

## Appendix 6 - Improving science-based stakeholder processes

Extracts from the EPA's findings on 'Improving Science-Based Environmental Stakeholder Processes' (US EPA 2001):

### Finding 1

*"An adequate treatment of science is possible in stakeholder processes, but typically only if substantial financial resources, adequate time, and high-quality staff are available from the outset to allow the necessary deliberation and provide the necessary support on an iterative basis through ongoing interaction with the stakeholders."*

*"Absent such resources, stakeholder decision processes, of the types considered in this commentary, frequently do not do an adequate job of addressing and dealing with relevant science."*

### Finding 3

*"If group stakeholder processes, ... are to result in environmental decisions that are adequately informed by science, participants ... must share a commitment to explore the implications of all relevant science, and a willingness to reframe the problems they address when scientific evidence leads in unanticipated directions."*

### Finding 5

Using stakeholder process ... should be undertaken with great care. ... it can appropriately be applied to only a modest subset of environmental regulatory decisions in which:

- a) adequate staff, generous financial resources, and sufficient time are available to provide expert support on an iterative basis;
- b) parties are willing to adapt their thinking and the problem formulation to the scientific evidence as it becomes understood;
- c) the problem being addressed involves a small number of well identified affected parties who can all be made party to the decision process; ...

### Finding 6

*"If and when a stakeholder process is to be used as the vehicle for decision-making, great care must be taken to assure that all relevant interests are represented in a full and balanced manner. Only then can modest ambiguities involving fact-value tradeoffs be allowed to persist without risking serious errors in outcome. ..."*

### Reference

US EPA (2001), Improved Science-Based Stakeholder Processes, EPA Science Advisory Board (1400A), United States Environmental Protection Agency, Washington DC, 216 pp.