

# WORKING TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together.  
African proverb.

## Are you making a big enough difference?

You've got big aspirations for achieving your environmental mandate and improving our planet. Are you making enough of a difference?

It's time to think beyond solutions offered within the confines of your own organization. Enough of the piecemeal approach. The planet needs you to amplify your efforts with bigger, broader and more far reaching solutions.

## Working across boundaries is the way forward

The solution is to work with folks in different organizational silos, economic sectors, jurisdictional boundaries and with people who know things you don't. Within this diversity, you can create holistic, ingenious and durable solutions you could never imagined on your own.

## If it's so easy, why aren't more of us doing this?

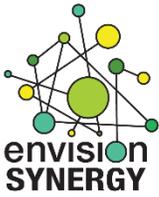
Because it's comfortable, we're often working with those we know, in our own organizational silos or sectors. When we try to achieve bigger environmental results collectively, it feels like uncharted territory. So many questions arise:

- Who's in-charge? We're so accustomed to "someone" being in charge that when we want to truly collaborate, it's often not clear what to do.
- How do I actually work this way? Working collectively often means a new mindset, and can feel threatening to our notions of being an expert.
- How are my interests met if we work this way?
- What about all those group dynamics that invariably arise? It's super easy to feel frustrated – sometimes to the point of giving up.

## Here's how you can work this way

Working together across sectors, silos and skill sets involves these general steps:

- **Lay the ground work to collaborate.** That means, among other things: shifting your mindset, securing leadership support and learning tools for collaboration
- Decide **what** problem you want to work on
- Identify the **right collaborators** – those with **complementary** strengths and organizational mandates to yours



# Collaborative, Multi-organizational Environmental Solutions Overview

- Meet to **explore joint interest** in the problem and in working together
- **Work on** joint and collective **solutions**.

## envision would love to get you started

**envision SYNERGY** -- helps you navigate roadblocks to working outside your organization so that you set the stage for holistic, creative environmental solutions. Together we work through the three essential elements<sup>1</sup> of a collaborative, boundary spanning effort:

1. **What** problem you're working on/what results you seek
2. **Who** should be working on it
3. **How** will you work together

In figuring out the "what-who-how," you'll get:

- Increased understanding of the challenge/problem at hand
- Clarity on why or if participating makes sense for you
- A resource map showing what you and others can contribute to such an effort
- Identification of whether any major "interest" is/are missing
- Resources to use in future, similar efforts

## Ready to begin?

**envision** can help! We can:

- Hold an initial conversation to explore reasons you're thinking a collaborative approach may be appropriate
- Provide you with a workbook that describes the approach we follow to help you collaborate

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## Who is envision SYNERGY?

**envision SYNERGY** – environmental solutions, together – amplifies the effectiveness of groups, organizations and companies working for healthy air, land and water. As this complex work needs "all hands on deck," envision catalyzes collaboration across silos, organizations, jurisdictions, sectors, and academic backgrounds. It supports the creation of innovative, broadly-supported solutions that foster systems thinking and span organizational boundaries. Along the way, **envision** builds strong organizations that can successfully carry out their work for greater effect.

Charlotte Young, Ph.D., an environmental psychologist, leads **envision**.

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<sup>1</sup>In addition to participants in my sessions, numerous authors have contributed to my thinking. Contact me for a list of these resources. Thank you to all!