

# How to Solve Climate Change by involving All the People

Comparing two Processes: ...

	<b>the Citizens Assembly</b> <a href="https://citizensassemblies.org">https://citizensassemblies.org</a>	<b>Wisdom Council Process</b> <a href="http://www.WiseDemocracy.org">www.WiseDemocracy.org</a>
<b>What is it?</b>	<p>This is a single large mini-public (50-200 random people), which meets over time long enough for people to learn about the issue and deliberate the options. It has been one weekend 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 and weigh the options in small groups, vote and present their final results to decision-makers in a live ceremony. Although the Citizens Assembly is used primarily as an intervention, organizers desire to transform the nature of politics by institutionalizing greater deliberation in the process.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing series of different small mini-publics (8-20 random people). They meet for only two or three days with someone skilled in Dynamic Facilitation. This allows them to face ill-defined, impossible-seeming issues and achieve unified conclusions quickly. Then this group presents its shared perspectives to “the people” with the intent of stimulating a creative collaborative conversation of all. While policy changes naturally arise, more importantly the aim is to convene a new kind of public conversation, where all the people reach shared perspectives as an all-powerful “We the People,” capable managing the System with wisdom and virtue.</p>

<b>What's the purpose?</b>	To make better policy by expressing to decision-makers the public judgment on a difficult issue. Also to improve the level of understanding and reasoning among both decision-makers and the general public.	To make progress in solving difficult problems by involving all the people in a “choice-creating” conversation. And in the process to gradually transform the underlying structure of the system to a higher form of democracy, with “We the People” as ultimate authority.
<b>Who sets this up?</b>	Usually the government, where elected officials commit ahead of time to listen, or maybe to allow a public vote.	The Wisdom Council Process is best established by a nonprofit organization or NGO with the support of governments.
<b>Who is the audience?</b>	... Primarily decision-makers.	... The general public.
<b>What to present?</b>	The Citizens Assembly presents its final conclusions as a <i>recommendation</i> to decision-makers.	The Wisdom Council presents it's conclusion as a <i>reflection</i> of what we are all thinking and feeling. Plus they tell the story of how group unity was achieved.
<b>What are the results?</b>	... a one time set of recommendations to decision-makers. Decision-makers can comply or not.	... an ongoing public conversation that affects the issues, people, culture, institutions and System.
<b>The process of thinking?</b>	<b>Deliberation/Decision-making</b> ... people try to be unemotional, detached, informed and rational in assessing the situation and weighing the options.	<b>Choice-creating</b> ... Wisdom Council members are dynamically facilitated to face hot issues creatively together and achieve win/win perspectives.
<b>Who is the facilitator?</b>	... a neutral moderator guides people on a step by step journey of “decision-making”, which includes dialogue, analyzing, discussing, deliberating and voting. Sometimes Dynamic Facilitation is used to help the groups reach better conclusions	... someone skilled in Dynamic Facilitation reliably evokes the spirit of “choice-creating” in the Wisdom Councils. ... Plus then the ongoing Wisdom Councils facilitate the larger system into an ongoing conversation, as much as possible, in the spirit of choice-creating

<p><b>Use of experts?</b></p>	<p>The Citizens Assembly is informed by experts, who consult regularly. People learn a great deal about the issue. Then they discuss it, deliberate the options and vote.</p>	<p>Wisdom Councils make only minimal use of experts, just enough to assure that people know about the issue. The aim is give experts a larger platform to influence the whole-system conversation.</p>
<p><b>How does change happen?</b></p>	<p>Citizens Deliberative Councils generate greater understanding of difficult issues in many people. And they can influence decision-makers to abide by the recommendations and/or to be more deliberate. But this influence is largely dependent on a vote, which decision makers may choose to ignore.</p>	<p>The Wisdom Council Process establishes a unified clear voice of the “public interest”. This can have a disruptive impact on the ordinary System, which is a battle of “special interests.” Plus, as the process grows, it offers a way to evolve a new form of democracy: Wise Democracy, where a legitimate “We the People” assumes ultimate responsibility.</p>
<p><b>Example</b></p>	<p>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 agree/disagree battle of special interests. The proposal was ultimately rejected. (\$5 million cost)</p>	<p>In Santa Cruz county, CA, a citizen group sponsored a 1.5 day (one time) 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 an issue battled out through the county transportation committee. The whole community needs to get involved and create a shared vision. “. The process should be ongoing. (The cost for one WC can be \$10,000 or less)</p>

**How might this be used to address climate change?**

Citizens Assemblies can be used at the city, national or state levels on the issue of climate change and build interest, knowledge and momentum for policy measures at those levels. But this issue is fundamentally a global issue where there is no decision maker” or possibility for global policy.

With a few millions of dollars, a few people can initiate and maintain a global Wisdom Council Process. Here’s a way to reach global clarity on what is the Truth, what is our Vision, and what Strategies we shall pursue. And for all of us to assume responsibility for making sure we are really solving the issue. . for solving the issue.