CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.1 The Need for a Change in Perspective

Modernism - the value system that dominates decisionmaking in the Western world -- is a function of instrumental rationality and objectivity and the basis for scientific observation. However, modernism has received criticism as the mode of thinking that created a functional regard for the environment as a source of resources to be exploited. This study was initially conceived as a response to a realization that environmental conditions continue to decline in the face of science-based decisions. It began with an examination of the role of noneconomic, environmental values in environmental decisionmaking because personal environmental values, positive or negative or somewhere in between, are a part of every decision that affects the environment. Kellert (1996) has described what he considers to be the basic environmental values that humanity finds in nature as varying from aesthetic and scientific, to utilitarian and dominionistic. Not all of these are favorable to the environment, but their consideration will be a part of any environmental decision. Further, while the importance of science in preserving the environment cannot be disputed, the ultimate fate of the environment may not rest on science, but rather on the noneconomic value humanity places on nature. To restore, protect, or conserve the natural world may require decisions based on more than a utilitarian analysis.

Collaborative environmental decisionmaking offers a means of merging the dualism that separates science and values and of re-uniting humans with nature. A deliberative process where values are considered through a discourse can allow information on the personal consequences of

actions to be presented and discussed. When a dialogue is established, there is more opportunity for consideration of other positions. The collaborative process works toward consensus, and not compromise, by creating a dialogue where the expression of all participants' views becomes a part of a group learning process that leads to a collaborative decision. While an individual participant's view or position may be changed by new knowledge, this does not imply that the participant's core set of values changes. While values may change, all that is implied here is that new knowledge has created a potential to view an issue in a new light, and a change in viewpoint can lead to a creative solution. Further, while not all members of the group may participate as individuals, as representatives of some group they may be expressing the position of some organization or agency. Still, their positions are based on values -- the values held by the particular organization or agency they represent. The collaborative process can create a situation where a representative experiences a change in a personal position. That representative can then explain that change to his or her constituency in terms of the knowledge and understanding gained through participation in a collaborative process. This can lead to a change in the position of the group.

Decisionmaking implies choices. These may be yes or no choices, choices to act or not to act, or choices somewhere along the spectrum between those extremes. Decisions require a decisionmaker to balance, or weigh, the pros and cons associated with different choices. If a decision is solely empirical, the potential outcomes are added and subtracted, and the choice is made. If a decision includes at least some consideration of nonnumerical, normative, or another form of subjective values, as is almost always the case, the choice may be based on a combination of acquired knowledge, understanding, previous experiences, thoughts, and feelings. When faced

with controverting information, when a numerical determination does not afford a complete solution, or is only part of the information being considered, the decision will be influenced by the decisionmaker's values.

The Chesapeake Bay Program Community Watershed Initiative Workgroup did not reach a particularly viable solution. Even though discussions were open and information was shared, two-thirds (66%) of the participants doubted the success of the process. As several informants indicated, power was not shared among the group. The final document produced by the group did not reflect what the participants discussed because the drafter of that document retained decisionmaking authority. The work product of the group was described as a document of attrition because the knowledge gained from the process was not linked to the product of the process. The positions of participants from the local watersheds were not integrated into the final document, and the Workgroup did not result in a workable plan or action. Alternatively, 83% of the participants in the Elizabeth River Project Watershed Action Team believed their process was successful because participants were able to learn from one another as a result of meetings where open discussions were held and information was shared. Participants shared power, and positions were able to converge in the creation of a working plan. The Watershed Action Team was able to reach consensus on a set of actions that were integrated into an implementation plan that captured the participants' positions.

The information gathered in the course of this study indicates that the issues changed in importance to some participants and that some participants' positions changed. However, an important question remains. Was the Elizabeth River process successful and the Chesapeake Bay process unsuccessful because one was able to capture participants' values and the other was not?

This can be validated upon determination of a link between the values of participants in a collaborative process and their positions, and from changes in positions to the realization of a successful process. For now, the results of this study indicate that when the elements of collaborative decisionmaking are present in a decisionmaking process, there is the potential for participants to alter or modify what they think are important issues. Do changes in what participants think are important issues relate to their positions on those issues? Not directly, but there is room to speculate that the importance of an issue is related to a position. Did the positions of participants in these studies reflect their values? While there is a likely relationship, its confirmation requires additional research.

8.2 Decisionmaking power

While stakeholder input is now a feature of most environmental decisions made by government agencies and elected officials, and, in fact, is legally mandated in many instances, ultimate decisionmaking still remains with government personnel or representative leaders. Advisory groups, usually comprised of appointed stakeholders (as opposed to being open to all stakeholders), are relatively common, but their influence is limited. By law, decisionmaking responsibility cannot be delegated to them; they are simply allowed to advise. So, even when individuals participate in a governmental advisory group, the ultimate government decision may still reflect a deference to advocates of consumption and growth. For political reasons that go well beyond the scope of this work, federal, state, and local governments must support the basic philosophical underpinnings of capitalism and the market system. However, this ignores a basic fact -- the Earth's capacity to provide for growth is finite. As a result, government decisions may not be capable of providing definitive solutions to continued environmental degradation. Good environmental solutions may require another source outside of the normal decisionmaking process. Collaborative environmental decisionmaking has the potential to provide this other source and overcome some of the problems associated with the government's environmental decisions.

This then raises the question as to whether a collaborative decisionmaking process can ever be utilized where a state or federal agency is required to make a decision. Agency or organizational representatives may be constrained as to how much they can change, what they can consider, and how far they can go beyond some limited range of possibilities. If the actions of a government agency are prescribed by law, the responsible official may feel that he or she is not

able to divest any power. Yet, there are ways around such legal situations. An enlightened agency decisionmaker can adopt the decision of a group without having to abdicate power or without having to acknowledge that he or she relied on the group for the decision. In fact, collaborative processes have been initiated by federal agencies and have accomplished their goals. For example, the U.S. Forest Service has updated forest management plans using collaborative processes. The Bureau of Land Management has involved environmental groups and ranchers in rangeland management.

One of the case studies herein involved a process that was initiated by the Chesapeake Executive Council -- the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania; the mayor of the District of Columbia, the administrator of the EPA, and the head of the Chesapeake Bay Commission. Four private citizens meeting around a kitchen table started the other. The Chesapeake Bay Program Community Watershed Initiative began at the top levels of government; the Elizabeth River Project Watershed Action Plan started at the grassroots level. One process was formed to develop a strategy for getting local watersheds more involved in restoring a large watershed. The other was established as a partnership among all segments of the community to restore a small watershed. While both were oriented toward local participation, their disparate beginnings resulted in two distinctly different processes. The Watershed Action Team may have been successful because a diverse group of affected parties reached consensus on how to proceed. The Workgroup may have been unsuccessful because the endpoint was inconclusive; they essentially passed their objective on to another group.

Collaborative decisionmaking is a process that embraces many of the attributes of participatory democracy. It attempts to include all affected citizens in social discourse over

issues. Differences in the composition of the two case studies illustrate how this can affect decisionmaking. The majority of participants in the Chesapeake Bay Workgroup represented government agencies that were participating as part of their job-related duties, while many of those on the Elizabeth River Watershed Action Team participated because of a personal desire to do so. A quarter of the Elizabeth River participants were private citizens; none of the Chesapeake Bay participants identified themselves in that manner. State and federal agency employees dominated the Chesapeake Bay Workgroup. The Elizabeth River Project had representatives of civic associations and industry; the Chesapeake Bay Program had no participants in these categories. The Chesapeake Bay Program's more limited representation may have restricted its information and knowledge. Further, a representative of an agency attending a meeting is likely bound by the positions of that agency or organization. Those positions are determined by policy considerations and decisions made outside the confines of the meeting. There may be no flexibility available to that representative. There may be legal or political reasons that limit the representative's information sharing or open discussions, no matter how that person may be affected by the process. Alternatively, an individual that is not attending in a representative capacity is more free to change positions based on gained knowledge or the discursive flow of the proceedings. These differences could have resulted in different ranges of positions, concerns, and issues considered. It may have affected the success of the process.

Instead of opening up development of a strategy to all the people of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the Chesapeake Bay Program chose to invite selected agencies, organizations, and people to participate in a workgroup. While it may appear impractical to attempt inclusion of everyone within a 64,000-acre watershed, that level of input has been obtained; for example, the

Berger Commission's efforts in Northern Canada covered a vast area, and the Chattanooga Vision 2000 project involved a population of hundreds of thousands. These kinds of efforts require many meetings in different localities over a period of time, but they are not impossible to accomplish. The decision to invite selected representatives may have been a fatal flaw in the Chesapeake Bay process that began at its initiation. It likely shaped the process and made it something other than a truly collaborative decisionmaking process in that all affected parties were not encouraged to take part. On the other hand, the Elizabeth River Project sought volunteers from business, government, citizens, and scientists to be on their Watershed Action Team. The grassroots founders wanted to obtain as wide a spectrum of people as possible from the community. No one was turned away, and the team ended up with 119 diverse members who became dedicated to finding ways to restore their river. While some people attended as representatives of various groups, many came simply as concerned individuals. These volunteers spent many hours in meetings over a period of almost a year before finally achieving consensus on a plan for cleaning up the river.

As alluded to earlier, a further reason power was not shared and all parties did not participate in the Chesapeake Bay Program Workgroup may be due to the sheer geographical size of the watershed. The logistics and time constraints involved may have made the task of involving all affected parties seem unattainable to the Workgroup. Having open discussions and sharing information and power among the millions of inhabitants of the Bay watershed seems absurd on its face. Getting that many people, located hundreds of miles apart, together for meetings is a daunting task. Even with several meetings in several locations, listening to the opinions, positions, and concerns of that many people would be a logistical nightmare. Even if

they had used some of the techniques employed by the Berger Commission or Chattanooga Vision 2000, decisionmakers were facing a deadline in terms of coming up with a strategy. The Chesapeake Bay Commission director felt he had to make ultimate decisions because of a lack of time to implement a truly consensus-based process. Given more time, the Workgroup could have attempted to involve all the people of the watershed by breaking down into subgroups and holding meetings in subregions. However, these logistical necessities inherently limit open discussions. Not all people are present for all discussions. Concerns, issues, and positions that surface in one locale at one time do not necessarily get transferred and aired at other locales and other times. The same may be true for information. With different discussions and different information, different solutions may be considered, or different weight given to different alternatives. Positions, concerns, interests, and issues are all likely to be different in different locations. They may be affected by population size (rural versus urban considerations may be different), employment (agriculture, industry, business, fishing, and forestry are all important economic activities at different locations within the Bay watershed and their relative importance differs by location), and needs (university towns are going to differ from inner cities and rural villages). With increasing diversity in positions, concerns, and issues, something likely to occur when increasing the geographic size of the area considered by the decisionmaking process, it becomes harder to reach consensus or make decisions.

The absence of the power sharing element of collaboration can lead to a failure to develop different alternatives, a hardening of positions, and a failure to reach consensus on potential solutions. Yet, while 53% of the survey respondents in the Community Watershed Initiative Workgroup were unsure as to whether the process was successful and another 13% stated the

process was unsuccessful, it is important to acknowledge that there are different degrees and scales of success. The actions resulting from the Watershed Action Team's plan may be so localized as to have no true environmental effects. Some of their consensus decisions may be so narrow as to have no long-lasting environmental impact. On the other hand, the Chesapeake Bay Program may eventually come up with solutions that affect the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. It may accomplish environmental successes on a scale unimaginable to the Elizabeth River Project. In that scenario, the Workgroup could be considered successful because it recommended the formation of the task force and the Watershed Action Team unsuccessful because its effects were limited to a local site.

8.3 The Importance of Establishing a Dialogue

Dialogue -- oral, two-way conversation among people -- is a basic form of human communication. It is a foundation for information exchange, for examination through questioning, and for knowledge exchange. It may be confusing or even misrepresentative, but it can also lead to greater understanding. Collaboration requires this communication in the form of a civic dialogue -- an unimpeded, open discussion of ideas among affected parties.

The collaborative process begins by gathering together all affected parties and getting them simply to listen to each other. Over time, if a person continues to attend meetings, other participants become recognizable individuals, not just faceless opponents. With this recognition may come respect for the other party as a fellow human, if not for the particular stance of that person on a position or issue. There may be the opportunity to find a shared value or common ground on an unrelated matter like hobbies, sports, or family. Once some common ground is found, empathy and understanding can develop and further open up listening. If a participant is actually listening, he or she may be able to consider new information. With the consideration of new information comes the opportunity to consider new solutions.

Parties enter into a decisionmaking arena in certain roles. A local person is directly affected by the issue at hand. That person may possess local knowledge pertinent to that issue. A party from a nongovernmental organization; an environmental, civic, or industry group; or a government body has an organizational mission or goal that shapes the role they play in meetings. However, by entering into a dialogue, these roles may be modified or changed. An open discussion permits the local person with normative values to give a sense of place to the process, the group representatives the ability to provide input on the concerns of large blocks of people,

and the government official the chance to play the role of a guide to the process instead of authoritarian decisionmaker.

Also critical to a collaborative process is a forum that permits the airing of diverse points of view. There must be an atmosphere about the meeting that is conducive to the understanding of others' positions or concerns. The Workgroup meetings were held at the offices of the Chesapeake Bay Program in Annapolis, Maryland, during weekdays. Some local watershed representatives could not attend due to the distance and to personal work requirements. Many affected parties were effectively shut out of attendance. The forum favored those who could be there in a work-related capacity, especially those on the Chesapeake Bay staff. Elizabeth River Project meetings were held on weekends and evenings. Because it was a local process, the meetings were held locally. The point is, where and when meetings are held is crucial to the attendance of affected parties. If some people are unable to attend, they cannot participate in the dialogue that is critical to a collaborative process.

A successful collaborative process may increase civic virtue among the participants in that decisionmaking process. If the collaboration is successful, there is an exchange of information brought about by a civic dialogue. The parties walk away with a greater understanding of the other participants. Since government is the chief regulator of environmental media (air, water, soil, wildlife, etc.), government representation is likely necessary to an environmental collaboration. If the process is successful, the other parties may depart with not only more faith in the process, but also more faith in their government -- all stemming from opening up a dialogue among disparate parties. Sandel (1996) associates the ills of modern life to the loss of a civic voice, a disengagement from the political realm by the individual. Collaboration affords a means

of recapturing civic virtue by the establishment of discussion over a course of action. Environmental decisionmaking in particular may be fertile ground to recapture this civic voice. It involves basic American ideals: private property rights, public goods, capitalism, social welfare, and individual freedom. However, many basic American ideals are now somewhat restricted because the space where an individual can do whatever he or she wants has disappeared. The frontier is long gone. Whenever a person performs an act that affects the land, air, or water, it now impinges upon someone else's wants, needs, or desires. For that reason, few people are neutral about environmental issues. Perhaps in no other area do so many fundamental rights and beliefs intersect. Perhaps in no other arena is collaborative decisionmaking more needed.

8.4 Social Learning and Social Capital

An open, civic discourse may be the critical factor that enabled the Watershed Action Team to be successful. Discourse is free, open communication that creates mutual trust and understanding and leads to consensus (Dryzek, 1990). Discourse can be subdivided into two different types -- dialogue and discussion-- that can complement each other (Senge, 1990). Discussions take an idea and expose it to a back and forth deliberation where it is analyzed and criticized by participants that vie to have their argument carry the day. However, dialogue is more of a sharing of ideas where the group explores an issue from several points of view (Innes and Booher, 1999). A dialogue gives rise to consensus as fixed opinions meld into a group view. Collaborative decisionmaking involves encouraging discussions to move into dialogue as joint responsibility for the process develops.

As Forester (1996) indicates, dialogue is a means of transformative learning. Transformative learning is a social learning process (Grabove, 1997). Social learning is a complex, cumulative, and ongoing process based on the communication inherent in a critical discourse where the members identify themselves as being part of a group (Grabove, 1997; Akers and Lee, 1996). It is possible that social learning resulted from open discussions and information sharing during meetings of the Elizabeth River Project Watershed Action Team. This social learning may have caused transformations in positions. These transformations, or changes, may have resulted as participants gained knowledge. They may have increased their understanding of the issues through their participation in the process. This knowledge and understanding is the likely result of open discussions and information sharing. Thus, open discussions and information sharing may be considered as basic activities that bring about joint, or social, learning. Social

learning requires participants in a group to engage in face-to-face dialogues (Friedmann, 1987). It occurs when a task-oriented action group learns from its own activities (Friedmann, 1987). Within the group, participants are free to explain their positions, defend them, and challenge the positions of others. Social learning can link practical wisdom with formal knowledge and allow the introduction of noneconomic values. Local participants can sit down with experts and exchange information through a dialogue. Noneconomic values and scientific reasoning are then given the opportunity to intermingle.

In a collaborative effort, it may not be necessary to reach a solution in order to attain success. The building of social capital may be considered a valid endpoint to the process. This is based on the proposition that, as the group meets, the process creates connections among the participants. These connections are the basis for social capital that forms when people who share a common identity as members of some group develop reciprocal obligations (Innes and Booher, 1999; Wallis, 1996). Obligations, expectations, and knowledge that build among a group of individuals as they meet over time are the basic elements of social capital (Hemingway, 1999). Social capital is an asset, like economic capital. However, it differs from economic capital in that as it is used, it increases instead of decreasing – the more it occurs, the more connections are made. What makes it valuable as an endpoint to a collaborative process is that the knowledge, obligations, and expectations built by social capital are transferable to other groups (Hemingway, 1999).

Environmental problems and issues will continue into the foreseeable future. If the use of collaboration as a means of addressing these problems and issues increases, the knowledge, obligations, connections, and expectations built up in one collaborative environmental

decisionmaking process may resurface at another time and place and be critical to the resolution of another environmental situation. Thus, the development of social capital may be as important as reaching a solution to the particular problem at hand. While one situation may not be successfully resolved, the relationships built during consideration of the issues or problems may be fundamental to resolution of a future issue or problem.

Collaborative environmental decisionmaking is a social process. Social learning and social capital are its products -- products that, in some instances, may be more important than resolution of the particular matter currently at hand. Their implications involve a societal evolution where disparate people, positions, concerns, and interests may be able to come together and create a more livable community. The community built around the Elizabeth River Project may go on to accomplish other tasks that better their environment, and even expand their success outward into other facets of their community life. Participants in the Chesapeake Bay Program Community Watershed Initiative did not build social capital with local watershed groups. Because the Workgroup did not advance its understanding among local groups, when the Bay Program looks to these local venues for cooperation in the future, at best it is likely going to have to start with the same relationship it had prior to the Initiative Workgroup.

8.5 Changing Positions through a Collaborative Process

Collaborative processes can build consensus and foster creative alternatives and solutions through a convergence of the positions of the people participating in the process. The process can change a participant's substantive viewpoint or interest. Two of the questions in the survey were designed to provide an indication of change. Participants were asked to rank what they thought were the three most important issues at the beginning of their participation on the Workgroup and Watershed Action Team and then rank them again at the end. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the respondents from the Chesapeake Bay Program and sixty-four percent (64%) of the Elizabeth River Project respondents indicated a change in what they thought were the most important issues. Something happened to the participants in the course of the process. While this change in ranking of issues may not indicate that the participant's position on an issue changed, it does indicate a change in the way in which that participant considered the matter at hand. The important concept is that change occurred during the process. In a collaborative process, the affected parties are assembled into a group where they hold open discussions and share information. Members of the group obtain knowledge and acquire new information from each other as individuals express and explain their positions and concerns. These positions and concerns, external manifestations of the values held by the parties, can change due to new information and/or a persuasive argument.

Even though the Chesapeake Bay group was unsuccessful in attaining a compelling solution, one informant from the Workgroup indicated that he believed the process may have changed the entire philosophy of the Chesapeake Bay Program. This person indicated that, as a result of this collaborative effort, Bay Program decisionmakers may begin to understand the

positions and concerns of the local watershed people. Another indicated that all participants ended up understanding each other's perspectives. Some of those who participated on the Elizabeth River Watershed Action Team indicated that positions changed during the course of the process. Participants stated that the process educated and enlightened them on the depth and breadth of the issues, helped them understand others, informed them, bonded the participants, and created a teamwork situation. Others noted that there were adversarial positions at the beginning, but that opponents began appreciating the other side during the course of the meetings. For example, one Elizabeth River Project interviewee explained how government agency representatives came into the meetings with their positions formed, but the process led them to change these positions as they began to feel that they belonged. Another person attributed changes in positions to education. A participant explained that decisions were made by people stating their positions, discussing the ideas, and then deciding that they could live with a proposed solution. Some of the respondents were amazed that agreement was reached, one stating it was magic that a hundred people could reach consensus on a plan. Over time, as a collaborative group meets, knowledge and understanding may increase about not only the positions and concerns of others, but also of one's own personal beliefs and values. This knowledge and understanding can grow to include the reasons why a participant holds a particular position or concern. The process can change participants in terms of what they think and how they ultimately act (Innes and Booher, 1999).

One final point about this change is that it does not have to involve compromise. Compromise involves concessions by at least one of the parties. This implies that parties have yielded to another's claims or demands; that they have given in to some other interest.

Collaborative decisionmaking does not require compromise. An exchange of information results in an increase in knowledge -- parties learn from one another. It is this learning that can give rise to a change in position. This is fundamentally different from compromise. Nothing is given up. Rather, something is gained -- knowledge.

8.6 Consensus

Consensus is an inclusive, group decisionmaking process where participants accept responsibility for the success of that process by modifying options until all members of the group think the best decision has been reached (Carpenter, 1998). It does not force compromises. It provides opportunities for participants to learn from one another and draws on the joint thinking of the group (Carpenter, 1998). It also reinforces the elements of collaborative environmental decisionmaking. Having all affected parties involved in decisionmaking is inclusive. Open discussions and information sharing provide opportunities for learning. However, accepting joint responsibility for success does not necessarily guarantee power sharing. Success is a relative term. Success may be just getting parties together, or it may be getting opposing sides talking. It does not necessarily mean making a decision, reaching a solution, or implementing a decision.

Consensus can be used as a tool of persuasion. In a situation where a group comprised of disparate interests speaks with one voice on a particular issue and confronts the decisionmaker with a consensus position, that decisionmaker is likely to carefully consider what the group is saying. Also, a decisionmaker participating in a group setting can be convinced of the soundness of a decision by the joint thinking of the group. The decisionmaker can then make a decision based on the group's position. This differs from joint decisionmaking where the group takes joint responsibility *for the decision*. Thus, there can be consensus without collaboration, but can there be collaboration without consensus?

Can a majority decision be a collaboration? To make a decision by a majority requires voting. When a vote is taken, some people win and others lose. Losers are unhappy and may contest the results of the vote or otherwise hinder implementation (Carpenter, 1998). Prior to

reaching a decision by voting, all affected parties can be gathered together for open discussions where information is shared; however, voting is not power sharing. If a vote is taken and a decision is based on a majority, then power is not shared by the minority; their decisionmaking power is lost. So, at best, a majority decision constitutes partial power sharing. The entire group does not take joint responsibility for any actions taken, and there is no joint decisionmaking by the group as a whole. Further, if a group cannot reach consensus, it cannot have the option of falling back on voting to make a decision. If that option exists, the group is not making decisions by consensus. Since participants have the knowledge that they have voting as a back-up, it will affect their willingness to reach consensus. This does not mean that solutions cannot be attained or that the process cannot be a success where voting is the means of reaching decisions. Both of these can occur when a majority makes decisions, just as they can when a person, organization, or other body makes an authoritarian decision.

Another consideration concerns leadership. There is a question as to whether any group requires a person to assume responsibility for, or "spearhead," a collaborative process. A first reaction might be that it is not necessary -- that a truly collaborative process works through the joint actions of all the participants. The participants discuss issues, concerns, or problems, and, in Habermasian terms, the best argument carries the day. However, humans being humans, it also seems likely that a process could degenerate into a long, drawn-out, ongoing argument, get stuck on minutia, or degenerate into anarchy. Interestingly, in both of the case studies, there were two people who "took charge" of the process, made sure it kept moving forward, and drafted documents for consideration at later meetings. In the Chesapeake Bay Program Workgroup, the executive directors of the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Chesapeake Bay Program filled

this role. Interviewees indicated that both of these individuals ran the meetings by exerting influence, choosing what would be discussed, and indicating the direction in which the meetings were to proceed. One staffed the Workgroup and the other steered the meetings. One would open the meetings and the other would have the final say. One did most of the drafting, while the other put the final document together. These two people exerted incredible influence over the process. The Elizabeth River Project's executive director and facilitator played similar roles on the Watershed Action Team. Interviewees indicated that the executive director ran the meetings but shared power among the participants. She drafted the final plan but did so in conjunction with committee heads. While the executive director made some decisions, she based them on the input from participants; and while the executive director was considered essential to the success of the Watershed Team, the facilitator was described as the key to participation. The facilitator controlled the meetings but also made them more open. She got the group to discuss the issues and reach consensus on them. In the Elizabeth River Project case, participants indicated very strongly that the process was successful. The difference may be that, in the case of the Chesapeake Bay Program, the process was controlled; in the Elizabeth River Project, the process was guided. A collaborative environmental decisionmaking process may require guidance, but not domination.