

Terms of Reference: Planning Roles and Capacity

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Introduction

This breakout will examine various roles and responsibilities within the Terms of Reference and consider the capacity requirements to fulfill these responsibilities.

Background

Commissions are independent bodies with a mandate to create a vision and provide direction to land use decision makers. Their efforts are guided by Terms of Reference that encourage a common land use planning process and establish agreement between Parties on the scope of the planning process. Terms of Reference might also identify key planning issues, provide statements of relevant government policy or establish protocols for Party, public and/or stakeholder engagement, but these matters have not been included in Council recommendations thus far.

Terms of Reference are prepared by a region specific technical working committee and recommended to the Parties by Council. Terms of Reference define a Planning Region Boundary; set out membership on the Commission; clarify the relationship between the Parties, the Council, and the Commission; outline the process, timelines, products expected during the Commission's term; and establish a budget for completion of a recommended land use plan. Explicit roles and responsibilities are not been defined in Terms of Reference, but are included as part of the common land use planning process recommended by YLUPC.

Roles identified in the common land use planning process include Process Coordinator, Training and Orientation, Intergovernmental Liaison, Community Liaison, Information Provider, Plan Author, Product Reviewer, Approval Body, Plan Implementer (see attached Schedule "C"). Responsibilities under these roles require adequate governance structures, staffing, training, and financial support to ensure process objectives are met. Each Party fulfills one or more of these roles during the production of the land use plan. Shared roles, such as those for policy and technical support may be delegated to a technical working group or senior liaison committee.

Issues

Timely production of land use plans requires that all Parties understand and agree to the mandate, roles and responsibilities set out in Terms of Reference. Terms of Reference lacking clarity with respect to mandate or roles may cause confusion when work plan and budgets are out of step with Party expectations.

Each Parties capacity to organize and contribute of information, respond to consultations by the Commission and to participate in technical and senior level working committees affects a Commission's ability to fulfill its mandate. Delays challenge a Commission's ability to maintain timelines, budgets and staffing commitments.

Commissions make an important contribution to the definition of regional issues. The inclusion of statements of policy direction or preliminary scoping of issues may also impinge on Commission independence. Overly prescriptive Terms of Reference may limit flexibility to respond to emerging issues and challenges.

Questions

Should capacity building opportunities be provided in advance of Commission start-up? If so, to whom & on what aspects of plan production (e.g. team building, info management, etc.)?

Should Terms of Reference contain issues, and policy statements from the Parties?