).

Terminology

Major difficulties in assessing innovation have derived from confusion about key terms such as ‘citizen involvement’, ‘conflict resolution’ and ‘governance’ (as well as for ‘sustainable development’ and ‘sustainability’). Progress in the third wave will depend critically on pursuing a strategy of expecting differences among stakeholders in the interpretation of commonly used terms, always seeking to clarify differences in their meaning, and capitalizing on differences to foster fresh insights (and the same, of course, applies to sustainable development and sustainability). The following sections briefly indicate principal sources of terminology difference and set the stage for exploring and defining them as they are relevant to specific situations in third wave experimentation.[vi]

Citizen Involvement

Difficulties arise from great variations in the use of central terms, such as 'citizen involvement', and because differences in usage are often not made explicit. Different innovations or writers may use key words such as 'public' or 'civic' or 'community' or 'stakeholder' instead of 'citizen', and 'participation' or 'engagement' or 'consultation' in place of 'involvement'. On some occasions these terms are used synonymously; on others, there are significant differences in intent. For example, in certain instances, 'stakeholder involvement' is differentiated from 'citizen involvement' by limiting the former to only those who have a specific interest in the issue as opposed to being generally interested as citizens (e.g., the affected landowners versus all voters in the jurisdiction). In other situations, the term 'stakeholder' may be used to identify the non-governmental interests and imply that the participants represent discrete constituencies. On yet other occasions, 'participation' is distinguished from 'involvement' or from 'engagement'" as being more passive (e.g., citizens being merely informed versus actively contributing to or making decisions). Commonly, 'consultation' is differentiated from 'involvement' as being a purely advisory process, as opposed to providing for direct decision-making (see also Chapter 18).

In the third wave of innovations, it will be essential to define citizen involvement broadly as processes for the involvement of citizens in advising and making decisions on matters under government authority that augment or supplant decision-making through established channels of representative government. Within this broad definition, it will also be critically important to distinguish clearly the specific intents when alternative terms are employed, as illustrated above.

Conflict Resolution

Comparable difficulties in assessing experience arise from differing use of the similar proliferation in key terms relating to conflict resolution processes and techniques (Box 20.1). Conflict arises among citizens involved in all processes of governance. Legislatures, courts and markets are mechanisms specifically designed to work through conflict as well as to avoid and resolve conflicts. However, the initial interest in conflict resolution in environmental and resource management in the second wave of innovations usually had a more limited focus. At the outset, it was often referred to as 'Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)' or 'environmental mediation' because processes such as mediation were seen as being more cost-effective alternatives for resolving conflicts compared to the use of the courts and administrative processes of governments. But as the innovations expanded and were initiated to seek agreements, as well as respond to disputes in land and resource planning and in developing environmental regulations and policies, they came to be referred to by more varied terms, in particular 'consensus processes' and 'multi-stakeholder processes'. Applications of these types of processes led to more specific terms such as 'shared decision-making' (Commission on Resources and Environment, 1994), 'reg-neg' (regulatory-negotiation) (B.C. Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 1991), 'co-management' (National Round Table on Environment and Economy, 1998) and 'civic science' (Lee, 1993).

In the third wave of innovations, it will be essential to view conflict resolution as part of processes for reaching consensus and not just focusing on the resolution of disputes once they arise. More fundamentally, the innovations will need to consider processes for exploiting the advantages and avoiding the disadvantages of both cooperation and conflict. In this larger context, techniques of negotiation, facilitation and mediation developed during the second wave need to be recognized as being central to each of these processes. While there are clearly times when not all stakeholders have to be involved in reaching decisions, multi-stakeholder processes strategically employing the full array of potential techniques will be essential if the diversity of citizen involvement necessary to meet the challenges of understanding and implementing sustainable development are to be met. In these multi-stakeholder negotiation processes, assistance by facilitators and mediators is critical to success in reaching consensus.

Box 20.1: Negotiation, Facilitation, Mediation and Consensus

The terms 'negotiation', 'facilitation', 'mediation' and 'consensus' are used in many varied ways. Some times they are referred to as 'processes' and other times as 'techniques'. For example, on one occasion a consensus process may be described as utilizing techniques of negotiation, facilitation or mediation. On another occasion a negotiation process may be described as employing the technique of consensus. These differences are explored more fully in Dorcey and McDaniels (2001). Below are some basic definitions to guide the present discussion.

- **Negotiation** can be defined as 'a process whereby two or more parties attempt to settle what each shall give and take, or perform and receive, in a transaction between them' (Rubin and Brown, 1975: 2). Fisher and Ury (1981) in their seminal book *Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, describe negotiation techniques that have been widely employed.

- **Facilitation** is provided by a facilitator, who has been defined as 'an individual who enables groups and organizations to work more effectively; to collaborate and achieve synergy. She or he is a 'content neutral' party who, by not taking sides or expressing or advocating a point of view during a meeting, can advocate for fair, open and inclusive procedures to accomplish the group's work. A facilitator can also be a learning or dialogue guide to assist a group in thinking deeply about its assumptions, beliefs and values and about its systemic processes and context' (Kaner et al. 2007: xv). Kaner et al. provide a guide to widely used techniques of facilitation.

- **Mediation** is 'an extension or elaboration of the negotiation process that involves the intervention of an acceptable third-party who has limited (or no) authoritative decision-making power. This person assists the principal parties in voluntarily reaching a mutually acceptable settlement of the issues in dispute.... [Mediation]

is usually initiated when the parties no longer believe that they can handle the conflict on their own and when the only means of resolution appears to involve third-party assistance' (Moore, 2003: 8). Mediation thus employs the processes and techniques of negotiation and facilitation and more besides (e.g. caucusing). In *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*, Moore summarizes commonly used techniques of mediation.

- **Consensus** is '*the process* - a participatory process by which a group thinks and feels together en route to their decision. Unanimity, by contrast, is the point at which the group *reaches closure*. Many groups that practice consensus decision-making use unanimity as their decision rule for reaching closure -but many *do not'* (Kaner et al., 2007: 276) (italics in original). Consensus processes frequently employ the processes and techniques of negotiation and facilitation and sometimes mediation.

- **Multi-stakeholder** processes involve a diversity of stakeholders (usually including government, business and civil society participants) and variously utilize negotiation, facilitation, mediation and consensus processes and techniques.

- **Third Parties** are individuals or groups who assist those involved in negotiation, facilitation, mediation, consensus and multi-stakeholder processes. They are often called 'facilitators' or 'mediators' but other labels are used for specific contexts such as 'conciliators', 'convenors', 'fact-finders' and 'problem-solvers' (Dorcey and Riek, 1987).

Governance

Adding to the difficulties of assessing experience has been the relative novelty and breadth of the concept of 'governance' within which citizen involvement has increasingly come to be considered over the last two decades. A new term was found to be needed in order to focus discussion on the complex of interacting organizations and systems of government, business and civil society within which decisions are made by citizens in their many varied roles (see also Chapter 2). Within this broad concept of governance, all the forums and activities of government (executive, legislative, administrative and judicial), at all levels (from the local to the global), have come under consideration and led to innovations in citizen involvement and conflict resolution processes. Accompanying this has been the new terminology of 'stewardship', 'partnership', 'collaboratives' and 'round tables'.

In the third wave of innovations, it will be essential to consider citizen involvement and conflict resolution in the broad context of 'alternative governance regimes' (AGR) with all of their complex component parts. Governance can be simply

defined for these purposes as ‘collective decision-taking and action in which government is one stakeholder among others’ (Knight, Chigudu and Tandon, 2002: 131).

Goals

Assessments of citizen involvement and conflict resolution innovations in Canadian governance depend fundamentally on the preferred model of democracy and associated procedural and outcome goals. The first two waves of innovation have taken place in an era of major shifts around the world in dominant ideologies, including the collapse of Communist regimes and the ascendancy of neoliberalism with its emphasis on free markets and free trade in a context of globalization (see Chapters 1 and 2). Accompanying this has been a general belief in the superiority of liberal democratic forms of governance, but also that the role of government needs to be reduced and those of business and civil society to be increased. In the process, conventional views of ‘left’ and ‘right’ approaches to governance have blurred as ‘third way’ approaches, such as the adoption of market-based mechanisms by social democratic regimes (e.g., privatization of water), have been introduced. In this dynamic environment, designing and assessing the merits of third wave innovations in governance will depend critically on being much more explicit than in the past about the goals they are intended to meet.

Democratic Models

Competing managerialist, pluralist and populist models of democracy have significantly different views on the appropriate role of citizen involvement in governance (Beierle and Cayford, 2002). The managerialist view is that elected representatives and their administrators should be responsible for identifying and pursuing the common good. While citizens might be involved in all kinds of ways to inform the shaping of decisions, they would not be directly involved in decision-making because self-interested behaviour might threaten the common good. In contrast, the pluralist view sees government not as the manager but as the arbitrator among competing interest groups. From this perspective, there is no single common good to be identified but only a preferred one that results from negotiations among the interest groups. The populist view, on the other hand, believes that decisions should be made directly by citizens and not through representatives, believing that such involvement is essential in developing democratic values and hence the performance of the governance system.

In the third wave of experiments, it will be essential to be much more explicit about the models of democracy that underlie the innovations in citizen involvement, in particular how the traditional and enduring dominance of managerialist views are to be challenged by pluralist and populist alternatives. Central to this will be the exploration of broader concepts of citizenship and the role of citizens with rights and responsibilities in sustainability governance. Drawing on the comments of nearly 10,000 citizens in 47 Commonwealth countries, Knight, Chigudu and Tandon (2002) argue that a new consensus is emerging on the three-part requirements for reviving democracy: (1) a strong state and a strong civil society; (2) a 'deepened' democracy and democratic culture; and (3) an enlarged role of citizens.[vii]

Outcome Goals

Understanding the governance alternatives and their merits is greatly enhanced by being explicit about the specific goals of citizen involvement in terms of the problems they are intended to address. Beirele and Cayford (2002) have suggested a set of five outcome-oriented social goals:

1. incorporating public values into decisions;
2. improving the substantive quality of decisions;
3. resolving conflict among competing interests;
4. building trust in institutions; and
5. educating and informing the public.

Again, in the third wave of innovations it will be important to be more explicit about the outcome goals than in the past. Further, while they might be subsumed within the above goals, it is essential to include specific consideration of empowerment, equity and cost-effectiveness as they are central issues in disputes about the relative merits of alternative models of democracy and the challenges of implementing sustainability governance.

Offering another perspective, Knight, Chigudu and Tandon (2002: 160) found that the good governance goals voiced by citizens were threefold: (1) basic needs; (2) association; and (3) participation.

> In fulfilling basic needs, the state is expected to play a providing role. Active citizens complement such a providing role by playing their part.
>
> In strengthening associational aspects of society, collective citizen action is the 'actor'. The state complements this with its facilitator role, which is crucial to building and nurturing collective citizen action.
>
> In enhancing participation of citizens, the state has to play the role of an active promoter. By engaging themselves in the public arena, citizens complement the 'promoter' role of the state.

Procedural Goals

While outcome goals relate to desired consequences of citizen involvement, procedural goals focus on who is involved, when, how and where. The innovations in the second wave were strongly oriented to addressing procedural goals. This is well exemplified by the Guiding Principles of Consensus Processes developed by the Canadian National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (1993):

1. *Purpose-driven*: People need a reason to participate in the process.
2. *Inclusive, not exclusive*: All parties with a significant interest in the issue should be involved in the consensus process.
3. *Voluntary participation*: The parties affected or interested participate voluntarily.

4. *Self-design*: The parties design the consensus process.
5. *Flexibility*: Flexibility should be designed into the process.
6. *Equal opportunity*: All parties must have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process.
7. *Respect for diverse interests*: Acceptance of the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of the parties in the consensus process is essential.
8. *Accountability*: The parties are accountable both to their constituencies, and to the process that they have agreed to establish.
9. *Time limits*: Realistic deadlines are necessary throughout the process.
10. *Implementation*: Commitment to implementation and effective monitoring is essential for any agreement.

In the third wave it will be essential to be explicit about how such procedural goals contribute to the achievement of outcome goals associated with each of the different models of democracy, building on the analyses of researchers such as Beierle and Cayford (2002) and Knight, Chigudu and Tandon (2002), mentioned above.

Research

While an abundant and diverse body of writing exists on the merits of citizen involvement and conflict resolution, the literature has major limitations that will need to be recognized and overcome in assessing innovations in the third wave. There is, nevertheless, a basis in this literature and the rules-of-thumb created by experienced practitioners for guiding the design of innovations that should be assessed through an explicit strategy of experimental development in the third wave (Dorcey and McDaniels, 2001).

Limitations

Experience has demonstrated that it is exceedingly difficult to conduct evaluation research on citizen involvement and conflict resolution for theoretical, practical and methodological reasons. As described above, assessments need to be based on explicit theoretical models of democratic governance, linking outcome goals to procedural goals, and making clear the hierarchy that relates ideology through to the particular techniques employed. Interest in these questions has catalyzed a remarkably diverse and interdisciplinary literature, much of which has been developing in isolation and needs to be cross-fertilized (e.g., co-management, civic engagement, deliberative democracy, empowerment, and communicative planning).

Methodological problems stemming from weaknesses in research designs and their implementation compound the theoretical difficulties with the existing assessment literature. Much of the early literature on evaluation is questionable and reflects partial and unsubstantiated opinions. Only in recent years have the theory and techniques of qualitative research methods essential to insightful assessments of citizen involvement and conflict resolution processes been advanced to the point where they are beginning to be widely and vigorously used and more commonly accepted. Accompanying this has

been recognition of the severe limitations of attempts to assess experiences only after the processes have concluded, and the critical need for real-time observation and feedback using participatory evaluation approaches.

Practical problems compound the theoretical and methodological in evaluative research. What is relevant theoretically and in practice is highly context dependent. All too often the literature on citizen involvement and conflict resolution ignores critical differences in time and place (e.g., the U.S. governance context for conflict resolution is significantly different from that of Canada, and the political climate for experimenting with citizen involvement in British Columbia was greatly more favourable in the early than the late 1990s). On other occasions, recognition of the context changes that have taken place can regrettably render well-designed studies impotent (e.g., detailed assessments of some of the shared decision-making processes in British Columbia in the first half of the 1990s concluding that innovation potentials were not achieved because governments lost interest and did not sustain the commitments required to give them a reasonable chance of success).

Best Practices

Countering this seemingly bleak perspective on the insights available in the existing research literature is the growing recognition that the rules-of-thumb developed by practitioners over the last three decades to guide their use of citizen involvement and conflict resolution techniques have great value. A notable example of this is the Guidelines for Consensus Processes (listed above), developed through a process that engaged professional and citizen practitioners involved in round tables across Canada. These guidelines have been widely acclaimed, accepted and employed around the world. Most significantly, there is a growing recognition of their merits as professionals and academics subject them to more vigorous assessment utilizing emerging methods of research.[viii]

At the same time, however, there is a growing appreciation of the extent to which the most productive approaches to citizen involvement and conflict resolution is not only contingent on the circumstances but also on the personal approach of the individual(s) responsible for facilitating or mediating the process. These critical roles are coming to be acknowledged as involving both art and science about which there is only infant understanding. Case studies of practicing facilitators and mediators who are recognized for their prowess confound us by revealing that they do not necessarily follow established principles nor do they even do what they normally profess (Kolb, 1994).

Experimental Development

Progress in the third wave of innovation therefore demands experimental development strategies that build on experience and focus on learning-by-doing (see also Chapter 16). These strategies will need to be contingent, progressive, structured and adaptive.

Contingent Strategies

Out of the experience with the first two waves of experimentation has emerged a growing appreciation of when and how to use particular approaches to citizen involvement and conflict resolution (Dorcey et al. 1994; Thomas, 1995).[ix] There is recognition that each approach comes with costs and potential benefits, and that these need to be weighed in a particular context. Thus, there will be some situations in which citizen involvement should not be considered (e.g., when elected representatives have already made a policy decision, the planners responsible for implementation should not organize citizen involvement processes that create the impression that the decision has not yet been taken or that it is open to reconsideration). Conversely, there are situations in which public hearings that merely allow stakeholders to voice their concerns will not be adequate if the need is for development of understanding and agreement. Indeed, they could escalate conflicts. While it calls for careful judgment, those responsible for sponsoring citizen involvement, consensus-building and conflict resolution processes can take a much more discerning and strategic approach to deciding on when and how to employ specific approaches in third wave experiments.[x]

Progressive Strategies

At the same time, critics of the earlier experiments with citizen involvement and conflict resolution (e.g., Arnstein, 1969; Forester, 1989) have questioned the extent to which they merely reinforce the existing power structures as opposed to seeking to redress inequities. They argue on grounds of both normative principle and practical efficacy that progressive approaches should be employed (i.e, there are not only ethical reasons for arguing that the disadvantaged should not be further disadvantaged but also practical reasons such as the increased costs that would result for everyone from escalation of conflict). In third wave experiments, it will be important for sponsors of citizen involvement and conflict resolution to address these issues explicitly in mandating processes. Those responsible for facilitating and mediating these processes will need to be clear on their mandate and their own ethical responsibilities to those participants who might be disadvantaged as a result of their lack of knowledge, resources or access.

Structured Strategies

Criticism of first and second wave experiments has also focused on their deficiencies in generating and structuring information to aid decision-making by the participants (Raiffa, 1982; Hammond, Keeney and Raiffa, 1999). All too often, processes neglect the importance of systematically identifying the goals and objectives and the assessment of the relative merits of alternative ways of achieving them. These critics point to the problems that result from not anticipating the well-recognized tendencies of individuals and groups to ignore or misconstrue complexity and uncertainty, and from neglecting the well-developed techniques for aiding decision-making through techniques such as ‘value-focused thinking’ (Keeney, 1992). In third wave experiments, it will be important for facilitators and mediators to be much more aware of how these techniques can be employed to great advantage by the stakeholders within their citizen involvement, consensus-building and conflict resolution processes.

Adaptive Strategies

Given the uncertain understanding of the merits of differing approaches to citizen involvement, consensus-building and conflict resolution in varying governance contexts, there is a need in the third wave for experimental development and adaptation as insights are gained (Holling, 1978; see also Chapter 16). This implies explicitly designing processes to learn from experiments with specific evaluative questions and methods included. Among the key questions to be addressed are strategic choices among options; roles of convenors, facilitators, and mediators; empowerment; front-end investment in process paying-off in the longer term; and, fundamental governance system changes that provide the context for citizen involvement, consensus-building and conflict resolution. The evaluation methods employed need to be participatory and applied in real time. In the remainder of this chapter, these ideas are elaborated through a specific example.

SUSTAINABILITY GOVERNANCE OF GREATER VANCOUVER: SURFING THE THIRD WAVE

In their origins and outcomes, innovations in sustainability governance are very much the product of a particular time and place. This is one of the key lessons from assessing the first two waves. Therefore, this last section briefly considers what might be learned in a third wave of innovation by focusing on transforming sustainability governance of Greater Vancouver in the opening years of the new millennium. This is a useful illustrative case because it is a rapidly urbanizing region of international significance for Canada, in a province with a history of innovations in sustainability governance and with an array of initiatives that provide rich opportunities for experimental development in the third wave. But first I suggest why there are reasons to believe a third wave might be building.

Context and Prospect: Confused Seas

Bobbing on my west coast surfboard, the next big wave is not yet clearly formed. The seas are confused with swells, long and short, coming from more than one direction. They are reminiscent of the cross currents that preceded the first two big waves but now, driven by awesome storms all around, they look like they might build to something much bigger. As before, environmental and natural resources management issues are emerging around the world as growing concerns, but this time - more than for the second wave - they are intimately intertwined with economic and social issues. Environment and natural resource issues and their resolution are not only seen today as both cause and effect of the scourges of poverty, disease, corruption, intolerance and civil strife but now they are complicated immeasurably by an extraordinary global financial and economic crisis that threatens to spiral out of control. This complex of issues has created a new sense of insecurity for all, but also a willingness to explore more radical innovation.[xi]

As in the build up to the two preceding waves, innovations in governance have been increasingly advanced as fundamental to resolution of the emerging issues. And, as with the second wave, the next builds on the experience with the one preceding it. This time the emerging proposals are not just for enhanced utilization of the best practices of citizen involvement and conflict resolution processes and techniques distilled from experiences in the first two waves, but for more fundamental transformation through democratization of governance processes. However, even within liberal democracies there are widely differing views on what form it should take with the continuing dominance of managerialist models being increasingly challenged by pluralist and populist alternatives.

Before 9/11 and the succession of corporate scandals, reform proposals emphasized a smaller role for the state and larger roles for business and civil society. But over subsequent years significant doubts have arisen (and almost faded away in the fiscal and economic crises of 2008-09) about the proposed reductions in the role of the state. Increasingly revised and more refined proposals are for strengthening the roles of all three in selective and appropriate ways. Adding momentum to the forces for renewed experimentation is the remarkable globalization of stakeholder involvement, in particular civil society, over the last decade. The development of the World Wide Web has facilitated the empowerment of civil society organizations to mobilize, coordinate and engage in and influence governance processes - from the local to the global - in ways only dreamt about during the first two waves.

Frustrated and disillusioned by the failure of second-wave multi-stakeholder processes to produce significant progress and enduring results, often concluding they had been co-opted, civil society stakeholders have also resorted to campaigning through other governance forums, including the market (e.g., international campaigns to boycott products, such as wood, produced in unsustainable ways) and the political system (e.g., the Green parties). Increasingly in recent years and focusing particularly on multinational corporations and globalization as causes of un-sustainability in all its dimensions, civil disobedience and direct action have been employed to influence decisions (i.e. Seattle, Washington, Quebec City, Prague, Genoa; and more recently with the global economic crisis, Paris, London, Athens).[xii]

While these global cross-currents are clearly flowing through the governance waters of Greater Vancouver, others have origins in Canada and British Columbia. Environmental groups have widely deplored the neglect of environmental priorities in Canada over the last decade and a half and lamented the demise of the country's international reputation for leadership and innovative policies. Preoccupied with deficit and debt reduction and the challenges of international competitiveness, the focus of governments has been on economic issues and reducing the costs of government by cutting staff and programs; this has been the case for the federal Liberal and Conservative governments throughout this period and increasingly became the focus of the B.C. government, particularly with the election of the Liberal Party in 2001 that introduced restraint policies more stringent than those previously implemented in Alberta and Ontario. Social programs including health, education and housing have been cut back,

reinforcing the controversies about downsizing of federal and provincial governments and downloading onto local governments. The tragic deaths from the failures of the community water supply system in Walkerton became a symbol of the risks created by the retreat of governments (see Chapter 7). More generally, local governments became increasingly vociferous about their inability to respond to the downloading of responsibilities and the historical neglect of municipalities by the senior governments that have been unwilling to provide them with adequate independent legal or financial capacity or share of revenues.

In British Columbia, the failure of a decade of treaty negotiations to produce agreements and the regressive policy stance of the incoming Liberal government, resulted in all of these concerns becoming acute in and around First Nation communities (see Chapter 4). More recent policy reversals by the British Columbia government have not produced the promised results (e.g., progress on treaties with First Nations under the 2005 New Relationship policy is still frustratingly slow); and doubts have been raised about the commitment to the raft of climate change initiatives, including the first carbon tax in North America, with the move of the powerful climate action secretariat out of the Premier's Office in early 2009 as his attention shifted to other priorities and an upcoming election in mid May of that year.

It is in this context that questioning of governance institutions and their performance has increased and diversified from the national to the local level. The concerns expressed are both general and fundamental, reaching beyond their occasional specific relationship to environmental or sustainability issues. Often they are summarized in terms of a 'democratic deficit'. Long-expressed dissatisfactions with the dominance of the Prime Minister, the 'friendly dictatorship' (Simpson, 2001), the lack of influence of elected members of Parliament and the ineffectualness of the appointed Senate, heightened under the leadership of Prime Ministers Chrétien, Martin and now Harper.

Related concerns have existed in British Columbia and took on new prominence when the provincial Liberal Party swept into power in 2001, leaving only two members of the 79-person Legislature in opposition, a predicament only worsened by Premier Campbell's refusal to accommodate them in any way (e.g., denying them the recognition and resources of an official opposition because they were less than the required four in number). Adding to the disenchantment with governments has been their failure to deliver on their policy promises, one of the most telling examples being the volte-face of the B.C. Liberals on their 2001 electoral commitments. But more insidious has been continuing erosion of confidence from ignoring or undermining transparency and accountability commitments, such as provided in legislation for the Freedom of Information Commissioner, the Ethics Commissioner and the Auditor General.

Apathy and cynicism have become the inevitable consequences and are widely believed to be the reasons for declining participation in the fundamentally important electoral processes. In these circumstances, there is heightened interest in alternative electoral models, such as proportional representation, and ways to increase citizen involvement throughout the governance process. The continuing revelations with regard

to the governance failures of business corporations have undermined faith in the private sector alternatives and are reinforcing the desire to explore models that strengthen the roles of governments, business and civil society, capitalizing on the comparative advantages of each. This is the turbulent context for considering the likelihood and potential for experimental development of sustainability governance innovations in Greater Vancouver in the third wave.

Greater Vancouver: A Sustainability Prospect

The urban region of Greater Vancouver is Canada's third largest metropolis, with a population of over two million people in which some of the 22 member municipalities have been growing at rates approaching the fastest in North America. Perched on the Pacific Rim, sitting astride the Fraser River estuary, in a triangle hemmed in by mountains and wilderness to the north, the border with the United States to the south and the waters of Georgia Strait to the west, the constrained geography of a magnificent natural setting for this burgeoning multicultural city presents major challenges for sustainability governance.

Although British Columbia's resource-based, export-oriented economy was severely depressed during the last decade of the twentieth century, it recovered strongly in the new millennium and the economy of the urban region, contributing half the GPP, continued to grow, shifting in structure as it became more service-oriented across a diversity of sectors. Greater Vancouver exhibits the diversity and international roles and connections of the emerging world cities, even if at one of the tertiary tiers. The forest of high rises that is downtown Vancouver is interspersed seemingly on every block with the cranes of further construction, and looking across the triangle from the top of the North Shore ski slopes it can be seen that other skyscraper clusters are reaching for the sky in adjacent municipalities from Richmond at the mouth of the Fraser, to Burnaby's Metrotown in the midst of the region, to Surrey on the south eastern boundary. Just beneath the ski slopes, urbanization can be seen creeping up the mountainside.

In stark contrast to the glittering images are the insidious problems that threaten to engulf so many urban conglomerations. Nowhere is the evidence more tragically evident than on the streets of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside where drugs, crime, homelessness and poverty are in the face of many persons walking the streets only a block away from all that is internationally lauded as a success story in central-city, mixed-use, high-density living. It has been described as the poorest postal code in Canada. Further pockets of desperation are found in other regional municipalities such as Whalley in Surrey. Like many other cities, the aging and neglected infrastructure of roads, sewers, and water supply systems threaten the well-being and ambitions of the communities. Notoriously high real estate prices have driven people to the suburban and valley communities in search of affordable housing and the single-family home and traditional amenities that many still prefer to the high density central city alternatives. Auto-dependent sprawl of homes and jobs along with inadequate transit services threaten to undo the early successes achieved by rejecting the construction of freeways in Vancouver in the 1960s and imposing an Agricultural Land Reserve in the early 1970s that preserved the region's

green field options. The road, rail, port and airline transportation systems vital to the domestic and international role of the metropolis are fighting to meet the challenges of remaining competitive in an era of rapid evolution to highly integrated multimodal systems, globalizing markets and unrelenting pressures from competing cities.

At a time of escalating demands for tax dollars, made all the more scarce by governments committed to tax reduction, public expenditures are presented as difficult choices. For example, given all the competing demands for tax dollars, should the region build secondary treatment plants for its sewage or wait until water pollution problems become more evident? Faced with the growing evidence of the costs of auto dependence, do not investments such as transit merit higher priority? Into this contradictory scene, there came the award of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, giving massive new momentum to construction activities and raising questions that have only increased with looming completion deadlines and the sudden onset of the Great Recession, about the highly uncertain and controversial costs and benefits for all components of the metropolitan economy, environment and society.

Greater Vancouver's Governance System: Evolving Multi-stakeholder Cooperation

The local government system established under provincial legislation to address this increasingly difficult complex of issues in the region consists of 21 municipalities and an electoral area in which each are members of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), which in 2007 renamed itself Metro Vancouver (Metro).[xiii] Within individual municipalities, such as the City of Vancouver, the mayor and members of city council, as well as school board and parks board, are elected at large.[xiv]

Metro is not another level of government but rather is a federation of the 21 municipalities and one electoral area, where there is voluntary participation in a joint venture with a cooperative approach to delivery of services including water, sewer, waste systems, parks, housing, air quality, labour relations and regional long-range planning. The members of the Metro Board are appointed by municipal councils, from among their mayor and councillors, and their number and votes on the Board are weighted by the population size of their municipality. The general mode of operation is for municipalities to contract for services from Metro for which they pay on a user-pay, cost-recovery basis. In 1996, the GVRD Board adopted the Livable Region Strategic Plan, which provides the framework for making regional land-use and transportation decisions in partnership with the GVRD's member municipalities, the provincial government and provincial agencies.[xv] The plan is built around four key policy directions: (1) protect the green zone; (2) build complete communities; (3) achieve a compact metropolitan region; and (4) increase transportation choice. This regional plan meets the provincial government's requirements under its growth management legislation and each member municipality produces a 'regional context statement' stipulating how its plans support the regional plan.[xvi]

Over the last 35 years, path-breaking multi-stakeholder innovations within the regional governance system have been designed to facilitate cooperation and coordination with federal and provincial agencies with jurisdiction and interests in the region and other

stakeholders. Environment and natural resources management issues have been a primary concern leading to many of these initiatives. Four innovation areas are particularly significant:

1. Established in 1986, the Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP), led by a Management Committee of six senior administrators from Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, the BC Ministry of Environment, the Port Authorities and the GVRD, has developed and operated a coordinated management program to address issues relating to the waters and shoreline uses of the estuary. In 1991, a similar mechanism, the Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Plan (BIEAP), was created for the region's other large water body, and in 1996 it was linked with FREMP.[xvii]

2. The FREMP model influenced the design of the Fraser Basin Management Board (FBMB, now Fraser Basin Council, FBC) that was introduced in 1992 to facilitate coordination among all organizations concerned with the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the basin. The FBC is, however, a novel mechanism in that the Council consists of 36 Directors, 22 of whom are appointed by the four orders of government: three by the federal government, three by the provincial government, one by each of the eight regional districts in the Basin, and one by each of the Basin's eight First Nations language groups. The remaining 14 Directors are non-governmental representatives appointed by the FBC. These 14 include two representatives from each of the basin's five geographic regions, one basin-wide representative for each of the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, social and environmental), and an impartial Chair.[xviii]

3. In 1998, the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (GVTA), also known as TransLink, was established by provincial legislation as an organization separate from the provincial government and GVRD. Its mandate is to plan and finance the regional transportation system, including transit and major road networks. In 2007 the Provincial Government established a new governance framework under the name South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority, The authority consists of a Mayors Council on Regional Transportation, made up of the mayors within Greater Vancouver, who in turn appoint a Translink Board of Directors, selected on the basis of their skills and expertise, and who are mandated to act in the best interests of Translink. The Authority is required to seek input from Metro Vancouver on its long-range transportation plan and its borrowing limit increases.[xix]

4. In addition to the creation of multi-stakeholder institutions such as FREMP, FBC and Translink, multi-party partnerships have been established to address key issues in the region. The Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative (GBEI) and the Vancouver Agreement are two significant examples. The GBEI was a founding partnership between Environment Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in 1998, which was joined in 2000 by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs.[xx] In 2003 a five-year Georgia Basin Action Plan was signed by federal and provincial government partners, establishing a collaborative framework to improve air quality, reduce and prevent water pollution, conserve and protect habitat and species

and support community-based environmental and sustainability initiatives in the Georgia Basin, the bio-region cradling Greater Vancouver. A Joint Statement of Cooperation on the Georgia Basin and Puget Sound Ecosystem was signed in 2000 by Canada and the United States, thus laying a foundation for transnational and transboundary, multi-stakeholder processes.

The Vancouver Agreement was first signed by the Government of Canada, British Columbia and the City of Vancouver in 1999, and renewed in 2005 for another five years.[xxi] The Agreement lays out a framework and principles for the three orders of government to work together to promote and support sustainable economic, social and community development in Vancouver, with a first focus in the Downtown Eastside. This community, with its residents and businesses and service organizations, the three levels of government, the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, the Coalition for Crime Prevention and Drug Treatment, as well as the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Park Board, are working together on the Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program. The main goals are to reduce crime and drug addiction, provide effective community services to addicts, achieve a balance of types of housing, and also promote economic development. An important part of the program is to develop the community's capacity to involve all members of society in addressing the issues that face the area.

Into this already complex and evolving system over the last five years have emerged further sustainability and governance initiatives, two of which are particularly significant, to suggest a third wave of innovation is gaining momentum.

- In 2002 the GVRD launched a Sustainable Region Initiative (SRI) intended to provide a wider sustainability context for its Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP), the region's growth strategy.[xxii] Over the intervening years, both the SRI and LRSP have been advanced through various collaborative processes. These have included technical workshops involving staff of the GVRD, municipalities, other government agencies, business and community organizations, and multi-stakeholder processes involving all interested stakeholders in *Future of the Region Sustainability Dialogues* and *Forums*, and *Sustainability Community Breakfasts*, and culminating in a *Sustainability Summit* in the fall of 2008. Out of these collaborative processes came a series of reports and decisions. In 2008, a Sustainability Framework was adopted by the Metro Board and the latest annual Sustainability Report (2009) was subsequently released. The final draft of a new Regional Growth Strategy to replace the LRSP was scheduled for public review in 2009.[xxiii]

- The second set of initiatives relate to potential changes in governance through electoral reforms. In 2003, in response to diverse concerns about the provincial electoral system, the British Columbia government created an independent Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.[xxiv] The Assembly consisted of two randomly-selected citizens from each of the province's 79 electoral districts, plus two randomly-selected First Nations members, and a Chairperson (Jack Blaney), for a total of 161 members. The mandate of the Citizens' Assembly was ‘to assess

models for electing Members of the Legislative Assembly and to issue a report recommending whether the current model should be retained or another model should be adopted'.

The Assembly operated from January to December 2004. It began with an education phase for members of the Assembly, then held public hearings across the province, and finally had a deliberations phase to consider its recommendation. On December 10, 2004, the Citizens' Assembly released its report recommending that the province change from the existing electoral system based on 'first past the post' to a form of proportional representation, the Single Transferable Vote, which the Assembly labeled BC-STV. A referendum on the proposal was then held during the Provincial Election on May 17, 2005. Two thresholds were set by the *Electoral Reform Referendum Act* for the referendum results to be binding on government: (1) at least 60 per cent of the valid votes cast in support of the question stated on the referendum ballot, and (2) in at least 48 of the 79 electoral districts, more than 50 per cent of the valid votes cast should also be in support. The second of the two thresholds was met overwhelmingly: 77 of the 79 electoral districts voted in favour of change to BC-STV. In the case of the first threshold, it fell narrowly short with 57.69 per cent of votes cast in favour. Despite the closeness of the vote to the super majority required, the Provincial Government decided not to change the electoral system but that it should be voted on again, under the same decision rules, at the next Provincial Election scheduled for May 12, 2009.

When it was voted on again in May 2009 it was defeated by substantial margins: only 39 per cent of the votes cast in the election were in favour of changing to BC-STV and in only 7 of the 85 electoral districts was there more than 50 per cent in favour of the change. In the week following the result, varied reasons were suggested for the defeat. Without the widespread and sustained media coverage associated with the deliberations and recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly that had preceded the first referendum, little was heard of the proposal until shortly before the election when the Provincial Government provided funding to support a Yes and a No campaign. It was only on February 2, 2009 that 'No STV' and 'British Columbians for BC-STV' received the first installments of the $500,000 that each was provided to finance their campaigns.[xxv] Each organization established a web site and launched a campaign including media advertising, lawn signs, door knocking and debates.[xxvi] By all accounts the campaign was relatively late to appear and was uneven in its activity level across the province. Readers comments posted in response to articles in the media indicated that not only were people divided on the pros and cons but that there was substantial confusion about what the STV would involve.[xxvii]

Just how the dynamics of the election campaign itself affected the referendum is unclear. The Liberals won with 49 seats (58 per cent of the seats with 46 per cent of the votes) to the NDP's 36 seats (42 per cent of the seats with 42 per cent of the vote).[xxviii] However, the turn out at only 52 per cent of eligible voters was an historic low, prompting an article in *The Globe and Mail* about the continuing decline of voter turnout in Canadian elections, reasons for it and possible responses.[xxix] Already advocates for electoral reform are pointing to the fact that the new BC Liberal Government was elected

by only 24 per cent of the eligible voters and arguing that this is reason to carry on the campaign to change the existing system of 'first past the post'.

Responding to similar concerns at the municipal level and stimulated by the provincial initiative, the City of Vancouver established in 2003 a one-person Commission (Thomas Berger) to review the relative merits of the existing at-large electoral system in comparison with a ward system and other alternative civic election systems.[xxx] After reviewing studies and conducting neighbourhood meetings and surveys, Berger issued his report on June 8, 2004. He recommended that the City move to a ward system with 14 wards. He reported that a preponderance of people at the hearings favoured a ward system and that an extensive survey resulted in 1091 respondents, of whom 50 per cent preferred wards, 29 per cent a partial ward system, and 20 per cent the existing at-large system. He examined proportional representation systems and recommended the City give them further consideration.

When Berger's proposal was voted on in a special plebiscite on October 16, 2004, it was narrowly defeated when 54 per cent voted in favour of retaining the at-large system (turnout 22.6 per cent). Members of the Vancouver City Council elected in the fall of 2008, many of whom expressed support for another referendum before the election, said they would await the results of the provincial referendum before deciding what to do next.[xxxi] It remains to be seen what they will decide in the light of the outcome from the provincial referendum.

Governance Innovation: An Experimental Development Agenda

Greater Vancouver is uniquely poised to engage in third-wave experimental development of sustainability governance. As elsewhere, there is a growing recognition of the need to accelerate changes in attitudes and perceptions and to build consensus if the challenges of implementing sustainability principles are to be met. Fundamental to progress is overcoming apathy, cynicism and disengagement from governance processes. This concluding section briefly considers two major complementary components of a third-wave experimental development agenda focused on urban electoral reform and multi-stakeholder engagement and how it might be led by a multi-stakeholder mechanism. In putting forward the following proposals, I assume that, building on second-wave experience multi-stakeholder processes, multi-stakeholder processes would be increasingly employed and that they would incorporate the criteria and lessons for good design and practice summarized in earlier sections of this chapter.

Citizens' Commission on Greater Vancouver Governance

Critical to vigorous and productive innovation in the third wave is a mechanism for providing leadership in designing and assessing potential innovations, facilitating their experimental implementation, evaluating the results, and fostering adaptation in light of the findings. The mechanism needs to avoid being dominated by partisan politics while benefiting from the wisdom of experienced politicians and bureaucrats; to reach beyond the entrenched interests in the existing system while developing an appreciation of their

perspectives; and, to be inclusive of diverse citizen views while being productive and cost effective. This multi-stakeholder mechanism might be called the Citizens' Commission on Greater Vancouver Governance (CCGVG) and could be convened by the Board of Metro Vancouver and other stakeholder organizations acting in concert.

The challenge of balancing such considerations in designing an appropriate commission is similar in many regards to the task that Gordon Gibson was given by Premier Campbell in recommending within three months the design of a citizens' assembly for provincial level electoral reform.[xxxii] While asking a well-respected and informed individual to perform this design task is one option for the collaborative of Greater Vancouver organizations, another would follow the path of innovative second-wave multi-stakeholder models and establish a small design panel of well-regarded individuals who reflect the diversity of interests but serve as individuals. The design panel's task would be to recommend the commission's membership, procedures, financing and mandate. An example of how this was done with notable success is the panel that designed the World Commission on Dams (WCD), a task that was arguably a great deal more challenging.[xxxiii]

Once the CCGVG is approved by the collaborating Greater Vancouver organizations, it would develop a more specific work plan, consistent with its mandate and, building on the design panel's recommendations, consider questions relating to the details of how it would proceed (e.g. Would it establish an advisory forum and web site as did the WCD? How could financial and in-kind resources be pooled to support its investigations and activities? What specific criteria should be used to assess governance innovations and what alternatives should be examined?). In the next two sections, I briefly consider two key types of innovations that I would propose they examine.

Electoral Reform

There has been a long history of questioning the pros and cons of the at-large process of electing councillors in municipalities, including Vancouver.[xxxiv] And, in recent years, with the rapidly growing importance of the Greater Vancouver Regional District and now Metro Vancouver, related questions have been raised about the Board members being appointed by municipal councils. Driving these questions are concerns about the low turnout for municipal elections, with only one in three citizens participating;[xxxv] the lack of adequate representation of key neighbourhood interests on municipal councils and consequent lack of responsiveness and accountability; and, the extension and compounding of these problems to the regional level because members are not elected directly on the basis of their regional policy positions but are appointed by municipal councils.

The major alternatives are a ward system of election at the municipal level and direct election to the board at the regional level. While each of these alternatives is frequently discussed, there has not been much interest expressed in unicity models, such as those introduced in Toronto and Montreal.[xxxvi] If members of the regional board were elected, they might be elected at large from the region or through their municipalities

(i.e., individuals running for the municipal council would simultaneously run for the regional board). Mixed models would also need consideration as ways to combine the merits of each (e.g., part of the municipal council might be elected from wards and part at large, or part of the regional board might be elected at large and part be appointed by municipal council from among local councillors who have simultaneously been elected to serve on the regional board). In addition, various proportional representation models would be possible at both the municipal and regional level.[xxxvii]

The task of the CCGVG would be to lead and facilitate an examination of the pros and cons of these and other relevant options and develop recommendations that, insofar as possible, reflect the consensus among stakeholders. They would seek to foster an informed consideration of alternatives by drawing on the results of research, assessing experience in other jurisdictions, and conducting studies as necessary to focus on the questions and options relevant to the Greater Vancouver context.

In the process of considering the electoral alternatives, questions inevitably will arise and have to be addressed about the pros and cons of having separate boards for parks and schools at the municipal level, separate boards for transportation at the regional level and the extent to which component activities of local government should be focused at the municipal or regional level.[xxxviii] Likewise, questions will surface and need examination about the pros and cons of how the multiplicity of stakeholders in business and civil society should be involved in the governance process in ways beyond voting and running for election and how the other orders of government - federal, provincial, and First Nations - should work with the local governments at the municipal and regional level.

Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Experimental development and assessment in the third wave needs to be distinguished by focusing on not only the multi-stakeholder processes in themselves but also on their role in the emerging governance system, in particular their critical linkage to the municipal and regional institutions where elected representatives are making decisions. The task of the CCGVG therefore would also be to catalyze and facilitate innovation and evaluation in two general realms of governance.

First, there is immense scope for wider application of best practices in citizen involvement, consensus-building, conflict resolution, and use of negotiation, facilitation and mediation. In particular, contingent, progressive, structured and adaptive approaches need always to be considered. Most municipalities and the GVRD draw on the same menu of techniques, including individual Web sites, surveys, cable television, complaints/requests to staff/councillors, public hearings, advisory committees and boards, open houses and forums/committees for developing policies and plans. While there are exceptions, these techniques tend to be utilized in conservative ways, under-employ consensus-building, and neglect the critical necessity of incorporating ongoing assessment of how to build on their strengths and remedy weaknesses. The City of Vancouver demonstrates how each of the governance institutions could be much more

explicit about their policies, strategies and techniques for selecting, implementing and evaluating mechanisms for interacting and working with stakeholders and has put detailed information on its Web site.[xxxix]

There is nothing comparable for other institutions in the region. Even the Fraser Basin Council, which has been breaking new ground in facilitating multi-stakeholder consensus-building, is remarkably reticent about its approaches and neglects explicit self-assessment of them. In this area, the role of the CCGVG would be to foster the development, adoption and implementation of best practices, drawing on experience from elsewhere as well as locally, and reporting on the results in application and their implications for further innovation and its adoption. Included in this role would be auditing the extent to which entities actually follow their stated policies and provide the resources for their implementation (e.g., stakeholders express concerns that the City of Vancouver does not vigorously pursue its stated policies).

Second, there is an urgent need to assess the overall performance of the emerging governance system with all of its innovations and make explicit decisions on its future directions. Many experiments are underway, but there is little recognition of this and the critical need to learn from them. The emergent system, at least superficially, is polycentric, consists of networks of networks, involves multi-partnering, and engages the diversity of stakeholders in a multiplicity of ways. At the same time as it retains the essential components of the traditional government models, it is experimenting with radical innovations - from the Fraser Basin Council on the large scale to hundreds of localized instances in neighbourhoods or creeks where the stakeholders are variously allowed to make decisions and act on them. The role of the CCGVG in this area is to facilitate recognition and informed consideration of the emergent system and make choices about its future development and assessment. Central questions relate to the appropriate roles of elected representatives versus non-elected stakeholders in new governance models characterized by strong government, strong business and strong civil society. The proposed agenda items focusing on electoral reform and best practices will be essential inputs to this overall focus, but there will also be a need to incorporate other closely associated governance innovations relating to the use of financing and market mechanisms, public-private partnerships, decision-support systems and the use of the World Wide Web and other media, which have not been discussed in this chapter.

CONCLUSION

While Greater Vancouver today has been the focal place and time in considering the need and potential for third-wave transformations in sustainability governance, a comparable assessment and experimental development approach could be taken to any urbanizing region in Canada and to any of the emerging governance systems provincially, nationally and globally. In the near future, Greater Vancouver is undoubtedly one place to watch the shape and force of the new wave and just possibly catch a mind-blowing ride.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Using a Canadian sustainability issue with which you are familiar (e.g., managing Atlantic fish stocks), explain how conflicts and uncertainty have increased as stakeholders have endeavoured to establish and pursue ecological, economic and social sustainability goals.
2. How have participatory processes employed in natural resources and environmental management evolved in your province over the last fifty years?
3. What are the participatory skills that should be developed by people who are going to be involved in sustainability governance in Canada?
4. Choose a situation with which you are familiar (e.g., a watershed, a city or a region) and design a strategy for using experimental development of participatory approaches to improve sustainability governance.

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ENDNOTES

All web sites accessed 15 May 2009.

[i] This chapter builds on arguments developed in more detail in Dorcey and McDaniels (2001), where further examples and references are provided.
[ii] For extensive examples and discussion of the many differing definitions of sustainable development and sustainability, see http://sdgateway.net/introsd/definitions.htm. Also see 20 Years Into Our Common Future http://www.environmentmagazine.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/September-October%202008/Brundtland-intro.html.
[iii] For example see UNEP's Sustainable Consumption Program, http://www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/about-us/about-us.htm; and Schmidt-Bleek (2008).
[iv] For continuing information on water conflicts and references to literature on them see http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/natres/waterindex.htm#2008
[v] For information on evolving research on water governance see http://www.watergovernance.ca/index.htm and on sustainability governance see http://www.earthsystemgovernance.org/
[vi] References provided here and in Dorcey and McDaniels (2001) elaborate on the use and definition of terms beyond discussion in the following sections.
[vii] There is an extensive literature exploring novel concepts and greatly expanded models of citizenship relevant to a post-modern and globalizing world concerned with the breadth of issues relating to sustainability (e.g., Holston (1999) and Isin (2000)).
[viii] Core Principles for Public Engagement created through a collaboratory process involving leading practitioner organizations in North America reflects strongly the earlier Canadian Consensus Process Principles and is the focus of an ongoing online process to evolve them through further experimental development http://www.ncdd.org/pep
[ix] For an assessment of the pros and cons of the latest approaches see the Public Participation Toolbox developed from evolving experience by the International Association for Public Participation http://www.iap2.org/
[x] See the decision tree diagram that summarizes the contingent approach by Thomas (1995), which is reproduced in Dorcey and McDaniels (2001).
[xi] Governance is the focus of the rest of this chapter but it is not the only realm of innovation amidst the growing crises; accompanying policy innovations include progressive action on issues central to a sustainability agenda (e.g., the emphasis on addressing environmental, economic and social issues by governments creating massive expenditure plans in desperate attempts to revive their economies).
[xii] Greater Vancouver in the context of British Columbia and Canada is the focus of the rest of this chapter but mention has to be made of the surge of optimism accompanying the inauguration of Barack Obama as President of the United States in January 2009. His commitments to reform of governance and sustainability policies, capitalizing on the opportunities created by the ongoing global crises, greatly increased the hopes of many for a new wave of fundamental and far-reaching innovations not only in the USA but also abroad, near and far. Time will tell whether the extraordinary expectations can be realized; already by May 2009 (the time of writing), some of the decisions made by the President amidst the realities of governing have raised doubts among some of his supporters.
[xiii] For clarity, I use the term GVRD whenever I am speaking about the organization prior to its re-naming. I also use the term Greater Vancouver whenever I am speaking about the

area as opposed to the GVRD or Metro organization. http://www.metrovancouver.org/about/Pages/default.aspx

[xiv] http://city.vancouver.bc.ca/erc/

[xv] http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/strategy/Pages/default.aspx

[xvi] http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/strategy/Pages/RegionalContextStatements.aspx

[xvii] http://www.bieapfremp.org/

[xviii] http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/

[xix] http://www.translink.ca/en/About-TransLink.aspx

[xx] http://www.pyr.ec.gc.ca/georgiabasin/index_e.htm

[xxi] http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/dtes/agreement.htm

[xxii] http://www.metrovancouver.org/Pages/default.aspx

[xxiii] Two major international events during this time had significant influences on the GVRD's development of its SRI. First, in 2003 Canada's submission to the international CitiesPLUS competition, a 100 year sustainability plan for Greater Vancouver, won first prize (http://citiesplus.ca/). Second, in 2006 the 3rd World Urban Forum was held in Vancouver (http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=41). Discussions in and around these two high profile events tested and stimulated ideas about the SRI.

[xxiv] http://www.bc-stv.ca/

[xxv] http://www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/ref2009/

[xxvi] http://www.stv.ca/ & http://www.nostv.org/

[xxvii] For an example see this article in The Tyee and the comments posted by readers http://thetyee.ca/Views/2009/05/07/DebatingSTV4/

[xxviii] For commentary on these results and comparisons with previous elections see http://www.straight.com/article-220345/was-no-landslide-win

[xxix] http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20090519.BCTURNOUT19ART2124/TPStory/

[xxx] http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/decision2004/index.htm

[xxxi] http://www.straight.com/article-175443/councillors-waffle-wards

[xxxii] http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/nrm_news_releases/2003OTP0031-000400.htm

[xxxiii] In 1997, I was approached by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Bank to assist them in designing and facilitating a global multi-stakeholder process to seek resolution of the huge and long-running disputes surrounding large dams (Dorcey et al., 1997). This led to the creation of a novel World Commission on Dams (WCD) that was a multi-stakeholder evaluative mechanism and employed multi-stakeholder processes throughout its two years of work (World Commission on Dams, 2000). The innovative characteristics of this experiment led to an independent assessment project to monitor and evaluate the Commission's work in terms of representation, independence, transparency, inclusiveness and cost-effectiveness (Dubash et al., 2001). Of particular relevance to establishing the CCGVG, is the constitution and role of the formative multi-stakeholder panel for the WCD and its experience in commissioning research on the design of the novel multi-stakeholder commission and its mandate; running a nomination and selection process to select the Chair and 11

Commissioners reflecting global regional diversity, expertise and stakeholder perspectives; and, securing commitments on funding, ultimately from 53 public, private and civil society organizations. The process that led to the establishment of the World Commission on Dams illustrates what would be required to establish the CCGVG. For further discussion of the relevance of the WCD experience see Box 19.2 in my chapter of the 2004 edition of this book. Another example is my experience in establishing the Fraser Basin Management Board in 1992 (Dorcey, 1997).

[xxxiv] http://vancouver.ca/erc/pdf/verc_report.pdf

[xxxv] The average participation rate for Greater Vancouver municipalities was 29.6 per cent in 2005 and 26.1 per cent in 2008; the City of Vancouver was respectively 32.5 per cent and 30.8 per cent http://www.civicnet.bc.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=34

[xxxvi] There are, however, periodic meetings of the 'Council of Councils' when the GVRD (Metro) wants to engage all the member municipalities' councillors in major decisions.

[xxxvii] While Berger discussed proportional representation options for Vancouver City, he did not explore this for election to the regional board and recommended Vancouver continue appointing councillors to the regional board as long as this was the system being used by other municipalities in the region.

[xxxviii] The new governance structure for Translink, recommended by a Review Panel in 2007 and implemented by the Provincial Government, has introduced an entirely new and controversial model that would be one of the key innovations to be assessed by CCGVG http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/publications/reports_and_studies/

[xxxix] http://vancouver.ca/getinvolved/index.htm

Anthony H. J. (Tony) Dorcey is a Professor in the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability and the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia. His teaching and research focus on the use of negotiation, facilitation and mediation in sustainability governance. Over the last two decades he has served as Director of SCARP, a member of the BC Round Table on Environment and Economy, inaugural Chair of the Fraser Basin Management Board, and a facilitator of global multistakeholder dialogues for organizations including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the World Bank (http://www.tonydorcey.ca).