

# **FROM ENGOS TO INDUSTRY: COMPARING OBJECTIVES, MEANS AND CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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# WHY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

- Great uncertainty about environmental impacts
- Desire to maintain standard of living
- **Scale/scope of environmental problems**
  - Philosopher's dilemma (Dale Jamieson, NYU)



# DEFINITIONS

- Sustainable Development: **“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”** (Brundtland Report; Federal Sustainable Development Act)
- Sustainability: **“the capacity of a thing, action or process to be maintained indefinitely.”** (Federal Sustainable Development Act)
- What are we looking to sustain?



# CONFLICT

## CURRENT SITUATION

- Government role lessening
- Industry taking greater role in policy formulation
- ENGOs trying to ensure regulatory compliance
  
- Leads to more ENGO/Industry conflict
- Increased mistrust, adversarial interactions
- Focus on extremes/differences rather than commonalities





# ENGOS VS. INDUSTRY



# COMMUNICATION

## ■ ENGOs:

- Speak/appeal to laymen, communities, interest groups;
- Often philosophical or hypothetical;
- Part of survival is mass appeal
- different risk tolerance than industry.

## ■ Industry:

- Technical terminology; polished, corporate imagery;
- Often fail at connecting with emotions, gloss over failures/struggles.
- Calculate risk and decide acceptability of action based on that.



# COMPARISON: RAISON D'ÊTRE

- **Common Industry themes:**

- growth; providing services;
- responsibility to shareholders;
- responsible governance;

- **Common ENGO themes:**

- conservation/protection;
- improvement of quality of natural environment for nature/animals and human health/enjoyment and for future generations;
- ensuring responsible/sustainable resource use.





# MEANS

## INDUSTRY

- Stake/shareholders/customers; investors;
- Provide a service or satisfy a need – wouldn't exist otherwise;
- Pressures from rivals, parent companies, potential for takeovers, etc.

## ENGOS

- Financial: Donors/funders; grants; government; foundations;
- Formed on to pursue a defined vision;
- Always fighting for funds to ensure survival.



# CHALLENGES

## INDUSTRY

- Constrained by responsibility to earn a profit, board of directors, etc.
- Reputation factors; trade 'secrets'
- Lack of time/resources/knowledge to fully address environmental concerns

## ENGOS

- Governed by mandate/mission/vision; funds may have conditions attached
- Limits on activities through legislations
- Competition with other NGOs for limited funding pool, necessary to spend part of funds on fundraising and messaging



# PROBLEM

- Best case scenario
- Cumulative/unknown impacts
- Lack of communication – unwilling or unable.



# MOVING FORWARD

## INDUSTRY

- More transparent and human
- Work in groups to address environmental issues
- Cumulative/incremental impacts monitoring should be responsibility of an 'impartial' body.





# MOVING FORWARD, CONT'D

## ENGOS

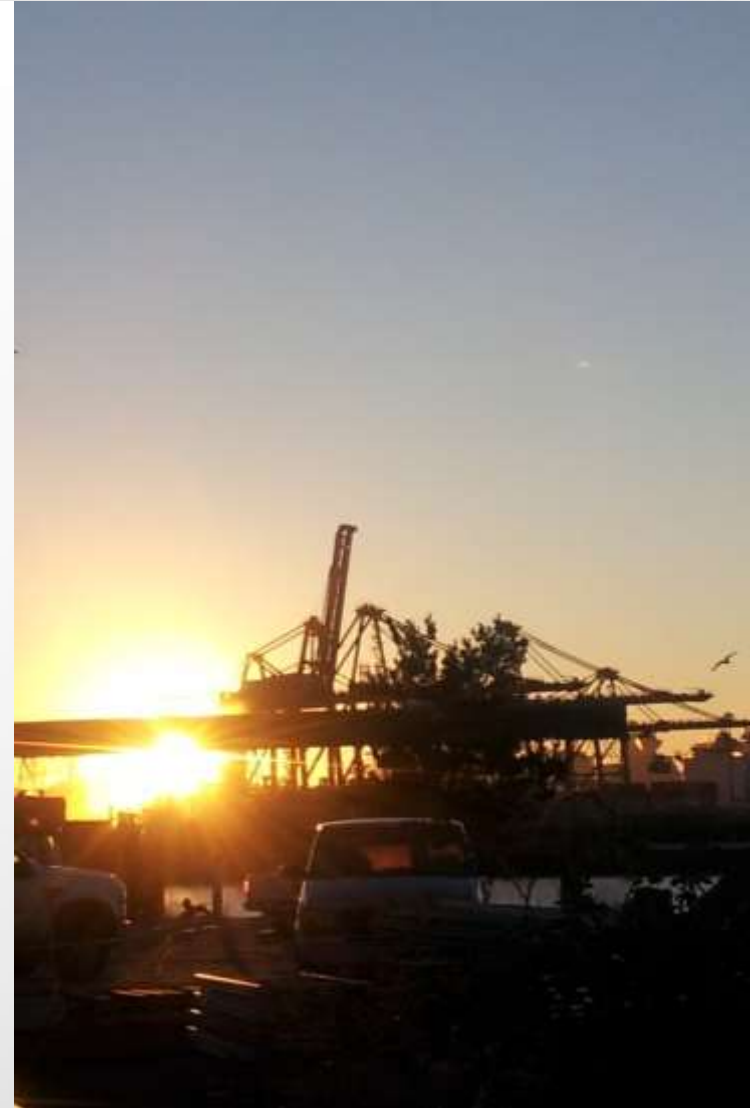
- Work collaboratively to come up with solutions;
- Encourage government to fulfill its oversight role;
- Understand the role that industry plays – use and learn from experts.





# CONCLUSIONS

- Need research and fact-based discussions;
- Acknowledge information gaps – work together to close them;
- Respect differing opinions based on subjective factors, and...
- There are no easy answers.



# THANK YOU

