
Glyn Chancey
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
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Overview

• The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is Canada’s largest science based regulatory agency.

• The CFIA is currently pursuing regulatory modernization across a wide range of programs.

• New and innovative public participation strategies in the area of Plant Biosecurity have yielded positive results.

• Share in the insights gained and contribute to the next phase of initiatives.
Objectives

• To present and seek your feedback on:

  • The model employed.

  • The results.

  • The lessons learned.

• Going forward.
The Context

- CFIA Plant Biosecurity Program (plant pests, plant biotechnology, crop inputs).

- Crop Input regulation the focal point for modernization due to product assessment backlog, staff shortages.

- New public engagement model was the cornerstone of crop inputs modernization initiative.

- The lessons learned are being applied to entire Plant Biosecurity Program modernization.
The Engagement Model

• Industry led, government enabled permanent consultative dialogue.

• Three tiered model (steering committee, central forum, working groups)

• Twice yearly central forum meetings, alternating with CFIA.

• Third party project management and facilitation.

• 3-5 year CFIA Strategic Action Plan, revised annually.
Results

• Strong growth in mutual understanding, recognition and trust over time.

• Complex issues were clarified, differences were narrowed, consensus for change emerged.

• Regulators grew more open to and appreciative of stakeholder perspectives.

• Stakeholders responded in kind and began to open their minds to new possibilities.

• Significant policy and regulatory change initiated.
Results - continued

However:

• Continued resistance to expanding circle from industry to “civil” society.

• Historically powerful interests less supportive of model due to perceived dilution of influence.

• Opportunity for enhanced corporate social responsibility, currently limited by aggressive activism.

• Opportunity for constructively channelling activism, limited by corporate agenda and resistance to collective approaches.
Lessons learned

• Commitment to ongoing predictable dialogue process a critical stability factor.

• Neutral third party project management and facilitation critical to building and maintaining trust.

• Sharing control of the process with stakeholders reduced risk and contributed to better policy.

• Strong CFIA presence was critical to stakeholder confidence in the model.

• Intellectual foundations of the approach used discovered after the fact – “Theory U”, “Presence”.
Theory U

C. Otto Scharmer: Addressing the Blind Spot of Our Time
IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum

**Inform**
- To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

**Consult**
- To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

**Involve**
- To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

**Collaborate**
- To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

**Empower**
- To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

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**Public participation goal**

- We will keep you informed.
- We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
- We will implement what you decide.

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**Example techniques**

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses
- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings
- Workshops
- Deliberative polling
- Citizen advisory committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making
- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

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Canadian Food Inspection Agency  Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments
Adopting a new lifecycle approach…

- Identifying & Assessing Public Policy Issues
- Setting Objectives and Expected Results
- Selecting, Designing & Assessing Regulatory Responses
- Consulting, Coordinating, Cooperating
- Planning for Implementation & Compliance
- Measuring & Reporting on Performance
- Evaluating & Reviewing Regulation
- Analyzing Impacts & Ensuring Benefits
- Justify Costs
Going Forward

• Broaden the focus of the initiative to the entire plant biosecurity program modernization spectrum and possibly beyond.

• Ensure early participation from government partners and emphasize corporate social responsibility in overtures to established corporate and activist interests.

• Incorporate intellectual rationale more explicitly into model when building awareness and support.

• Enhance appreciation of the close relationship among public participation strategies, risk management policy development and program management.