

**NORTHERN  
CLIMATE  
EXCHANGE**

*Visioning Session*

28 May 2001

Whitehorse, Yukon

## Background

The Northern Climate Exchange (NCE) is based at Yukon College, Whitehorse, and has been operating since February 2000. Funding and support are from the Climate Change Action Fund, the Yukon government and Environment Canada (Pacific & Yukon Region). The NCE is guided by a steering committee with representatives from Yukon and federal governments, co-management boards, municipalities, Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), the energy sector, and conservation groups.

In April 2001, after a little more than a year of operation, the key stakeholders agreed it was time to review the NCE to examine progress to date and to assess the extent to which the operations were contributing to achieving the goals.

Mal Malloch of Malloch Graham + Associates Management Consultants was retained to assist in designing the agenda for a one-day meeting, facilitate the session and prepare the following report. A list of those who were invited is attached as Appendix A. The facilitator recorded discussions that took place throughout the day on flip charts, and these notes are reproduced throughout this report in boxes.

## Agenda

Prior to the meeting, the agenda was distributed to the invitees. It is reproduced below.

### NCE Visioning Session Agenda

- Intro
- SWOT Analysis:
  - Strengths;
  - Weaknesses;
  - Opportunities; and
  - Threats
- In light of SWOT Analysis, review:
  - Purpose of NCE;
  - Long-term Vision
- In light of SWOT Analysis and reviewed Purpose and Vision, refine/update goals.
- Based on all previous steps, establish revised SC Terms of Reference, including:
  - Roles;
  - Structure and operating guidelines;
  - Membership.
- Other items for discussion.

## **Participants**

The sessions were held 28 May 2001 in the meeting room upstairs at the Alpine Bakery in Whitehorse. The following people attended the day-long meeting:

John Pattimore: First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun (NND)  
Clint Sawicki: Northern Research Institute (NRI)  
John Newton: John Newton and Associates  
Peter Johnson: University of Ottawa / Canadian Polar Commission (CPC)  
Perry Diamond: Yukon Department of Economic Development  
Bengt Pettersson: Yukon Department of Renewable Resources  
Gordon Voogd: Yukon Development Corporation (YDC)  
Don Trudeau: Selkirk First Nation  
Craig Olsen: Yukon Conservation Society (YCS)  
Bob van Dijken: YCS  
Joan Eamer: Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), Environment Canada  
Aynslie Ogden: NCE  
Will Webber: NCE  
Eric Taylor: Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations Research Network (C-CIARN)

In addition, the following people participated by long-distance and speakerphone for various parts of the day's activities:

Stewart Cohen: Impacts and Adaptations Research Group (AIRG), Environment Canada  
Chris Burn: Carleton University

## **Introductory matters**

The day began with a review of the agenda, which the group then approved. The facilitator then led a discussion of two items: the meaning of consensus and the authority of the group.

## **Consensus**

The group agreed on a definition of consensus with several important aspects to guide the work of the day: "General agreement, or at least no substantial disagreement, where the parties may not agree with all aspects, but where the outcome as a whole satisfies the major interests and concerns of each party, and all will commit to support it when they walk out of the room." It was agreed that consensus requires full and equal information to all, i.e. informed consent.

Flip chart notes contain additional references to the concept of consensus and are reproduced here.

## Consensus

- may not agree every detail
- group decision
- all can live with it
- group needs to be able to move on and continue work
- all must commit to support it outside
- informed (as much as possible) consent
- one agrees to the package as a whole

## Authority

The group agreed to proceed on the basis that those present were able to finalize many decisions right then and there.

## Authority

- of group to make decisions, come to an agreement
- steering committee (SC) is ultimate authority for guidance of NCE actions within funding constraints and guidelines
- do representatives here today need to take information back for a decision or does SC make final decision?
- the authority of a group to make a decision can depend on the context and type of decision being made
- if direction today that is determined is very different from path already taken, may need to seek approval
- summary of day can be taken back to organizations for review and comment prior to next SC meeting
- decisions-in-principle – representatives here today should be considered knowledgeable and organization they represent places trust in their opinions

## Introductions

The participants introduced themselves and stated their hopes for the session. Most said they were pleased with the work of the first year and expressed the desire to continue to move forward on many important initiatives. Some put particular emphasis on the structure and function of the Steering Committee. Highlights of what was said are presented here.

**Mal** – Management Consultant. Hopes for an open process.

**John P** – NND Lands and Resources (L&R). He is directed by Elders who notice impacts of climate change on lands around them. It is within his mandate to understand changes and work into L&R management practices. He is here to support research networks and concepts to address impacts of climate change.

**Clint** – involved in NCE proposal and establishment. He is here to help NCE continue successes and have a vision for next year.

**John N** – community planning background. Interested in conservation and renewable energy in remote communities, plus hazard research. Also interested in coping strategies and loss reduction. He is currently working on policy options for climate change with NCE. His main interest is in moving thoughts and ideas to a community action-oriented level.

**Peter J** – University of Ottawa, vice chair of CPC. His interest is in national and circumpolar initiatives of NCE.

**Perry** – experience to date with NCE on Summit, and on Public Education and Outreach (PEO) Hub and the Hub Pilot Advisory Team (HPAT). Interests are energy planning and economic development as pertains to climate change issue. He is involved in the Yukon Climate Change Co-ordinating Committee (YC4). Has interest in greater co-ordination on climate change issue in the North.

**Bengt** – chair of YC4, who completed an inventory of climate change actions in Yukon. He hopes to assist with ongoing work of NCE. Feels it is good timing for this session.

**Gordon** – YDC rep on YC4. His main focus is on efficiency and renewable energy solutions program delivery. Involved with Energy Solutions Centre (ESC) - subsidiary program of YDC and a joint initiative with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). The public component on climate change relating to this is a significant part of their program. Wants it to be closely co-ordinated with NCE on PEO activities. Sees good co-ordination with NCE already and hopes today will continue this.

**Don** – independent consultant and facilitator. Involved in all NCE meetings to date. Sees NCE as coming out of embryo stage. Good work to date, and is keen to see NCE move forward. Should be more documentation of observations on land and more work with First Nations (FN) people.

**Aynslie** – NCE Project/Research Officer. Here to listen to suggestions and integrate these into work plan for upcoming year.

**Craig** – Wants to see a more co-ordinated approach on climate change activities.

**Bob** – Independent voice. He is here to push the envelope. He recognizes guidelines of funders and wants accountability from governments. Need to look at overall policy on climate change— not just look good and feel good but addresses the big picture. Should push role on consensus.

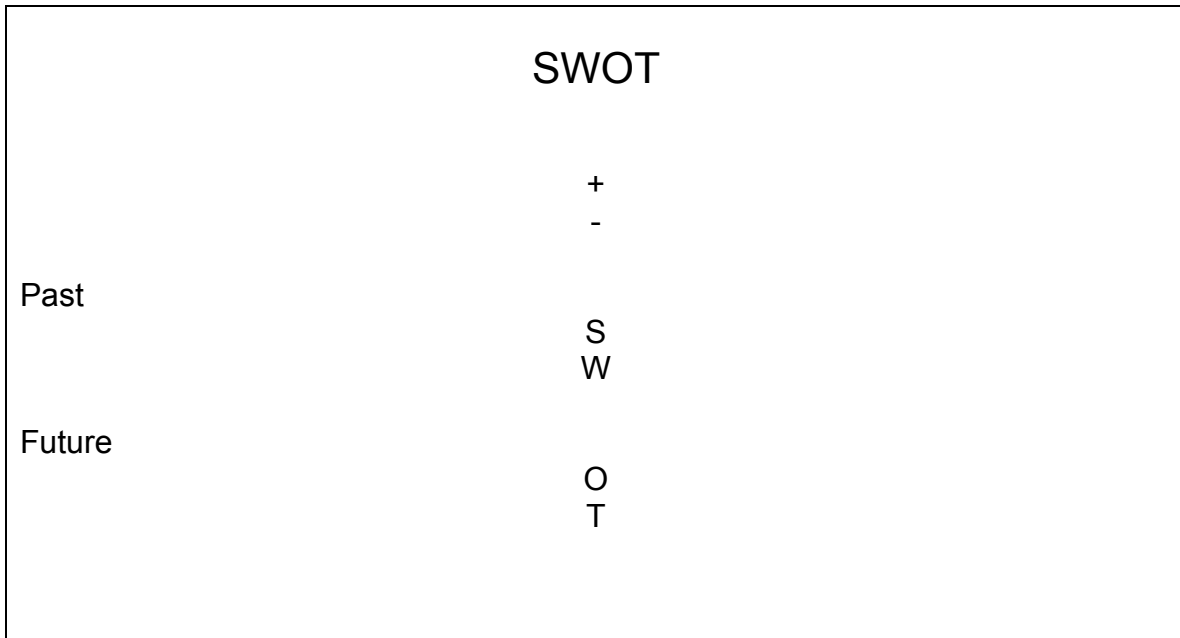
**Joan** – involved since proposal stage and in project work. Wants to get a sense of how projects fit together and wants to see NCE run more smoothly with better buy-in from all of the partners, improved management support and structure.

**Will** – Recently began Internship with NCE. His role today is to gain a better understanding of the work of the NCE.

**Stewart** – AIRG. Has had interest in NCE since proposal stage. Is excited to see accomplishments of its first year. The workshops demonstrate ability to build community across different interests. Is interested in seeing how this dialogue can be sustained. Need to encourage buy-in across different communities to allow NCE to sustain itself in long term by creating a broad base of support. How can NCE attract more investors and shareholders to continue its good work?

## SWOT Analysis

Mal explained the SWOT model where both positive and negative aspects of the situation are looked at in both the present and the future, hence Strengths; Weaknesses; Opportunities; and Threats.



Participants worked alone for four or five minutes of silent brainstorming on each of the four components. They then formed three groups to review and compare their thoughts and develop group lists. Finally, the facilitator solicited suggestions for strengths from each group until all ideas were voiced and recorded on the flip charts. Similarly, the ideas for the other three components were offered and recorded. Some highlights are listed in the following paragraphs and on the flip charts reproduced here.

For **strengths**, the following points were mentioned: filling recognized need; the very good work of Aynslie; independence and autonomy of the NCE; accomplishments to date, strong linkages; well positioned for effective networking.

### **Strengths**

- no baggage
- right place at right time
- momentum
- Aynslie
- lots of ideas
- independent voice and source of information
- able to say things governments cannot say
- willingness to partner
- links among First Nations and NCE
- promotes regional involvement
- website
- good connection being within Yukon College/NRI
- dedicated and knowledgeable staff
- accomplishments in year one
- located in the North
- smaller community/jurisdiction makes it easier to form linkages
- ability to include everybody
- interested in all input
- accepting of local and traditional knowledge
- good basic structure
- good network already established
- ability to tap into different sources of funding and people
- good public education/outreach
- a lot of good products to date that can be built upon – capital for the future
- good facilitating role
- well positioned for international networking
- tremendous amount of output in first year
- high visibility within first year for NCE and for climate change issue

For **weaknesses**, these were some key items: shortage of funds; constraints associated with funding conditions; vulnerability due to staff overload and potential burnout; lack of consistent and committed involvement for the full range of Steering Committee members; constraints of space, money and administrative systems.

### **Weaknesses**

- lack of long-term funding
- some southern partners may not relate to economic and social realities of doing work in the North
- fractured focus due to funding arrangements/conditions
- office space crunch
- risk for staff burn out
- lack of industry involvement, a reflection of the lack of industry in the Yukon
- loss of corporate memory if anyone leaves (because so few people involved)
- too much work, too little staff
- northern centre but focus is on Yukon
- financial management system within the College – taking up too much staff time and resources to serve the system
- lack of clear objectives from partner organizations
- limited focus on mitigation of climate change
- narrow public perception of all that NCE does
- lack of support from certain groups
- lack of existing scientific data and resources (issues may not be specific to NCE organization, but can limit NCE achieving its goals)

**Opportunities:** Climate-Change Impacts and Adaptation Research Network (C-CIARN), Public Education and Outreach Hub (PEO Hub) and other projects; profile and credibility derived from recent workshop and summit; possibilities for ever-increasing linkages and networking.

### **Opportunities**

- climate change is a growing issue, not getting smaller
- working more closely with individual First Nations
- opportunity to do community-based research and action
- C-CIARN and PEO Hub
- potential for long-term funding
- linking to other nodes and hubs in south can make better use of limited resources
- another long-term staff member to provide more resilience to Centre
- more depth, more ongoing professional staff
- seek funding from industry i.e. oil and gas who are interested in doing work in YT
- build on energy and media coverage from Summit and Whitehorse Declaration
- build on successes of Mayo workshop
- opportunity to minimize duplication and increase efficiencies with respect to Public Education and Outreach (PEO) by working more closely with Energy Solutions Centre
- Hub Pilot Advisory Team providing PEO communication tools that can be used and modified regionally
- Linkages between climate change and other issues that are hot topics i.e. water, energy
- network and participation with other territorial, national and circumpolar initiatives present opportunities for NCE to increase contact base
- young organization, opportunity for growth
- to bring community perspective to local government processes
- to develop a clear, focused business plan
- to contribute to co-ordination of Yukon climate change related initiatives
- new technologies will provide opportunities to work on mitigation side
- unique entity, not many of these types of organizations in existence
- Kyoto
- governments change (opportunity and threat)
- working with economic opportunities of climate change

**Threats:** funding instability; availability of local people to become engaged in issue and work of NCE, lack of involvement of some stakeholders; industry pressure against actions to reduce causes of climate change; and public apathy on the climate change issue.

### **Threats**

- ability of international climate change negotiations to be successful
- oil and gas in the Yukon and the attendant greenhouse gas implications
- funding instability and constraints and government control of funds
- profile of climate change on public government agenda going down
- apathy, other issues competing for attention, profile and funds
- community overload limits availability and energy of local people
- lack of capacity at community level
- limited control or watered-down organizational goals
- too dependent on Climate Change Action Fund (CCAF)
- lack of buy-in from some stakeholder groups
- competition from others for same funding sources
- capacity of centre to withstand changes in staff
- overwhelming advertising and funding for oil and gas to get one side of story across provides ability to shift public perceptions
- tendency for project funding focus vs. core funding
- trying to satisfy too many masters with different objectives can lead to a lack of focus
- global issue
- “cry wolf” syndrome, may not realize impacts until too late (some may become desensitized to the issue)
- changing governments

A discussion ensued that covered the following items.

- There are questions of scale— some items are ones the Steering Committee can work with and try to handle, while other items (i.e. international negotiations) are ones where the most the NCE can do is write briefing notes and provide advice and comment.
- NCE should not get distracted with global issues today. We have some focused ideas and issues. Structural issues to enable NCE to continue work should be more of the focus.
- An organization needs to know and recognize its externalities to find its niche, develop a marketing strategy and a business plan.
- Externalities can affect whether or not an organization will achieve its goals.

## Purpose and Long-Term Vision

The group then discussed Purpose, Vision, Approach and Goals. Some of the questions and issues are described here.

- How do we distinguish among these concepts?
- Can purpose and vision be combined?
- Purpose can be thought of as short-term goals, can be the same as mission – what we are doing right now or seek to accomplish in short term.
- Vision is the long-term goals.
- A mission statement is what we are in business to do, a one-sentence description.
- The existing documentation is a relic of the original proposal.
- There is a need to tighten up the wording of what NCE is here to do and what we want to do.
- We are in a good position now to re-work and remodel our description of these items.
- There is an alternate model: mission statement, strategies, goals for each strategy, objectives to support goals, tactics to implement each objective (action plan).
- It was suggested the group focus today on big picture (and structures that need to be in place to achieve this big picture), and leave details for future Steering Committee meetings.

The group then turned its attention to reviewing the purpose and the long-term vision of the NCE. After some discussion, the group agreed that a mission statement would be the logical next step. Four small groups were formed to work at developing a concise statement to address the following points:

### Mission

What we do

Why are we doing this

Who is involved/affected – clients and stakeholders

Where - environment within which we do what we do (scale)

When they were done their work, a representative of each group wrote that group's proposed mission statement on a flip chart. The four groups' work is shown here.

The NCE is a northern window on climate change. Through partnerships it develops shared understanding and promotes investment and action on current and future cases, impacts, opportunities, and challenges presented by climate change in northern Canada.

Due to increasing impacts of climate change (and to international agreements) NCE will facilitate and promote action and information on climate change and all its elements [through the exchange of scientific traditional and local knowledge, advancing knowledge and adaptation techniques on climate change in the north]

The mission of NCE is to reduce the effects of climate change through partnerships on a pan-northern scale to maintain and improve the quality of life for Northerners.

To provide a credible, independent voice for Northerners on anthropogenic climate change and effects and potential effects on northern lifestyles.

A small working group (Eric, Gordon, Joan and Aynslie) took on the task of reviewing the work of the four groups and devising a new mission statement. The mission statement working-group developed is as follows:

### **Mission**

To provide a credible independent source of information, develop shared understanding and promote action on climate change in northern Canada.

The participants reviewed the agenda and agreed to focus on several key items for the remainder of the day, as listed on the following chart.

### **To Do's - Agenda for This Afternoon**

- Discuss SC structure, roles, membership
- Discuss ways to provide clearer direction and increased support to staff
- Discuss the development of working groups on specific NCE initiatives as a more effective way to get tasks done that having the entire SC deal with them or else loading it all on Aynslie)
- Explore alternative finance and administration models, office space requirements, and new funding directions
- Provide direction to the SC regarding the development of a business/strategic plan for the NCE

It was further agreed that a discussion of the structure, roles, members and operational roles of the Steering Committee would deal with most of the items on the list.

## **Steering Committee**

The next item addressed was the terms of reference for the Steering Committee. Much discussion took place that led to consensus on a number of points. The conclusion reached was that a relatively small management committee should take responsibility for the day-to-day management of the NCE while a larger advisory committee with representation from the broader stakeholder group would provide advice on strategic direction.

Some of the issues surrounding the NCE Steering Committee were discussed. It was agreed that, in order to be effective, members of the Steering Committee need a strong idea of what their role is, clear objectives of what they want to get out of the NCE, and determine what resources they can commit. Once the governing body approves a business plan (strategic direction) they should leave to staff to implement day-to-day management. Other issues discussed include the location of the NCE – if it is outside college, there are legal implications to governance structures, and other implications regarding administration roles and other items, all of which place a strain on limited resources. It was also acknowledged that capacity issues in First Nation governments constrain NCE's ability to involve First Nations.

There was discussion of what was needed from a Steering Committee and what type of structure is needed. Questions to be resolved include:

- Who approves what decisions?
- Who develops a business plan?
- Who approves it?
- Who carries it out? and
- Who implements it?

Possible models for the Steering Committee were discussed. One model is to have a "Board of Directors" that would need to include funding agencies to ensure accountability of NCE to those agencies. It was suggested that this group meet twice per year and establish working groups to deal with specific project-based funds or other specific issues. The executive would meet more frequently. Another option presented was a membership model where stakeholders provide a certain amount of funds to become a member of the organization. This model would pose a challenge to bringing in community members to the organization/network. There was discussion of the relative advantages of top-down and bottom-up models for the Steering Committee. It was acknowledged that one of the strengths of the NCE to date has been the contributions of staff time from various agencies to NCE projects and initiatives. If NCE set up a structure where the role of the Steering Committee was exclusively to define goals and project work is left exclusively up to up to NCE staff, the organization could run the risk of being able to do less with funds available.

Some desire was expressed for more of a loose structure than the current one. It was agreed that the NCE should maintain its focus on work being done, not on a cumbersome and convoluted structure of governance.

The role of the College in the NCE was discussed, and whether or not the college has a different role to play in NCE than other partners. Currently, the College's role includes in-kind support with real estate, administration, human resources management and financial management. A question was raised whether the College would ultimately be responsible for developing and approving the business plan. In response to this, the view was expressed that the College is just one of the funding agencies, and does not have the ultimate veto on decisions. Other agencies and funders have equal status regarding decision-making. A question was also raised if the College would be able to provide long-term support for base funding and capacity as the operations of the NCE grow and expand. There is a possibility in the future there may be an administration fee on third party funds and this would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. It was also emphasized that the college supports ongoing growth of the NCE, continues to see a good fit between with the NRI and the College, and wants what is best for the NCE in the long run.

Some further thoughts on these points are outlined here.

## Steering Committee

- Is Steering Committee an advisory body or a management body?
- College role – support growth and ongoing role on steering committee, want what is best for NCE in the long run and help it along, good fit for college and NRI
- Not well defined who is driving the bus
- Role clarity is important
- Commitment of members is essential
- Yukon College / Yukon government / Federal government interests need to be represented
- Structure according to reality – what people can commit
- Need to fulfil three roles:
  - strategic direction;
  - day-to-day management;
  - co-ordinating role
- Need to consider legal and other implications of alternative governance models

- Need for a strong body
- Need for fast action
- Need for courage
- SC structure should NOT convoluted & cumbersome
- Balance between comprehensive representation/awareness/info and need for fast and decisive action
- Opportunities for obtain funding from independent foundations
- Possible model – advisory committee with an executive
- Executive should include Yukon College, Yukon government, Federal government plus all funding bodies and key stakeholders
- Community participation is essential
- Consider working groups and sub-committees
- Consider concept of members paying to participate
- Who sits on
  - Board/Steering Committee?
  - Executive?
  - Working groups/sub-committees?

There was consensus that NCE steering committee be restructured to include a smaller body such as an executive committee or management committee that oversees day-to-day operations. It should include representation from partners and main core funders. A larger advisory committee should also be established that would meet at least annually to review strategic goals and direction of the NCE.

The roles and responsibilities of two groups (Management Committee and Advisory Committee) are outlined here:

### **Advisory Committee**

- Meet annually or bi-annually
- Provide overall advice and strategic vision to management committee
- To include former NCE steering committee, key NCE contacts (including those invited to the Visioning Session) plus invitations to be sent to 14 Yukon First Nations, funding agencies, and individuals and organizations who wish to participate i.e. RRC and village councils

## **Management Committee**

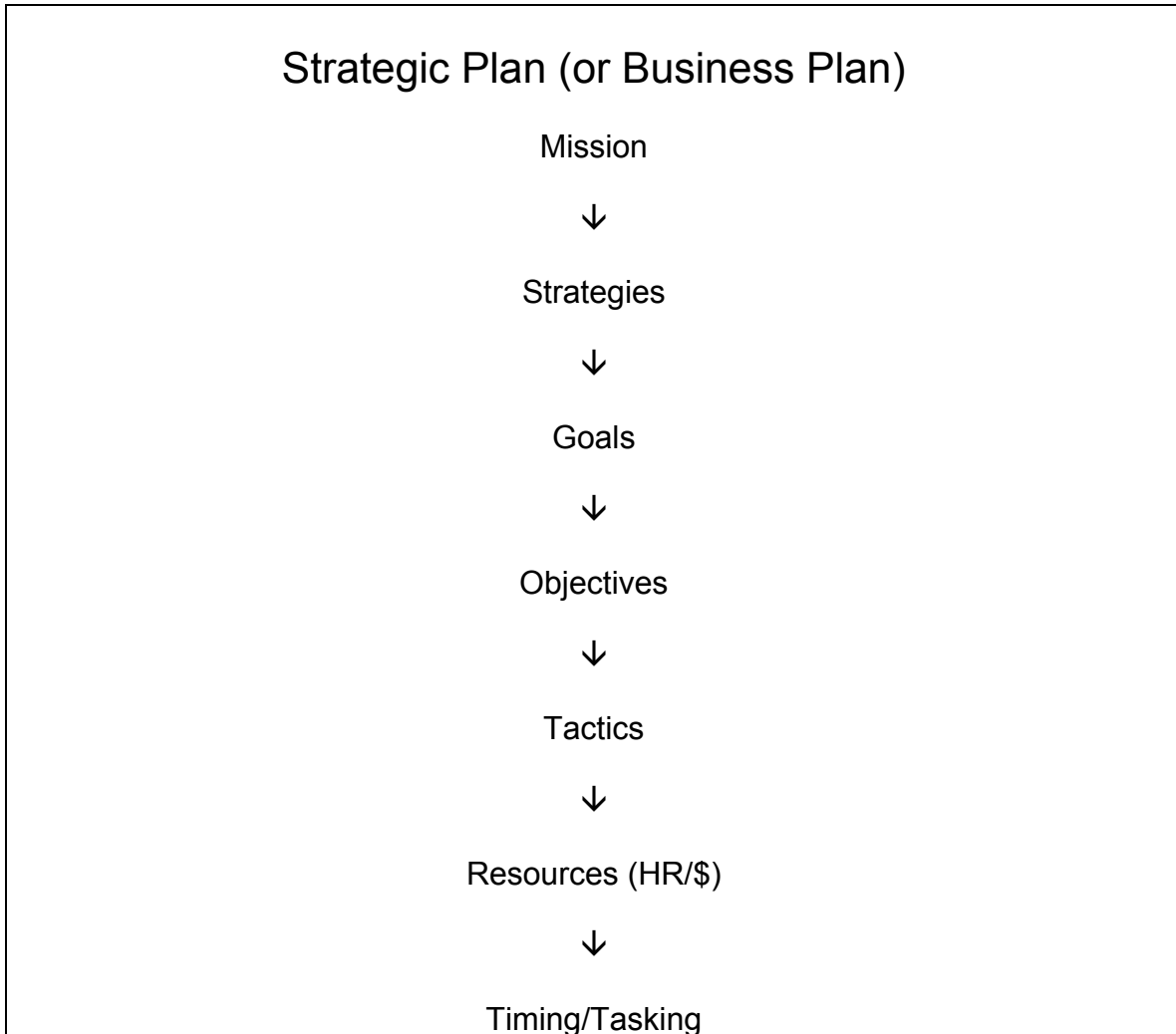
- Smaller: 4-6 reps
- Subset of advisory committee
- Staggered terms of membership to ensure continuity
- Aynslie's position included plus other NCE staff
- Secretarial function must be carried out, but not by NCE co-ordinator (NCE staff responsible for meeting arrangements)
- A Chair is needed to ensure meetings run smoothly, could be rotational responsibility or term responsibility, Chair should not be NCE co-ordinator
- Setting agenda for meetings – NCE co-ordinator in consultation with members of management committee
- Responsible for public relations
- Reviews budgets
- Approves business plan
- Approves staff hiring
- Provides advice & direction to staff
- Identifies issues that need to be taken to the membership
- Deals with issues on an as-needed basis
- Ensures effective communication with advisory body, stakeholders and membership
- Should be an open invitation to anyone who wants to be involved in meetings to ensure an open and transparent process
- Members appointed to management committee through an internal election process within advisory committee
- Monthly meeting
- Determine roles and function of working groups – Northern Ecosystems Initiative (NEI), C-CIARN and PEO Hub

## **Management Committee Members**

- Canadian Wildlife Service: Joan Eamer
- Yukon Department of Renewable Resources: Bengt Pettersson
- Yukon Department of Economic Development: Perry Diamond
- Yukon Conservation Society: Craig Olsen, Bob van Dijken
- Northern Research Institute: Clint Sawicki
- NCE staff: Aynslie Ogden
- open seat for FN/CYFN (Don willing if costs to attend are covered)
- open meeting for all who attend, pull in others when needed for specific issues

## Strategic Plan

The group agreed to recommend the following guidelines to the Management Committee for the dimensions of a multi-year, rolling strategic or business plan to be constructed by the Management Committee for the NCE:



In addition, the plan needs to include terms of reference of management committee and advisory committee as well as evaluation measures/indices for each objective.

## Closing

The meeting closed by developing a list of action items requiring follow-up. Many participants expressed satisfaction at the work that was accomplished and enthusiasm for the follow up work to be carried out by the Management Committee and others. A suggestion was made that a meeting such as this one should be held on an annual basis.

## **Appendix A**

### **NCE Visioning Session Invitation List**

#### **2000-2001 Steering Committee Members**

- Cindy Dixon, Council of Yukon First Nations
- Robert Jackson, Council of Yukon First Nations
- Mark O'Donoghue, Association for Yukon Communities
- Craig Olsen, Yukon Conservation Society
- Neils Jacobson, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board
- Joy Waters, Department of Renewable Resources, Government of Yukon
- Bengt Pettersson, Department of Renewable Resources, Government of Yukon
- Janet Moodie, Department of Economic Development, Government of Yukon
- Harley Trudeau, Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Yukon
- Joan Eamer, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada/Wildlife Management Advisory Council - North Slope
- Stewart Cohen, Impacts and Adaptations Research Group, Environment Canada
- Aron Senkpiel, Arts and Science, Yukon College

#### **Key NCE Contacts**

- Perry Diamond, Department of Economic Development, Government of Yukon
- Bob Collins, Department of Economic Development, Government of Yukon
- Sally Webber, Yukon College
- Clint Sawicki, Northern Research Institute, Yukon College
- Duncan Sinclair, Yukon Development Corporation
- Gordon Voogd, Yukon Development Corporation
- Don Flinn, Energy Solutions Centre
- Larry Duguay, Energy Solutions Centre
- Sabine Schweiger, Environmental Co-ordinator, City of Whitehorse
- Joe Ballantyne, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
- Doug Caldwell, Executive Council Office
- Bob van Dijken, Yukon Conservation Society
- John Pattimore, First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, Lands and Resources Department
- Don Trudeau, Selkirk First Nation, Pelly Crossing
- Shannon Cooper, Village of Mayo
- Will Jones, Alsek Renewable Resources Council
- Eric Taylor, Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Research Network
- Wendy Avis, Climate Change Outreach, Environment Canada
- Debby Corbin, Office of Energy Efficiency, Natural Resources Canada
- Peter Johnson, University of Ottawa/Canadian Polar Commission
- Frank Duerden, Ryerson Polytechnic University
- David Hik, University of Alberta
- Chris Burn, Carleton University
- John Newton, John Newton and Associates