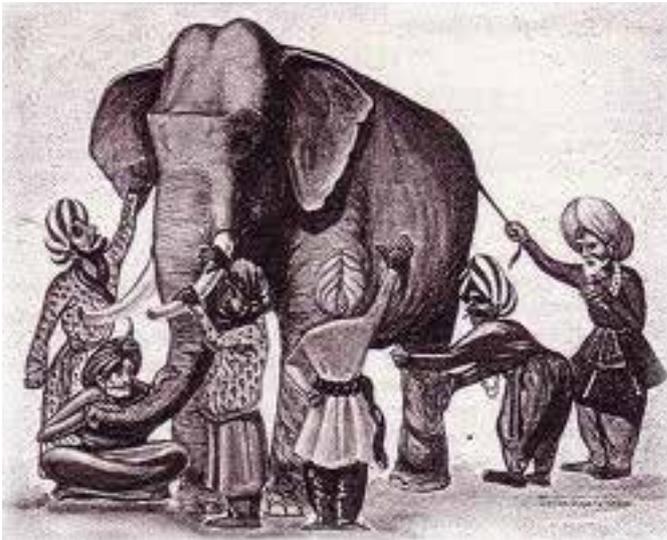


# GETTING THINGS DONE

– Tips and reflections for a successful outcome from development projects within the Northern Periphery Programme.



Theory, references to research and comments on the examples are written by Charlotta Fredriksson, PhD and Patrik Tornberg, PhD from the WSP Group. Reference is made to a theory formulated by, amongst others, Patsy Healy, professor emeritus in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at Newcastle University.



*It was six men of Indistan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy his mind  
/.../*

*And so these men of Indistan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right  
And all were in the wrong*

*John Godfrey Saxe (1816–1887)*

*...symbolizing the need of consensus and therefore a need of close dialogue between actors concerned when trying to develop business and services.*

# CONTENT

INTRODUCTION .....	4
<b>A. INITIATION</b> .....	5
Rising awareness.....	5
What do customers want? .....	5
What do we want to achieve?.....	6
<b>B. IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	7
Why collaborate? .....	7
The theory states: Co-work, coordinate, collaborate.....	8
1+1=3 .....	8
Lessons learned from TransTourism – Development of the interactive web journey planner in Scotland: Journey Genie .....	10
How to engage in a process.....	11
The theory states: Towards well-functioning collaborative processes .....	11
The strategic collaboration process .....	15
Lessons learned from TransTourism – Northern irish stakeholder engagement strategy .....	17
The theory states: A model for strategic collaboration .....	20
Lessons learned from TransTourism – Destination Funäsfjällen.....	26
<b>C. MONITORING OUTCOME</b> .....	28
Visitor’s preference.....	28
Environmental impact .....	29
<b>D. FURTHER READING</b> .....	31
Collaboration and joint development .....	31
Impact on carbon emissions .....	32

# INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this guide is to provide practical advice about the planning and implementation of business development initiatives through the formulation of a strategic, collaborative process in which the stakeholders work together towards a shared goal.

The guide provides a model for a work methodology with emphasis on collaboration and consensus. These tips are based on both scientific research and experience.

The advice is structured into a short introduction, summarized in checklists when appropriate, followed by a reference to theory and sometimes exemplified by experiences gained from the EU/NPP project TransTourism, illustrating both success factors and pitfalls.

The sections of the text allied to theory are marked with a blue frame, while references to TransTourism are highlighted in yellow.

In addition to the paragraphs on the value of collaboration and the necessity of a common perspective on the problem, there is one section that uses visitor surveys as an example of one way to find out about customer preferences and another that highlights the issue of ecological sustainability, particularly the impact of travel and transport on carbon emissions.

This guide is intended to provide support when considering the shape a destination development project, and can hopefully contribute to ensuring that critical consideration and fundamental work takes place and that valuable information and assumptions are captured, and also to unnecessary pitfalls being avoided. The advice also stresses the importance of customer surveys as a way of discovering what is important for those who will use the services being developed and also of dealing with the increasingly emphasized issue of the carbon footprint of human activities.

## FACTS ABOUT TRANSTOURISM

TRANS  TOURISM

This guide has been produced by the project TransTourism as part of the European Commission's Northern Periphery Programme (NPP). TransTourism focuses on tourism and destination development in sparsely-populated areas.

The TransTourism partnership develops and implements solutions for transport services that are adapted to rural tourism areas in the Northern Periphery. Tourism is important to the economic and social sustainability of many communities in the Northern Periphery area. The services developed as part of this project will facilitate the development of tourism in the

project area whilst reducing carbon emission and local congestion from private cars in the peak season. This will also serve as an example for the rest of the programme area. The project aims to demonstrate innovative, sustainable transport and transport information services that are environmentally beneficial and economically viable for rural tourism areas.

The new services will improve accessibility by public transport and encourage a reduction in dependency on cars for tourism activities in the project areas, leading to long-term economic and environmental benefits.

[www.transtourism.eu](http://www.transtourism.eu)

## A. INITIATION

---

There are plenty of things to think about when you initiating a development project. In the following section you will find some advice that is worth considering. It refers to the process caused by human interaction in more detail and relates this to theoretical concepts. When planning a project involving a product or service, it is useful to first study the demand and requirements for it.

### WHAT DO CUSTOMERS WANT?

An important starting point is to determine current and future customer preferences. By asking visitors, for example, using basic or more comprehensive surveys, you'll find out what they appreciate and are looking for during their stay.

### RISING AWARENESS

Prior to starting work and in the initial phase try to "analyze" what issues are of importance to get more information and arriving at some conclusions. What prevailing frameworks and prerequisites actually exist? How is the transportation system designed and run? What

obstacles can you identify? What kind of new services are relevant to people's behavior and local circumstances?

Of course, you don't have to gather all this information yourself, instead consider who may be able to contribute the knowledge you require.

You have to consider how your idea can be made enduring/sustainable and how to capture the interest and involvement of others in order to receive funding, the appropriate mandate and sufficient support.

For example, it may be useful to set up an overview of the transport system or to monitor the potential for services due to network coverage provided.

#### CHECKBOX

- What do customers want?
- What information do I require?
- What frameworks do I have to consider?
- How can I make my ideas interesting?

As an appendix you will find a description on Icelandic road and transport infrastructure and policy-making, produced by the Icelandic partner in TransTourism to illustrate the type of contextual analysis that it is good to conduct at the start of a development initiative.

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

The main reason for initiating a business development project is a desire for further or future economic benefit. At any rate, a business won't be last long if it cannot pay its way.

An entrepreneur improves their business to make it more competitive compared to other similar enterprises.

Nowadays, it is very likely that a business also has to be environmentally sustainable to be successful.

Thus, in a development that leads towards more sustainable tourism and travel with environmental benefits (less car travel, reduced emissions), there is the potential for:

- economic benefits – the new product or service could make it possible for certain people to travel to a destination who could not have done so previously (particularly those without access to a car or who prefer to travel by public transport), or improved information about transport options could encourage increased travel to a destination. These additional visitors will spend money on both the transport services and in the local economy (accommodation, restaurants, attractions etc.).
- social benefits – new transport services/information could also make it easier for local residents to travel.



## B. IMPLEMENTATION

---

### WHY COLLABORATE?

Involving a wide range of actors/stakeholders is fundamental to achieving a well-functioning collaborative process, as well as to ensuring that those who need to be involved are.

Favourable conditions are created for agreeing on which priorities and decisions are necessary in order to “get things done” through the establishment of a common understanding of the issues.

For your business to be successful, you may have to fight to engage those policymakers who are important to achieving your goal.

Collaborating with the right actors, increases with the likelihood that your plans will succeed and that you will end up with a better final result. There are several reasons for this, such as:

- access to a greater “knowledge bank” and a broader toolbox of skills and networks,
- new ideas may be formed when knowledge and perspectives are shared,
- resource efficiency, coordination of resources,
- shared responsibility and commitment to joint action,
- the possibility of identifying problems and opportunities and thereby the actions and activities required at an early stage, which in turn decreases the risk of obstacles occurring at later stages – i.e. increasing the chance of doing the right things from the start,
- inclusion of several interests and needs,
- legitimacy: by being involved and gaining an understanding of why choices are made (for example, an understanding of why “good enough” may be necessary), the acceptance of key actors, including local actors, may be gained, which decreases the risk of obstacles occurring at later stages,
- learning – new perspectives, new knowledge etc., but also an opportunity to learn from others’ experiences (“don’t try to reinvent the wheel”),
- fostering networks and improved relationships.

As an appendix you will find a detail of a mind-set that will help you to engage stakeholders in a development project.

The example is from the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. It may serve as an example indicating the benefits of a well-conducted stakeholder analysis.

# THE THEORY STATES: CO-WORK, COORDINATE, COLLABORATE

Working together – co-working – is something that we do in more or less explicit and formal ways. However, when referring to collaboration in this guide, this indicates that a group of actors/ stakeholders/people are actively working together to achieve a common goal.

In other words, collaboration aims to gather the collective “power of action”. In an effective collaborative process, the stakeholders share a common understanding of what problems are to be dealt with, find common goals and together contribute to fulfilling these goals – to getting things done. Collaboration can thereby be seen as an act of “making sense together” (Forrester, 1989).

A term that is closely related to collaboration is coordination. Coordination refers to the adjustment of resources, efforts, policies etc. to make them compatible and mutually enforcing. For example, this may involve the coordination of actors so that they work towards a certain goal

or the coordination of actions and activities so that they take place in the right context, at the right time, and in the right order. This means that effective collaboration requires coordination.

## **1+1=3**

A collaborative process is a mutual learning process. This means that actors – through interaction with each other – get to see each other’s views of problems and of solutions. Consequently, they may better understand each other’s positions, and why choices are made.

Furthermore, by working together, better ideas may be generated. One reason for this is that together the group possesses more information than each party does individually.

Certain parties may also possess information about things that may be relevant to the final outcome – both opportunities and challenges – which means that their involvement is

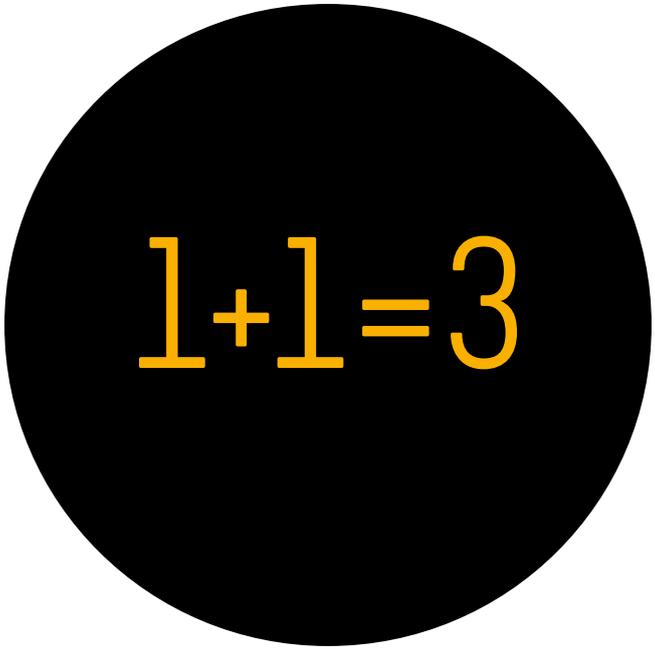


significant to the process. This means that collaboration can lead to win-win solutions being identified and taken advantage of. It also means that unnecessary pitfalls may be avoided by obstacles and any actions necessary to avoid them being identified at an early stage. All in all, collaboration increases the likelihood of doing the right things right from the start.

Besides this, new ideas may be generated when knowledge and perspectives are shared – i.e.

we may come to think of things that we would otherwise not have thought of and come up with new ideas when we hear something that someone else says.

Furthermore, collaboration in one project can lead to both new knowledge and improved relationships, which may then be utilized in new projects and contexts. In other words, collaboration in connection to a specific project can have long-term effects.


$$1+1=3$$

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM TRANSTOURISM

# Development of the interactive online journey planner in Scotland: Journey Genie.

*Purpose: journeygenie.co.uk provides an interface between public transport information and visitor information, enabling the user to create, share and edit itineraries or follow suggested tours. This is designed to maximise use of existing public transport in rural areas, encourage the development of new ticketing products and secure services for local residents.*

[www.journeygenie.co.uk/home.php](http://www.journeygenie.co.uk/home.php)



This picture symbolizes the importance of involving different actors with different responsibilities, expertise and knowledge at an early stage. Together they managed to develop a functional and useful solution from a basic idea. In this work they involved the organizations that have input data about tourism destinations, accommodation and public transport and actors who are involved in web development, media, public relations and social media. The organizations who should be using the product where thus involved in its development.

**Reflection:** When starting a new project it is important to conduct an analysis of the market and to find the relevant actors and invite them to become involved from the start. It is also important that the lead public agencies, who are the funders, retain a tight control over the project's direction and output in order to ensure that it is delivered on budget and that there is transparency of purpose and responsibilities, while also satisfying procurement audit requirements.

## HOW TO ENGAGE IN A PROCESS

Whether these “others” are in fact interested in participating depends, to a large extent, on whether they can see the benefits of doing so. Different actors have their own reasons for engaging in a project: entrepreneurs and market-oriented actors because of personal interest and potential profit and public authorities because of their commission, political will and agreements and current economic circumstances. There is a need to involve policymakers, the actors required and concerned stakeholders.

To pursue your project, it is essential to be clear about what it is you want to achieve – that you have a clear image of the goal. Nonetheless, it is also important to understand that others may want to revise this goal. It is also necessary to understand that there may be several ways to achieve this goal, which in turn requires a bit of flexibility.

Even if not held in formal meeting rooms and with a formal dress code, any process includes “negotiation” to some degree. A well-functioning collaborative process means working in confidence – that one’s opinion is considered sincere and important to the matter at hand, but also that there is a concerted effort to achieve “consensus”. This provides a good foundation for further cooperation.

However, fostering good collaboration also requires that you pay attention to the potential obstacles to collaboration, and to find incentives to overcome them. Examples of such obstacles are:

- a sectoral mentality amongst public sector actors, i.e. that strong units operate through focusing solely on “their” issues,
- a lack of incentives for and interest amongst private sector actors to look beyond their own interests,
- contradictory rules and norms that cause conflicts when there are several ways they can be interpreted,
- unclear role divisions and lack of clarity about who should be doing what,
- a lack of clarity about who is responsible for the final result of the process,
- different premises and pre understanding – “mental images” and perspectives,
- different interests and priorities,
- not seeing the benefits to themselves of collaborating/participating,
- resource, time or other constraints,
- asymmetrical power relationships.

### CHECKBOX

- Find necessary and relevant actors
- Learn from each other
  - Bouncing ideas
  - Share individual perspectives
- Find strategic focus – create shared images of desired goals, i.e target images
- Ensure legitimacy amongst the actors involved
- Find win-win situations
  - Overcome unequal power relations
  - Find consensus – what it is possible for “you” to accept that also benefits others
- Use the power of, and do not fear, negotiations
- Act honestly in negotiations

# THE THEORY STATES: TOWARDS WELL-FUNCTIONING COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES

To pursue a project from vision to execution, collaborative processes are needed that can counteract potential locking, or compromises must be made that no one is in fact happy with. This may require new ways of meeting, new ways of interacting, new ways of agreeing and new ways of thinking.

## Work to reach “consensus”

The term consensus is often referred to in collaborative processes. In everyday speech, consensus usually means agreement or common understanding. However, in theory, the term consensus commonly refers to an agreement that is reached through interaction and dialogue between actors.

By “bouncing” ideas and arguments between each other, the best ideas and solutions are generated as the best argument “wins”. The agreement reached may be about actual solutions to a problem, but it may also concern the values underlying the preferred actions (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2006).

The theoretical idea of how to reach consensus takes inspiration from Habermas’ “ideal speech situation”. Such a dialogue is characterised by being:

- *comprehensible (intelligible), i.e. that “B” can actually understand what “A” says,*
- *factually true, i.e. that what “A” says is actually true,*
- *sincere, i.e. that “A” does not try to deceive “B”,*
- *legitimate within the given context; i.e. what “A” says is relevant within the given context, but also that “A” is a legitimate actor to say what she says (Taylor, 1998).*

Such an ideal dialogue is, of course, a theoretical utopia, not least because it is based on the assumption that both parties are equal in terms of power, in terms of position and in terms of knowledge, commission and pre conditions. However, in most development cases, the power relationships are not equal; official agencies have power to say “yes” or “no”, financial power differs between those actors that have the means to “get things

IN MOST DEVELOPMENT CASES, THE  
POWER RELATIONSHIPS ARE  
NOT EQUAL.



# THE MENTAL IMAGES MUST BE RELIABLE



done” and those who do not, some possess crucial information that others lack etc.

Further, most often, neither of the four characteristics of the ‘ideal speech situation’ apply completely. There may be neither sufficient time nor interest to assure that parties completely understand each other; actors often have some form of agenda; and actors may not really have the mandate to say and do the things they are doing.

Nonetheless, the benefit of this theoretical ideal of how to reach consensus is to encourage “respectful ‘speaking and listening’” and “processes of ‘mutual learning’” (Healey, 1997: 266). Consensus would thereby mean that the involved actors have together created a solution and agreed that it is the best. This, in turn, means that it also has a better chance of actually being implemented.

### **Find a strategic focus**

The basis for a more constructive collaborative process lies in the ideas behind consensus described above, i.e. open processes characterized by respectful speaking and listening, and by mutual learning. Additionally, by ensuring that there is a strategic focus that can form the basis for this collaboration, the prospect that it actu-

ally leads to “getting things done” increases.

It is not possible to do “everything” and, without a focus on selected strategic issues at stake, there is a great risk of resources being distributed without a desired impact, and the necessary mobilization of actors will be difficult to achieve.

One way to ensure a strategic focus is by constructing a shared common target, something which makes it easier for the actors to work towards the same goal. Therefore, collaborative processes need to establish shared “mental images” of the existing conditions and of the way forward that ask: where are we now, what are the opportunities and threats, and where should we be heading?

However, agreeing on target images that are merely rhetorical is not sufficient. Rather, shared processes must ensure that these mental images gain legitimacy amongst the actors, which means that the actors really believe that these are the right things to do. Furthermore, the mental images must be reliable so that actors venture to make decisions and take action without the risk that the “rules of the game” change later on. And, although actors may indeed have a pre-set goal (intended outcome) when entering the process, the fact that

several actors are working together necessitates an attentiveness to the fact that the goal may change along the way.

The reasoning above indicates that “getting things done” requires first of all that actors/ stakeholders are identified and that a contact is established. Involving a wide range of actors/ stakeholders is fundamental to achieving a well-functioning collaborative process, but so is ensuring that the “right” actors are in fact involved. For instance, it is important to involve actors with the power and mandate to act and make legitimate decisions. Furthermore, reaching an agreement or consensus involves engaging in a process of negotiation.

### **Engage in negotiations**

Negotiation is when two or more parties try to solve a conflict of interest together. This means that we actually engage in negotiations concerning many things in our daily life, without reflecting on the fact that we are negotiating.

For example, the decision about where to go to lunch with colleagues is often preceded by some form of negotiation. In this guide, negotiation should be interpreted not only in the sense that parties sit by the same table with the intention of negotiating about a certain matter, but also as an ongoing element of any collaborative process.

The key to a fruitful negotiations in connection with a development project is to be *prepared*; for example, by considering the following:

- the issues at stake must be identified and subsequently prioritized – what is most important, what is less important etc.,
- the “reservation price” (i.e. the limit for what you may agree to while still being content) must be decided upon,
- the parties must be identified. Furthermore, their perspectives and interests must be identified, as should their goals and priorities (what is most important to them? What are they willing to let go?) It is also important to understand their mandate – what are they in fact able to decide and promise?

Being prepared is not only beneficial to the process, but also to your own accomplishments. It is advantageous to have thought in advance of several possible ways to act, depending on the potential actions of the other parties involved.

It is also important to consider power relationships. Who sets the agenda? Who influences what? What is it possible for me to influence? What do I influence by being the actor that I am?

In order for the negotiation to form the basis for future good relationships, one key is to try to create a constructive atmosphere. Furthermore, it is necessary to try to generate win-win situations, especially in order to foster long-term relationships. When leaving the negotiation, each party must be able to feel that, although they may not have gained everything they hoped for, they have indeed gained something of value to them.

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM TRANSTOURISM

# NORTHERN IRISH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

*The University of Ulster provides an example of how to engage key actors in collaborative projects. The following section gives several illustrations of strategic selections for stakeholder engagement.*

The University of Ulster has identified and engaged with various relevant stakeholders from the private and public sector to raise awareness of the TransTourism project in Northern Ireland. For the purposes of sharing information, the Business Advisory Group has been established to facilitate stakeholder engagement.

These stakeholders were identified and sourced using the excellent public and private sector contacts of the Ulster Business School's Academic Enterprise Coordinator who is also part of the University of Ulster TransTourism project team.

Paying specific attention to the North Coast area of Northern Ireland, we have been able

to share our experiences of, and ideas for, the formulation of more flexible and sustainable solutions to the problem of rural tourism transport provision. In terms of Business Advisory Group representation, the University of Ulster targeted those organisations actively involved in, for example, the tourism industry, passenger transport industry and local authorities.

The University met with several of these organisations individually to outline the purpose of project and highlight its relevance, with the aim of encouraging the acceptance of the project image. Private sector representation includes a range of business related to travel and tourism. From the public sector, Limavady, Coleraine, and Moyle Councils were represented.



Business Advisory Group engagement has taken the form of regular round table discussions held at the University of Ulster, with the central focus being to allow stakeholders to inform the project, to act as a forum for sharing and discussing ideas and to develop solutions to challenges facing the tourism and transport industries.

Discussions at these events are mainly centred on:

- existing problems with regional transportation,
- integration of transportation with tourism destinations,
- progress of the TransTourism project,
- existing issues for regional stakeholders in the sector,
- potential issues for regional stakeholders in the sector and
- potential solutions to regional stakeholder issues.

As the project has progressed, the University of Ulster has also engaged with some of the Business Advisory Group members on an individual level. For example, through the Business Advisory Group, we have been able to enter into discussions with the National Trust to gain ac-

cess to the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre for the purposes of conducting a transport related survey with visitors.

The Giant's Causeway was chosen as the pilot site for the University of Ulster's activities due to its prominent status as a UNESCO world heritage site. Initial meetings took place with the visitor centre manager at a time and location of his choosing. He recognised the opportunity presented and the value of impartial research into visitor behaviour, and gave his consent for the survey to be conducted there. This led to a good level of engagement with visitors and enabled their perceptions of transport provision to the area to be gathered.

Given Translink's monopoly of Northern Ireland's public transport, it has been essential to continually engage with them and portray the TransTourism project image to them. Translink is an associate partner in the TransTourism project and has not become part of the Business Advisory Group, but the University of Ulster has represented the TransTourism project at a number of consultation events organised by Translink.



In general, our engagement with Translink has been useful in the information dissemination process and we have been able to encourage Translink to participate in a regional conference being organised by the University of Ulster in Londonderry.

In order to raise awareness and disseminate the work of TransTourism and to influence policy in the area, the University of Ulster has organised their regional conference with various speakers from public and private sector organisations, as well as project partners. Some of the organisations/topics include:

- **SEUPB** (Special EU Programmes Body) will outline and discuss the NPP programme
- **the Department for Regional Development** will discuss transport policy, strategy and legislation
- **the Federation of Passenger Transport** will suggest changes to encourage competition between private operators and Translink
- **the Northern Ireland Tourist Board** will focus on their research into valuing the tourist and will highlight a call for changes

to transport that the tourism industry feels are necessary to realise its potential and

- **Mangan Tours** will provide a private sector perspective on transport provision in rural tourism areas of Northern Ireland.

Invitations have been sent to a range of people that have been identified through the business networks of the Ulster Business School and press releases in the local areas.

In summary, the University of Ulster is very satisfied that they have been able to engage various actors that have a vested interest in the remit of the TransTourism Project. The level of project dissemination, the sharing of ideas and the potential solutions for transport provision in Northern Ireland have proved very constructive.

This example illustrates a very conscious and strategic selection of those stakeholders with both the mandate to act and to make decisions in a way that facilitates future implementation efforts, and to ensure the dissemination of information.

## THE STRATEGIC COLLABORATION PROCESS

The chances of a collaborative process leading to mutual learning and consensus depend greatly on the conditions for dialogue and interaction. When initiating or engaging in a strategic collaboration process in which actors involved in (needed for) development work together towards a shared goal, it is important to pay attention to certain aspects such as:

### 1. Understand the context:

- What are the strategic issues that need to be dealt with?
- Which informal processes must be engaged in?
- What formal processes must be engaged in?
- Is there any particular legal framework that needs to be considered?
- Are there any local plans, policies, strategies or goals that should be considered (as they could favour the project or hinder it)?
- Which related processes are already ongoing and likely to influence what certain actors may perceive as important and relevant at this moment in time?

### 2. Identify the actors:

- Which actors/stakeholders/organisations should be involved?  
Why should they be involved? For example, who is concerned?  
Who has the mandate to take decisions on the questions?  
Who might hinder the project? Who possesses important information?  
Who has the resources to implement?
- How is the local authority organised? Which department(s) might it be relevant/necessary to contact?  
Are there any authorities at regional or national level that need to be involved?  
Any policymakers?
- What are the interests and needs of each actor? What might motivate their involvement?  
To help move the project forward? To obstruct it?

WHICH ACTORS  
SHOULD BE INVOLVED?



### 3. Construct the dialogue/collaboration:

- Create a contact.
- Clarify why actors are involved (be open).
- Specify objectives – what is the intention of the development project?
- Consider what arenas are relevant and suitable for collaboration.
- Consider which methods may be useful for dialogue and collaboration.
- Identify potential obstacles to collaboration.
- Reflect upon what it is actually possible to influence.
- Define the resources necessary in order to run a collaborative process.
- Define the resources necessary to implement the project.
- Start off from, and maintain, a high degree of relevance for the participants and a focus on their interests and reasons for involvement.

### 4. Embrace the process

- Start with a broad perspective, with wide participation.
  - Form a joint mental map on the problem and a joint target.
- Focus the target gradually.
  - Form strategies.
- Legitimize it with formal decisions.
- Accept that the process will zoom back and forth, to ensure legitimacy and accept that revisions may have to be made.

## EXAMPLES OF STAKEHOLDERS

- Municipalities – civil servants at different administrations, politicians (i.e. decision-makers, policymakers)
- County administrative boards, regional authorities (civil servants, policymakers)
- State authorities (civil servants, policymakers)
- Shopkeepers
- Citizens
- Formal and informal coordinators
- Actors for technical supply, e.g. mobile operators
- Actors with the knowledge required to understand how to push the project forward (for example, regarding legislation)
- The local business community
- Real estate developers

**Consider what is in fact possible to influence.**

# THE THEORY STATES: A MODEL FOR STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

## What is a "process"?

A "process" may be defined as a series of decisions, actions and activities. However, decisions need not necessarily be of a formal character, but may also be informal, and they may be official, or less so. And actions and activities may "just happen" without too much consideration. In other words, we may find ourselves being part of processes that are neither explicit nor obvious.

However, when referring to process in this guide, an active process is intended. Such an active process can be seen as a course of events leading in a certain direction – it is going somewhere. Decisions made and actions performed intend to lead to something.

A process is continuously ongoing and under development. It involves interaction between people or actors, or between a system and the context in which it exists. To understand a process thereby requires an understanding of complexity.

## Three process stages

Theoretically, three process phases can roughly be defined. These three phases differ in terms of the degree of tangibility of the collaborative work, discussions and activities. Furthermore, the "rules of the game" differ depending on

what stage the process is at. (Fredriksson, 2011, based on Healey, 1997; Bryson, 2004).

In the *open phase* – forum – discussions are rather loose. Here, the intention is to form a joint "mental map" of the conditions, the opportunities and threats, what the competition looks like etc. Furthermore, the intention is to form a shared idea of what it is that should be done.

In the *structured phase* – arena – the aim is to formulate strategies or plans. The purpose is to agree on how things should be done.

In the *formal phase* – court – the intention is to enable and facilitate the implementation of strategies or plans. This is done, for example, by tying them to formal decisions or declarations of intent that legitimize their role in guiding future actions or by connecting them to a budget that will free up the resources necessary for implementation.

These three phases of collaborative processes illustrate that development projects need to consider both informal and formal processes. And in order for collaboration to function well from target image to implementation, all phases need to be considered.

## FORUM: the open phase

### What should be done?

- Form mental image of conditions,
- Form target images;
- Identify who needs to be involved.

## ARENA: the structured phase

### What should be done?

- Form strategies and plans;
- Form target images;
- Form partnerships.

## COURT: the formal phase

### Enable the implementation of strategies.

- Formal decisions;
- Linking.

The open phase is important as this is where the framework for action are set, which means that it is important here to ensure that everyone involved shares the same image of what the conditions are like, what problems there are to be solved and, thereby, what it is that should be done. If this shared basis is lacking, there is the risk that the actors counteract each other when formulating and implementing strategies.

This also means that it is important that there is a link between what takes place in the different phases naturally, strategies formulated in the structured phase must correspond with what is agreed in the open phase, otherwise some actors may subsequently obstruct the project, as they feel that what is being done is not in accordance with what was previously decided. Furthermore, the importance of the formal phase is that this is where strategies and collaborative work are formalized and also where they are linked to implementation. Without this phase there is the risk that good ideas remain nothing more than ideas. It should be noted that development processes are “messy” (Hillier, 2008), which means that the open phase, the structured phase and the formal phase do not necessarily take place in that order, but may require zooming back and forth.

The formal phase of one discussion may, for instance, be an element in the open or structured phase of another discussion and vice versa. The further investigation of a certain issue may require a formal decision, while certain formal decisions take place because they are framed by wider discussions in related matters etc. This favours an iterative approach – “muddling through” – of heading in a certain direction, while still having the opportunity to adapt to what happens along the way.

The intention of separating the three phases is to illustrate that the degree of tangibility of the collaborative work differs between the phases, which means that what the parties do in different phases differs.

This also means that, in order for collaboration to be efficient, the parties must have a shared image of what stage the discussion is at – is it about setting the frameworks for action – “what needs to be done?”, or are these already formed and the intention is to formulate strategies in accordance with the target image – “how should it be done?” – and does everyone involved share the same image of who is responsible for doing what, and of what it is expected to result in?

## FINDING A WAY FORWARD



## FORUM: THE OPEN PHASE

In the open phase, discussions are rather loose and the collaborative work has an open character. Here, the intention is to form a shared “mental map” of the conditions, the opportunities and threats, what the competition looks like etc. One tool for performing such a contextual analysis is SWOT – i.e. identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a structured order.

Based on this contextual analysis, the intention is to form a shared idea of what should actually be done. In the open phase, this is not about details, rather about finding a direction forward. There is thus the flexibility to deal with what happens along the way, and it is possible to adapt to new information.

It is important to understand that a contextual analysis is not merely a task involving the objective analysis of the context. As described

previously, the actors concerned must agree to this being the right mental image. The image must make sense to those involved. This means that it is important in the open stage not only to identify relevant actors, but also to engage in negotiations in which a great deal of persuasion may be necessary in order for the actors to work together to implement the way forward.

Although it is important to consider this phase as it is here that the framework for action are set, it may very well be that when a project is initiated, this phase has already taken place. Given that the project is in line with this mental image, the work involves engaging in the structured phase and the formal phase. Nonetheless, what is important is to ensure that all those concerned share a mental image of the issues at stake, as that constitutes the basis for efficient implementation of the strategies.

## CONSIDERATIONS IN THE OPEN PHASE

### Identify and gather concerned actors

- Which actors are concerned/need to be involved? Why is it important that they be involved? At this stage it is important to identify those key actors required for implementation; not only those with the resources, those with the mandate and those that may help move the project forward, but also those that may hinder it. It is also important to strive towards a good dialogue in order to gain local acceptance.
- Clarify the role and mandate of each of those involved.
- Clarify the purpose of the project and reason for collaboration.
- Find suitable forums and methods for involvement, with regards to the aim of the project/ collaboration.

### Construct the mental image (a negotiation process). What is the context?

- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats? Make a diagnosis of the situation.
- What is it that we need to do – i.e. what is the problem? Specify objectives. What is it possible to do? Select common issues to deal with.
- Does the mental image of the context correspond with the chosen way forward? Does the mental image of the problem or of the target need to be adjusted, supplemented or specified?

THE AIM: FORM A MENTAL MAP

## ARENA: THE STRUCTURED PHASE

In the *structured phase*, the aim is to formulate strategies or plans. Rather than what should be done, the focus is now on *how* it should be done.

This means that the task of the collaborative work in this phase is to form strategies and plans that could lead to the target image being

implemented, thereby dealing with the problems identified in the open phase.

The collaborative work in the structured phase is strategic, tapered to those needed to get things done, intending to form partnerships with them.

## CONSIDERATIONS IN THE STRUCTURED PHASE

### Form partnerships

- Form partnerships with those actors/stakeholders that may ensure the implementation of the project; not just those with the resources, those with the mandate and those that may help the project forward, but also those that may hinder it.
- Clarify the role and mandate of those involved. Find suitable forums and methods for their involvement that take into account the aim of the project/collaboration.

### Select common issues to deal with and form strategies (a negotiation process)

- How can we achieve the target image (or solve the problem) identified in the open phase? Develop alternative strategies – is there more than one possible solution? Which are most relevant? What is it reasonable to do? What is it possible to do? (for example, taking resources, costs and other constraints into consideration)
- What are the consequences/outcomes/impacts of different strategies?
- Choose a strategy/action. What is in the best interest of those concerned?
- Which tasks/activities should be performed? Who should do them? And in what order?

THE AIM: FORMULATE STRATEGIES OR PLANS

## COURT: THE FORMAL PHASE

In the **formal phase**, the intention is to enable and facilitate the implementation of strategies or plans. This is done, for example, by tying them to formal decisions or declarations of intent – i.e. formalized agreements on what to be done. Such formal decisions legitimize the role of strategies or plans in guiding future action.

This means that certain formal decisions may be necessary in order to enable the process or to take it one step further. The intention is also to link the strategies to implementation mechanisms such as connecting a strategy to a budget that will free up the necessary resources for its implementation.

## CONSIDERATIONS IN THE FORMAL PHASE

---

### Formal decisions

- What decisions are necessary within the legal framework?
- Which political decisions must be taken? Other decisions?
- Can/should a declaration of intent be made?  
For example, could such a document put pressure on actors to actually do what has been agreed upon?

### Linking

- How can the necessary solutions be funded?
- Are there any opportunities for co-financing?

LINK THE STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

## IDENTIFY WHAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO INFLUENCE

– distinguish between issues of a formal or informal, situational or structural character

The issues to consider when initiating or entering a collaborative process (see previous list) may be structured according to their degree of formality and the degree to which they are specific to a particular situation or have more structural characteristics, external to the process as such. By distinguishing the issues along these two dimensions, a two-by-two matrix is produced, summarizing different kinds of questions that capture key considerations.

The upper left quadrant points to the formal characteristics of the planning situation in its local context. Without knowing who is responsible for what, or which local plans apply to the areas of interest, it will not be possible to move the project forward in practice. At the same time, a range of constraints at levels above the actual planning situation, for example, the legal framework and administrative requirements “from above”, have significant influence on the project itself, as pointed out in the lower left quadrant. However, such formal issues only give

a limited picture of the conditions for collaborative processes.

As indicated in the upper right quadrant, the conditions for collaboration are greatly dependent on the motivation of the individual actors. The perception of relevance to one’s own interests is a crucial prerequisite for this motivation. Similarly, an understanding of potential reasons for someone to avoid participating or even to obstruct the process can be of great importance to the possibility of pursuing a collaborative process and to its outcomes. Motivation can be partly explained by formal issues in the left half of the table, but individual behavior can often only be understood in the context of traditions, norms and other implicit “rules of behaviour”.

Consequently, the management of collaborative processes can be significantly enhanced with the lower right quadrant in mind.

	FORMAL	INFORMAL
SITUATIONAL	<p><b><i>The status of the local planning context:</i></b> Which existing plans, policies, strategies, goals etc. is the process directly related to?</p>	<p><b><i>The interests of actors related to the process:</i></b> What do they perceive as relevant and what might motivate them to become involved in or to obstruct the process?</p>
STRUCTURAL	<p><b><i>The institutional setting:</i></b> Which legal requirements, higher-level policies and guidelines constitute the formally mandated framework for the process?</p>	<p><b><i>Rules based on implicit understandings:</i></b> Which norms, routines, traditions and codes of conduct are predominant in the context in which the process takes place?</p>

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM TRANSTOURISM

# DESTINATION FUNÄSFJÄLLEN

*An illustration of how collaborative projects often require a continuous process of zooming back and forth through the forum-arena-court phases discussed here is the example of Destination Funäsfjällen.*

Simultaneously with the initial idea of a transnational transportation and tourism project, the board of Destination Funäsfjällen had a strategy of promoting the destination as an environmentally sustainable destination and made an application to purchasing vehicles for transfers which were the most environmentally friendly on the market.

During the first ten years of the 21st century, environmentally friendly alternatives had entered the market and prices had fallen, there was a shortage of vehicles in the skiing area during the peak season and the intention was that a greater number of vehicles and running them on-demand could be a solution.

The decision to enter the announced NPP project TransTourism was presented by the chairman and approved by the board. The board is mouthpiece for the more than 160 small enterprises in the skiing area, which has approximately 2000 inhabitants. The board also includes a representative from Härjedalen Municipality.

Initially, the plan was to build a communication system with modules (transponders) at the stops to which busses could be summoned from the regular bus schedule. However, in recent years a lot had happened in the market and in the destination itself, therefore the board was required to reconsider the issue.

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY  
WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN  
PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY



Technological development resulted in new ways to browse for information. Smartphones were entering the market and became the main device for information retrieval, with the market share of laptops and tablets exceeding that of desktops. More and more people increasingly used mobile broadband as the technology made this possible and convenient. Surveys in 2010 estimated that by 2013, 89 out of 100 mobile phones be classified as "smartphones". Today, almost all new phones sold in Sweden are able connect to the internet. In the destination of Funäsdalen, about 70% of the area is 3G compatible.

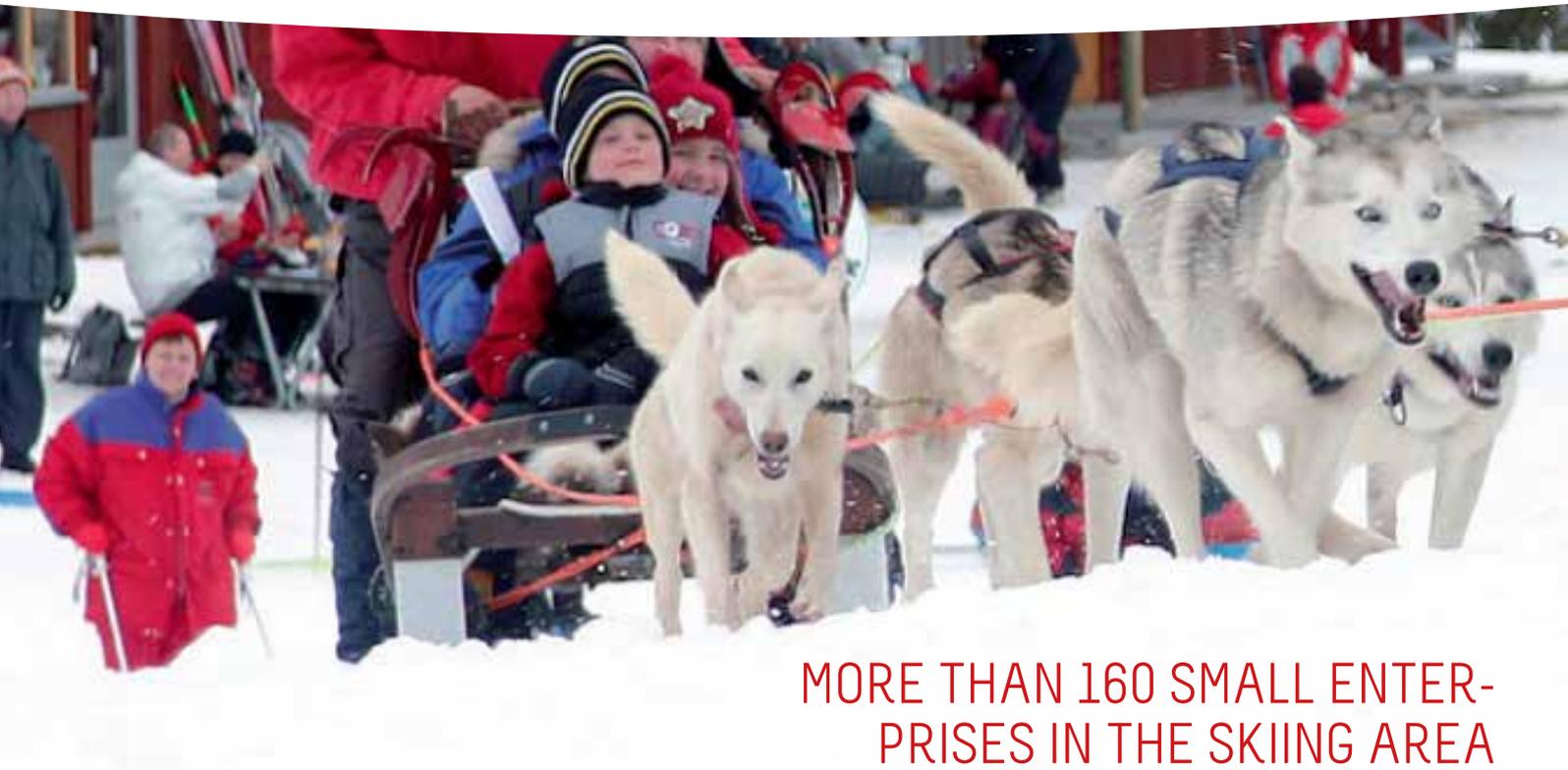
The guests' expectations and requirements on availability of information gradually increased. Visitors required more information digitally and in real-time, which went hand-in-hand with the development in many sectors. The number of websites adapted for mobiles and different types of applications exploded. Digital accessibility was more important than physical accessibility both prior to, during and after the visit.

At the same time, new public transport lines were started and their number increased from

three to five per day, within a year and a night train connection to Sveg (the main town in the municipality) was offered. These alterations changed the pattern of travel in the area and also the need for collaboration as the significance of the transfer facilities from Sveg increased.

The new conditions led to discussions in the destination board and steering committee, about whether the agreed plan was optimal. They decided that the original proposed solution, involving physical modules at the bus stops and on-demand services, was no longer required. It was considered more important to develop an easy accessible digital information system instead.

Within the same budget and the same time frame it was possible to change the products and services offered in the project. Instead of an inflexible system with physical units and an expensive on-demand service, it was possible to improve the supply of information, become more flexible to deal with future changes and reduce the operational and maintenance costs. This would also release some funds for the further develop of additional products and services.



**MORE THAN 160 SMALL ENTERPRISES IN THE SKIING AREA**

## C. MONITORING OUTCOME

---

Stakeholders, funders and others engaged in a project require some benefits or outcomes from a project.

It may be necessary to conduct some surveys in order to set goals, identify needs and expected benefits and also to evaluate the outcome of a development project.

When the product or service is ready and implemented, it is important to follow-up the results. An evaluation of the results compared to goals set up in advance. Has the project led to the expected outcome?

It is advantageous if you can compare the situation "pre" and "post" the developed or improved service's implementation. "Pre-measurements" have a great value when evaluating a transformation.

### ECONOMIC REVENUES, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL VALUES

An economic follow-up would preferably over-focus on the other economic outputs. For example, has the product or service resulted in increased revenue for public transport and local businesses, i.e. has more money been spent on both the transport services and in the local economy (accommodation, restaurants, attractions etc)? An evaluation can also contain an analysis of added value of relevance to public sector actors in addition to the tangible economic benefits, which are themselves often relevant to those same actors. Have new groups of visitors been attracted, have visitors altered their mode of transport?

Does the developed business also have an impact on the local community, such as better basic public transport or local services, a wider range of, or more attractive services, which would make young people more likely to stay and find a living in the area?

Have the improved services also enriched people's lives?

NO RESULT WITHOUT  
SATISFIED CUSTOMERS



## VISITOR/USER PREFERENCES AND SATISFACTION

It is useful to conduct user surveys in order to learn about what people think about a product or service. The survey can be a couple of extra questions in an existing customer or visitor survey or a special survey for a certain purpose. It can be in the form of an online survey, printed on paper or a verbal survey on site. However, it is important that user preferences are taken into consideration.

What is the impact of a new product or service on tourism travel behavior? Essentially, there are four potential answers to this question:

- a) The product/service was not used... so it has had no impact.
- b) Whilst the new product/service was used, it did not affect travel behavior – i.e. exactly same journey would have been made anyway. Although it may have improved the travel/ tourism experience.

- c) The product/service has influenced mode choice: without it the same journey would have been made by car rather than public transport. The impact is environmental – lower carbon emissions – and economic – supporting public transport services.
- d) The product/service has influenced the choice of destination: without it the journey to the specific destination would not have taken place – either the tourism journey would not have been made at all, or it would have been made to a different destination. The impact is economic – supporting tourism in the destination.

It is possible that both c and d could be valid simultaneously – i.e. product/service influenced both choice of mode and destination.

THINK GLOBAL  
AND ACT LOCAL



## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In the future, sustainable solutions with a minimal negative environmental impacts will also be of utmost importance and will probably have a competitive advantage.

The importance of monitoring carbon emissions are and will be great, both at a local and a global level. The expression “think glocal”, which means “think global and act local”, shows that the effects and problems of carbon emissions occur worldwide and often have a more dramatic effect in places other than those where the emissions occurred. Therefore, it is important to set targets, monitor and measure the emissions on all levels, from a project level to regions, nations and the whole world.

In 1992, countries signed up to an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to cooperatively consider what they could do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with whatever impacts were, by then, inevitable.

By 1995, countries realized that emission reductions provisions in the Convention were inadequate. They launched negotiations to strengthen the global response to climate change, and, two years later, adopted the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets. The Protocol's first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012. The second commitment period

began on 1 January 2013 and will end in 2020. From this framework of legislation to reduce total carbon emissions at international and global scales, it follows naturally that national, regional, trans-regional and local activities take place which work toward the goals of this legislation from a variety of perspectives.

Consequently, it should be noted that, in order for the larger international and global carbon reduction goals to be achieved, it is essential that carbon emissions are combated across all of these smaller scales.

Monitoring and measuring carbon emissions can be seen as the essential first step in achieving carbon reduction targets. Monitoring allows for a baseline to be established from which an understanding of the carbon emission profile of nations can be created. Then, from this understanding, activities and incentives can be devised to target various areas or sectors as desired.

A specific project can be seen as one of these activities – enacted with the aim of reducing carbon emissions at the local level and across regions. Therefore, for a project to assess its success – at these scales and as part of the larger global commitment – it should attempt to measure its effect on carbon emissions. Hence, an essential component of a project should be its attempt to measure (or predict) the overall effect of the technologies and services it has introduced (or intends to introduce) into the partner regions involved in the project.

## THE PROJECT'S IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS

As an appendix you will find a questionnaire used in the NPP project TransTourism to evaluate the impact on carbon emissions of the products and services offered through the project.

## D. FURTHER READING

---

### COLLABORATION AND JOINT DEVELOPMENT

#### About planning theory in general

Taylor, N. (1998) *Urban Planning Theory since 1945*. London: SAGE Publications.

#### About strategic planning

Bryson, J.M. (2004) *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations. A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement* (3rd ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fredriksson, C. (2011) *Planning in the 'New Reality' – Strategic Elements and Approaches in Swedish Municipalities*. Stockholm: KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

Healey, P. (2007) *Urban complexity and spatial strategies: Towards a relational planning for our times*. London: Routledge.

Hillier, J. (2008) "Plan(e) speaking: a multiplanar theory of spatial planning", in *Planning Theory*, Vol 7;24 2008 (pp.24-50). Sage Online Publications: <http://plt.sagepub.com>

Mintzberg, H. (1994) *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

#### About collaboration

Healey, P. (1997) *Collaborative planning. Shaping places in fragmented societies*. London: Macmillan Press LTD.

Engström, C.J. & Ingelstam, A. (2010) *Så får vi Den Goda Staden*. Final report.

Forrester, J. (1989) *Planning in the face of power*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Fredriksson, C. (2012) *System och strukturer som hindrar hållbar stadsutveckling – En kunskapsöversikt*. Stockholm: KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

Tornberg, P. (2011). *Making Sense of Integrated Planning. Challenges to Urban and Transport Planning Processes in Sweden*. Stockholm: KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

#### About consensus and the problems of consensus

Connelly, S. and Richardson, T. (2004): *Exclusion: The Necessary Difference between Ideal and Practical Consensus*. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 47(1): 3–17.

Dryzek, J. and Niemeyer, S. (2006). *Reconciling Pluralism and Consensus as Political Ideals*. *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 634–649.

Habermas, J. (1996) *Kommunikativt handlande: texter om språk, rationalitet och samhälle*. Göteborg: Daidalos.

Hillier, J. (2003) "Agonizing Over Consensus: Why Habermasian Ideals cannot be 'Real'". In *Planning Theory* 2: 37-59.

Innes, J. (2004). *Consensus building: clarification for critics*. *Planning Theory* 3: 5-20.

## IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS

European Environment Agency, (2013a). 'Annex 1\_12 EU-15 MS CRF tables and National inventory reports' [http://ftp.eea.europa.eu/www/GHG\\_NIR\\_2013/Annex\\_1\\_12\\_EU-15\\_MS\\_CRF\\_tables\\_and\\_National\\_inventory\\_reports.zip](http://ftp.eea.europa.eu/www/GHG_NIR_2013/Annex_1_12_EU-15_MS_CRF_tables_and_National_inventory_reports.zip) [online] Accessed: 14/10/2013

European Environment Agency, (2013b) 'Annex 2\_12 EU-27 MS CRF tables and National inventory reports' [http://ftp.eea.europa.eu/www/GHG\\_NIR\\_2013/Annex\\_2\\_12\\_EU\\_27\\_MS\\_CRF\\_tables\\_and\\_National\\_inventory\\_reports.zip](http://ftp.eea.europa.eu/www/GHG_NIR_2013/Annex_2_12_EU_27_MS_CRF_tables_and_National_inventory_reports.zip) [online] Accessed: 14/10/2013

IPCC, (2000). 'Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (SRES)' Nakicenovic, N., and Swart R (Eds.) Cambridge University Press, UK. pp 570.

IPCC, (2007). 'Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change' [Core Writing Team, Pachauri, R.K and Reisinger, A. (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 104 pp.

Stern, N., (2006). 'The Stern Review on the Economic Effects of Climate Change'. Population and Development Review, 32: 793–798. doi: 10.1111/j.1728-4457.2006.00153.x

TransTourism, (2011). 'TransTourism', <http://www.transtourism.eu/> [online] Accessed: 14/10/2013

United Nations Environment Programme, (2012). 'Handbook for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer' Ninth edition. Secretariat for the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer & the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

UNFCCC, Conference of the Parties (COP), (2009). 'Report of the Conference of the Parties on its fifteenth session, held in Copenhagen from 7 to 19 December 2009. Addendum. Part Two: Action taken by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session' United Nations Office at Geneva. FCCC/CP/2009/11/Add.1.

UNFCCC, (2013). 'National Inventory Submissions 2011' [http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/annex\\_i\\_ghg\\_inventories/national\\_inventories\\_submissions/items/5888.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/national_inventories_submissions/items/5888.php) [online] Accessed: 14/10/2013

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, (2013). 'Kyoto Protocol' [http://unfccc.int/kyoto\\_protocol/items/2830.php](http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php) [online] Accessed: 14/10/2013.

