

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

Topic: Measuring Success of Cooperative Conservation Efforts

Session number: 41

Facilitator: Robert Jones

Morning

Location: 242

A. Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.

Successful partnerships result from ensuring that local stakeholders are instrumental in defining the problems, creating a common vision, and achieving progress.

Measuring partnership success must be defined both in terms of quantitative (project actions/activities, outputs) and qualitative (such as collaborative processes, social capital gained through the partnership, etc).

There needs to be some flexibility in the process of defining success to allow for incorporating and accounting for unexpected successes or failures throughout the process.

For cooperative conservation to work, it needs to be a learning process, where partners are free to recognize failures and successes.

Promote an adaptive management approach to cooperative conservation and support the necessary monitoring to make this succeed.

Promote locally led, performance-based solutions that look at entire ecological functions.

B. National-level Practical Actions

Develop and disseminate consistent and uniform guidance through engaging partners at all levels for standards and practices in developing goals, monitoring progress, and reporting. In particular, best practices are needed for gathering and supporting the use of qualitative and quantitative measures of success.

Develop and promote the use of a uniform set of indicators to improve consistency, make monitoring/measuring easier, and better utilize trend data.

Promote a more open evaluation process to monitor for progress and adaptation when efforts are failing.

Communicate national goals so that local partnerships can link to those goals as appropriate. Local partnership should review the measures that already exist and determine whether those measures could apply to partnership objectives.

Establish consistent criteria for monitoring and measuring. Offer flexibility in national programs and grant making to allow local partnerships to achieve their goals.

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Develop and establish protocols for enhancing the capacity of citizen-science and fit that into the more formal scientific process.

The grant making processes should be more broadly framed to incorporate overhead and reporting needs, as well as offering and crediting partners for reporting qualitative and quantitative measures.

Seek broadened authority to use mitigation funding to advance cooperative conservation projects including support for monitoring and measuring success.

Simplify the grant making process within and across agencies.

C. Local-level Practical Actions

Initiate the collaborative process with defining the problem, setting a common vision, developing a common language and definitions, and focusing on priorities.

Monitoring and measuring success should be developed, agreed to, incorporated into the entire project, and understood by all partners.

Set clear standards for monitoring with built-in trigger points for projects and partnerships that enable change along the way.

Clarify expectations about the process (timelines, participation, different types of metrics, opportunities for revising measures, etc) at the outset.

Support opportunities to document partnership successes as well as failures to inform the changes necessary to succeed.

Involve as many local people as possible in setting goals and defining success.

Measure both the ecological outcomes, but also the social outcomes generated.

Initiate a dialogue between OMB and the local folks in what is being driven at a national level, outside local control.

Particularly insightful quotes from participants that capture the essence of key points made during the group's discussion.

Plan with people, not for people.

Collaborative processes call for moving from "me" to "we."

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