

GLOBAL TECHNOLOGICAL POLICY MAKING  
A BRIEF LECTURE ON  
**CONSENSUS BUILDING**

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Hiroyasu Takase

## SHARING AN ORANGE



- ❑ Two friends have only one orange and both of them want it.
- ❑ They want to share it in a way that they can agree.
- ❑ How can they reach an agreement?

## ENGINEERING SOLUTION



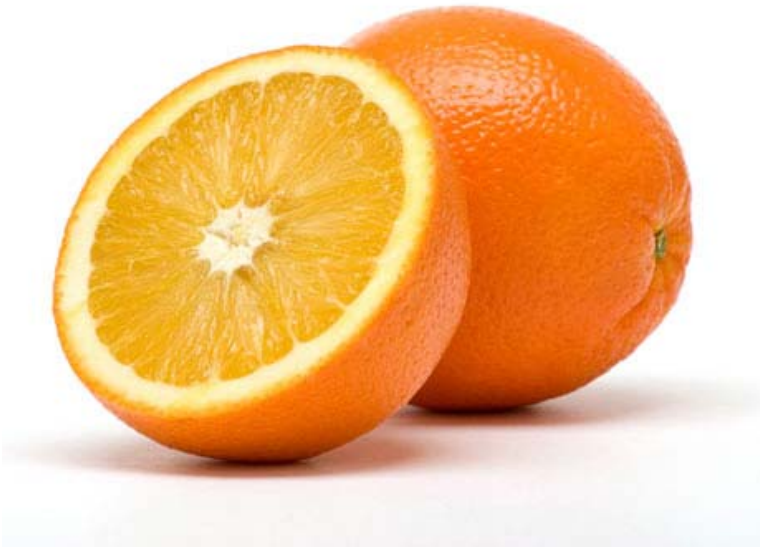
- ❑ Specify a “central line” that splits the orange into two precisely equal portions using a non-destructive remote weight scale.
- ❑ Cut it across the central line with a laser knife.

We have to cut two of the sections to lose some juice.  
Can I take the juice?



## POLITICAL SOLUTION

- ❑ One cut the orange into two halves and the other choose which one to take so that the first one has to do his best.

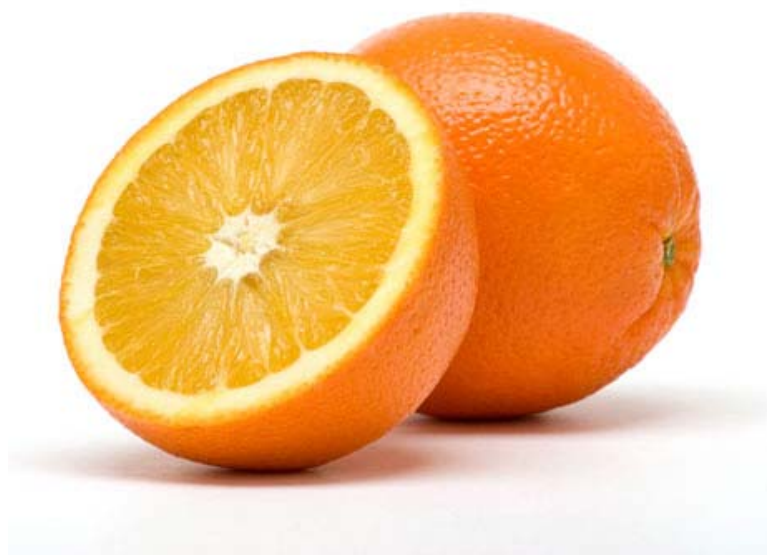


After you.

No, you go first.



# SOLUTION THROUGH DIALOGUE



- Ah, you want to make marmalade! You may need just orange peel then. Please take all of it.



## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS BUILDING

- Consensus building is a way to structure and facilitate the process of multi-stakeholder, multi- issue negotiation, using several steps and tools:
  1. identifying stakeholders, assessing their interests, capacities, and potential for reaching consensus-based agreements;
  2. determining whether to proceed with a consensus building process, and starting the process with clear goals, ground rules, work plan and timetable;
  3. using joint fact finding to resolve technical and factual questions and help the group focus on the development of feasible options;
  4. managing the process of deliberation among those stakeholders to maximize the chances for reaching agreements that are technically sound and politically acceptable;
  5. promoting consensus agreements where possible, and enabling near-consensus alternatives when full consensus is not possible;
  6. providing opportunities for stakeholders to revisit and revise their agreements as necessary during the implementation phase.

What we did and what we are going to do.

## Step 1 — Initiate a Consensus Building Process Using Stakeholder Assessment

- First, stakeholders must be brought together by a convenor. In multi-stakeholder negotiations, convenors can help resolve conflicts and build consensus by initiating and supporting a multi-stakeholder process.
  - The goals of the assessment are to:
    - clarify the key issues;
    - identify groups with an interest in those issues;
    - learn the concerns and interests of the stakeholders, and assess their incentives and capacities for building consensus;
    - identify areas of potential agreement and conflict among the stakeholders;
    - suggest a plan for the consensus building process (including its goal ground rules and work plan).

## Step 3 - Initiate a Joint-Fact Finding Process to Handle Complex Scientific and Technical Questions

- This step helps participants agree on the information they need to collect and how gaps or disagreements among technical sources will be handled. Joint fact finding is a process to help stakeholders build a shared understanding of technical and scientific issues and their implications for policy. It can also help resolve disputes about scientific and technical methods, data, findings and interpretations.
- In a joint fact finding process, the stakeholders work jointly to
  - define the scientific/technical questions to be answered;
  - identify and select qualified resource persons to assist the group;



## Step 4 - Deliberate

- This is the stage of a consensus building process where individuals can make major contributions to achieving agreed goals by using the **Mutual Gains Approach**: preparing effectively, focusing on interests, exploring options without committing, and developing shared criteria to guide decision-making.
- **Single text drafting**: When a group is trying to reach agreement on a complex set of issues that will require organizational commitments and potentially legal, regulatory and/or policy changes, it is very useful to use a single text approach to create a unified document reflecting the group's shared understandings and agreements as well as unresolved issues.

## Step 5 - Seek Agreement

- It is important to clarify what we mean by a “consensus agreement.” A consensus agreement is one that all participants can accept or “live with.” Ideally, the group consensus will reflect strong support from all stakeholders. However, not all stakeholders need to strongly support all elements of the agreement for the group to reach consensus, defined as “no dissent.”
- In some cases, despite the group’s best efforts, it is not possible to reach a full consensus, then there are several options for reaching decisions:
  - Voting, perhaps with the requirement that a super-majority (e.g. 2/3) of participants support the proposed agreement.
  - If the group is providing recommendations rather than making decisions, provide a report that explicitly distinguishes recommendations on which there is full consensus, recommendations on which a majority or supermajority of all stakeholder groups agree, and recommendations on which there is no (super)majority agreement.
  - Referring the issues in dispute to an independent individual or group that is recognized as competent and legitimate by all group participants, and seeking a non-binding recommendation or a binding decision on how to resolve the issue.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

### ■ Role playing

- Students assigned for Task1

  - Promoters of “Waste storage in UT project”

- Students assigned for Task2

  - Anti-“Waste storage in UT project”

- Students assigned for Task3 → Regulators

### ■ 45 minutes group discussion followed by 10 minutes presentation based on a “single text”