

How to Solve Climate Change by involving All the People

Comparing two Processes ...

	the Citizens Assembly www.tinyurl.com/y5znzh3	Wisdom Council Process www.WiseDemocracy.org
What is it?	<p>This mini-public is a large one ... (50-200 random people). They usually meet for a long time, maybe once a month for a year. They are given a well-defined problem, unbiased information and a set of possible options. A moderator helps participants discuss the issue, weigh the options, vote and present their final results to a live audience, hopefully with decision-makers present. Sometimes a vote of the electorate is arranged so that the Citizens Assembly seeks to influence the voters. Other times the results of the Citizens Assembly is highly publicized.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing process, where different small mini-publics (8-20 randomly selected people) are gathered regularly. They meet for two or three days with someone skilled in Dynamic Facilitation. This allows them to address and make progress on some impossible-seeming issue and reach unity on a shared perspective. Then this group presents their unity to a live audience, which may or may not include decision-makers. Then the whole audience talks in small groups and registers their level of support. Key: This facilitates the whole population into one creative conversation where all seek unity.</p>
What's the purpose?	<p>To make better policy by expressing the public judgment on a difficult issue to decision-makers. Also to improve the level of understanding and reasoning among decision-makers and the public in general.</p>	<p>To solve the problem by involving all the people in an ongoing public conversation that is creative and collaborative where near unity is achieved through breakthroughs. And to transform the system to a higher form of democracy with "We the People" providing leadership.</p>
Who sets this up?	<p>Usually the government, where elected officials commit ahead of time to listen, or maybe to allow a public vote.</p>	<p>Currently, most public Wisdom Councils are set up by governments. But it can be set up by a citizen group or NGO.</p>

Who is the audience?	... The decision-makers. The already-established leaders within the system.	... The general public. The process facilitates one all-encompassing conversation, where people build a unified perspective.
What are the results?	... a one time set of recommendations is made to decision-makers. These recommendations arise from a deliberative conversation and vote of the mini-public. Decision-makers can comply or not.	... a shared perspective of what to do about some huge problem and an ongoing whole-system public conversation. Plus, it sparks a system of true democracy where “We the People” become the ultimate authority.
What process of thinking?	Deliberation ... where people try to be unemotional, detached, informed and rational in assessing the situation and weighing the options.	Choice-creating ... This is the magic sauce. Wisdom Council members face hot issues creatively together and seek win/win answers ... and they facilitate a similar mode of thinking throughout the whole system.
Who is the facilitator?	... a neutral moderator guides people on a step by step journey of “decision-making”, which includes dialogue, analyzing, discussing, deliberating and voting	... someone skilled in Dynamic Facilitation who reliably evokes the spirit of “choice-creating”. Also ongoing Wisdom Councils facilitate the whole-system conversation.
Example	In British Columbia 153 random citizens met monthly over a year to investigate “how best to hold elections”. Different election methods were presented and a vote was ultimately taken. 146 to 7 they recommended “single transferable vote” over “majority rule vote.” As promised by the legislature there was a public referendum on the issue, a battle which fell back into the normal yes/no struggle of special interests. The proposal was ultimately rejected. (\$5 million cost)	In Santa Cruz county, CA, a citizen group sponsored a 1.5 day Wisdom Council on the 10-year old HOT issue of ... “what to do with the old rail corridor?” ... “keep it just a trail” or “make it a rail and trail”. The WC conclusion was, “We haven’t started talking yet! This should not be a high conflict transportation issue. The whole community needs to get involved and create a shared vision. “ The public conversation may soon shift in this way. (Can be less than \$10 thousand per WC)
How might this be used to address climate change?	While Citizens Assemblies can be used at the city, national or state levels on issues like “climate change” ... and build substantial momentum, interest and knowledge ... the focus is primarily about policy changes made by local officials.	A few people with adequate resources can initiate a global Wisdom Council Process. The aim is to facilitate an ongoing conversation where all the people get involved, face the issue and come to shared perspectives. Results may include establishing new forms of global governance.