Conflicts and Collaboration in Planning
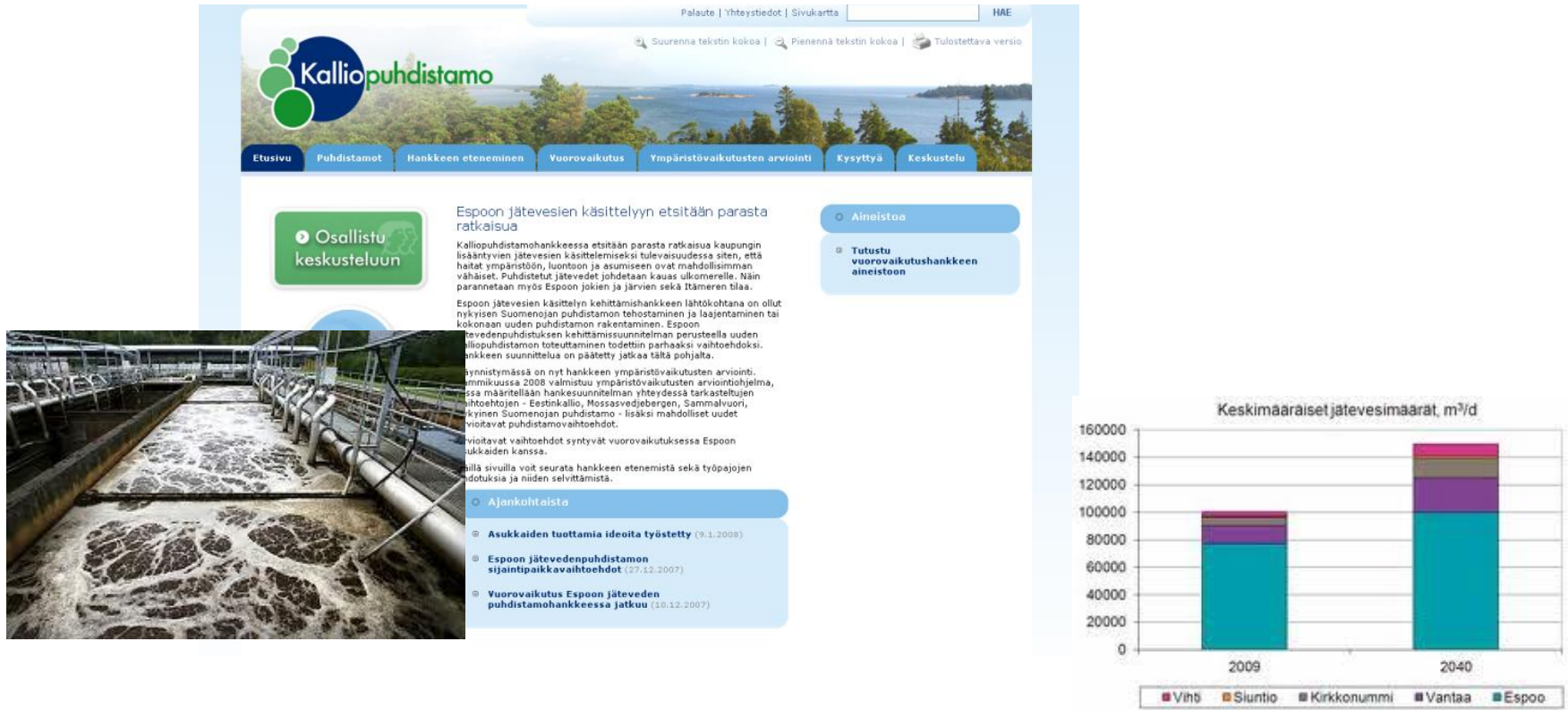
Participatory planning @ Aalto University

29 March 2021

Lasse Peltonen

University of Eastern Finland

Water treatment siting conflict in Espoo

Generic definition of conflict

- A situation in which actors use conflict behavior against each other to attain incompatible goals and/or to express their hostility

> Implication – parties have at least some influence over each other → interdependence

- Bartos, Otomar J & Wehr, Paul (2002) Using Conflict Theory. Cambridge University Press

Need to address multiple aspects of conflict – remember, conflicts are about people!
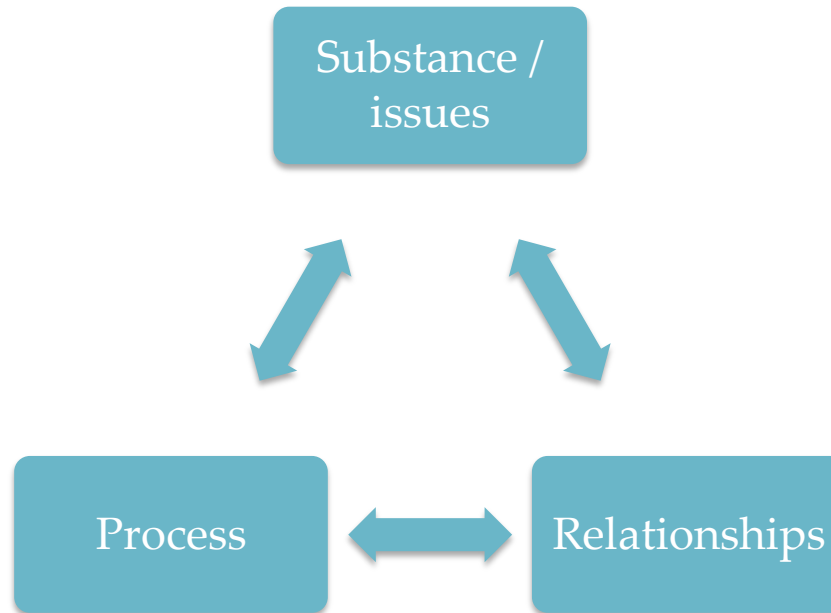
emotion

history

trust

knowledge

values

Interests, needs

Dimensions of problems / progress in environmental conflict resolution

Daniels, S. & Walker, G. (2001) Working Through Environmental Conflict: The Collaborative Learning Approach. Praeger.

1 – Conflict issues (substance)

- **Conflict Issues**: A conflict will normally develop around one or more issues emerging from or leading to a decision.

- Each issue can be viewed as a point of disagreement that needs to be addressed (or resolved)

Wehr, Paul (1979) Conflict Regulation. Westview Press, Boulder.

Conflict analysis: Micro and micro processes

Macro
- Societal dynamics
- Governance / decision-making

Micro
- Behavioral aspects
- Interaction

Environmental / land use / planning conflict

- Involve environmental / land use change
- Multiple parties
- Knowledge intensity
- Technical complexity
- Involve public interest issues
- Have implications for absent parties (future generations, other species)

Understanding conflict issues

- Issues can be identified and grouped:
  - *Facts-based*: disagreement over <u>what is </u>because of parties perceptions of what is
  - *Values-based*: disagreement over <u>what should be </u>as a determinant of a policy decision, a relationship or some other source of conflict
  - *Interests-based*: disagreement over <u>who will get what </u>in the
  - *Non-realistic*: originating elsewhere than disparate perceptions, interests, values. (e.g. Style of interaction or quality of communication, psycho-social issues, mental health)
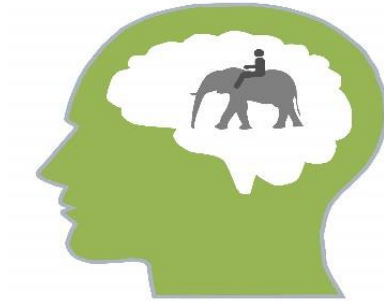
Wehr, Paul (1979) Conflict Regulation. Westview Press, Boulder.

Who are the stakeholders? What matters for *them*?

	H	Keep satisfied	Encourage and influence
P o w e r			
		Monitor	Keep informed
	L	**Interest**	H

2 - Relationships

The Elephant metaphor:
our brain is like a rider and an elephant

The rider is conscious, controlled thought.

The elephant, in contrast, is everything else; gut feelings, visceral reactions, emotions, and intuitions, related to core human concerns of safety, identity, autonomy, affiliation and status

Haidt, Jonathan. 2006. *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*. New York: Basic Books

What happens to our elephants in conflict?

- *"If you want to change people's minds, you've got to talk to their elephants."* — J. Haidt

# Relationships – the importance of face-to-face interaction

- The more people communicate the more they cooperate.
  - Repeated, over time
  - Opportunity to build a track record of trust
  - Consequences of non-cooperative behavior
  - Identify and explore mutual affiliations

- Face-to-Face; non-verbal communication crucial for building relationships - particularly around trust

Conflict transformation

"Rather than seeing peace as a static 'end-state', conflict transformation views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationship"

→ Change Goals: Personal, Relational, Structural and Cultural
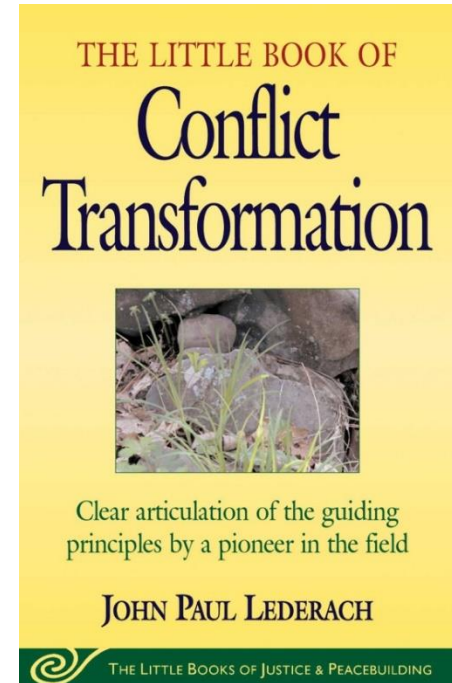
3 - Processes

Decide-Announce-Defend

Walker, P. (2009) Dinosaur DAD and Enlightened EDD – engaging people earlier is better. IEMA Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. <http://penny-walker.co.uk/media/2009/09/feb09_engage_deliberate_decide.pdf>
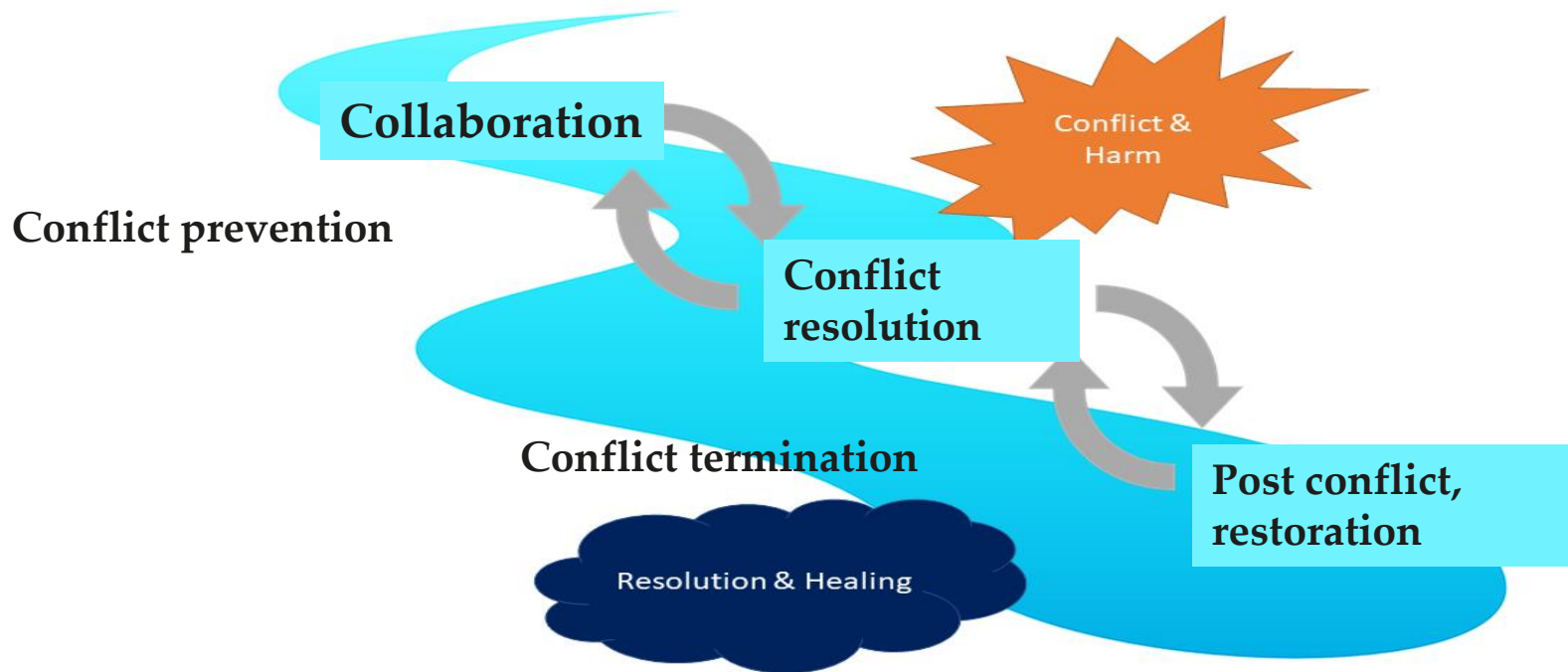
Engage – Deliberate - Decide

Walker, P. (2009) Dinosaur DAD and Enlightened EDD – engaging people earlier is better.   IEMA Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. <http://penny-walker.co.uk/media/2009/09/feb09_engage_deliberate_decide.pdf>

Conflicts: upstream vs. downstream

Collaboration

Conflict & Harm

Conflict prevention

Conflict resolution

Conflict termination

Resolution & Healing

Post conflict, restoration

Characteristics of Environmental Conflict Resolution (ECR)

- Aimed as resolving multiparty public problems / disputes
- Voluntary processes
- Face-to-face meetings & interaction
- Processes structured as negotiations (not hearings, dialogue or discussion…)
- Neutral third party facilitator / mediator assisting the process

Dukes, E. F. (2004). What we know about environmental conflict resolution: An analysis based on research. Conflict Resolution Quarterly **22**(1-2): 191-220.

Success factors in Environmental Conflict Resolution

- Face-to-face interaction promotes trust between parties
- Convening the parties early-on, before the conflict escalates
- The parties have the capacity and possibility to commit themselves to a shared problem solving (negotiation) process
- The differences in capacities to participate are taken into account in the process (support, training etc.)
- Third-party (neutral) professional mediators add value to the process – external help needed especially in complex processes
- Relevant, reliable and high-quality information is made available in the process; cannot rely only on parties own information and views

Emerson, K., P.J. Orr, D.L. Keyes and K.M. McKnight (2009) Environmental conflict resolution: Evaluating performance outcomes and contributing factors. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 27, 27-64

Responses to "NIMBY": The Facility siting Credo

- Seek agreement on status quo as not acceptable
- Seek consensus
- Explore real options
- Establish trust
- Fully address all negative aspects of facility
- Make host community better off

Kunreuther, H., L. Susskind and T.D. Aarts (1991) The Facility Siting Credo: Guidelines for an effective facility siting process. University of Pennsylvania Publication Services, http://web.mit.edu/publicdisputes/practice/credo.pdf.