

SUMMARY OF THE CLAYOQUOT SYMPOSIUM 2003

Tin Wis Resort, Tofino, November 25-28



Hosted by the Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education, and Training

Supported by the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, West Coast Learning Network, Westcoast Women's Resource Society, the Nuu-chah-nulthaht/West Coast Vancouver Island Aquatic Management Society, and dozens of individual volunteers.

PROCEEDINGS SUMMARY

The Clayoquot Symposium 2003 adopted the theme of "Health Across the Water" in a four day workshop designed to facilitate dialogue between local communities and academics.

On the first day, we gathered to discuss issues that influence community health within the Clayoquot Biosphere Reserve Region. Panel members shared information about different aspects of community health and described approaches for assessing and improving it. Ken Andrews (Ucluelet teacher) explained the importance of having a sense of community belonging and ownership. He described the success of the Ucluelet Elementary School Youth Leadership Program in convincing kids to be active agents in shaping the school and their communities. Holly Dolan (University of Victoria) shared some of the results from the Coasts Under Stress Project which asks how social and political change affects individuals and families. Coastal community members in Prince Rupert, Port Hardy, Ucluelet and Tofino rated their health at a significantly lower level than did individuals from all of BC or Canada. Craig Stephen (Centre for Coastal Health) challenged participants to think in terms of a holistic model of health. Nowadays, mainstream medicine is focused on the technology of health, rather than considering the person within the context of his/her environment. From a holistic perspective, health involves many aspects of life: peace, shelter, education, income, social justice, equity, food, etc. Mary McKeogh (Community Health Nurse for Ucluelet, Toquaht and Hesquiaht First Nations) candidly described health issues related to past oppression and residential schools, lack of education, diet, drug and alcohol abuse, overcrowding due to housing shortages, sexual abuse and lack of social services. Communities need to work together, and encourage people to seek and use resources proactively instead of just helping them to cope with crisis. It is very important to integrate cultural teachings into health, education and social programs.

Community members and panellists discussed the challenges of determining predictors of community health. There are a number of complex interactions. For example, socioeconomic restructuring closes opportunities for some and creates opportunities for others depending on education, support from family, etc. The main focus of the discussion was on the importance of truly understanding the cultural context to find solutions for First Nations communities. First Nations' mentors play a critical role. Researchers were encouraged to have a better understanding of the people they choose to partner with, and research with. It is time to work together with much respect for one another.

Adrienne Mason summarized the results from the Westcoast Women's Resources Society Community Needs Survey. She highlighted program access and affordability, and communication about what services are available as key concerns. The survey also produced a list of specific types of service needs.

Small groups of symposium participants focused on specific community health issues and discussed possible steps toward solutions. These steps included suggestions for programs to celebrate our cultures, train youth, educate people on the link between human health and the environment, promote regional resource management and access, and create more recreational opportunities using existing resources. These ideas were shared through presentations made by each group facilitator. Many of the ideas and conversations were captured in sketches made by the artist-in-residence, Clare Singleton. Linda Myres (Bamfield Community School and West Coast Learning Network) finished the day with her impressions and appreciation for being able to participate. She encouraged participants to pass on what they learned at the symposium to others who could not attend.

The second day of the symposium was devoted to considering the effects of tourism on community health. Local panellists shared their views of what tourism has to offer to our communities and what can be done to minimize negative aspects. Anne Morgan (Toquaht First Nation) described her interest in developing a meaningful program of cultural exchange so that Toquaht First Nation could begin to benefit from tourism. Danielle Edwards (Ucluelet) stressed the need to maintain other sectors and not allow tourism to drive the cost of living too high. Norma Dryden (Tofino) highlighted tourism as an opportunity for sharing our success in conserving the west coast environment, as well as learning about ourselves through interactions with visitors. She pointed out infrastructure challenges brought on by tourism expansion. Sidney Sam (Ahousaht) described the desecration of sacred sites and disrespect for beaches by tourists. He voiced concerns that Ahousaht bears the costs and acquires no benefits from tourism. Stephen Charleson (Hesquiaht) echoed these concerns. The BC government has carved up Hesquiaht territory into different designations – parks, tree farm licences, marine protected areas, without proper consultation. As a result, locals compete with tourists for access to food in their traditional territory. Michael Tilitzky (Tofino Chamber of Commerce) described local opportunities for environmental education as incredible. He explained that “landmark experiences” during activities such as whale watching help people become sensitive to global issues. Susan Payne (Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce) recognized the challenge of retaining our sense of community with tourism growth and suggested that we organize and work together toward setting controls. She pointed out that tourism may be a catalyst for developing secondary industries and a diverse economy. Not all tourism employment is low paying.

The discussion following the local panel included ideas about how to regulate tourism and how to derive benefits to First Nations. Tourist fees and educational videos are used in other areas, such as Haida Gwaii. Several participants suggested that we need training opportunities for youth to be involved in the tourism industry and that these courses should be delivered in the community. Interpretive internships at the Raincoast Interpretive Centre is one way that we have offered youth educational employment in tourism. Information from First Nations about their concerns and recommendations needs to be available for tourist operators and guides. First Nations need to decide how to share parts of their culture and how to protect what is sacred. It was pointed out that it will be difficult to reach consensus on how to regulate tourist activities at a detailed level. Overall, we lack planning for tourism development, and consequently development in Tofino and Ucluelet seems to have no limits. Special places, such as old forests surrounding pocket beaches are being cleared for development.

The afternoon panel of academics shared their perspectives on how communities can cope with the negative aspects of tourism.

Nicole Vaugeois (Dept. of Recreation and Tourism Management, Malaspina University College) stressed the importance of understanding tourism and posed some key questions about peoples’ perceptions of its impacts. Her research examined the transition of people from resource extraction to tourism-related employment on Vancouver Island. She was surprised to find a consistently high level of satisfaction with tourism-related jobs.

Alison Gill (Dept. of Resources and Environmental Management, SFU) suggested that the problems of tourism development, such as increasing land prices and loss of the small town feeling, have occurred in other areas, such as the British countryside (where she grew up) and Whistler. We might learn from

others' experiences although these problems tend to be complex. Our situation needs to be better understood. For example, Pacific Rim National Park is a huge draw for tourists and we need to examine the communities' relationships with the Park. Planning exercises, taking the time (up to six months) to develop a vision, political will, and a strong confident council are necessary to deal with the forces of development. Alison suggested that Community Futures could be helpful in community visioning and referred to a previous government program known as Community, Tourism Action Plans (CTAPs)¹.

Geoff Wall (University of Waterloo) recommended that we learn more about the implications of tourism of different types for communities of different types. He suggested that we build agreement upon the scale and types of tourism ownership we want, where it can occur, conditions for outside investors, etc. Tourism is a form of urbanization, and therefore creates demand for water, electricity, and sewage treatment, and gives rise to problems such as pollution. Tourists consume more resources than residents. Through regulations, Official Community Plans, bylaws, etc., communities can control and limit tourism development.

The discussion from the floor pointed out the challenges of finding resources to discuss solutions, involve decision-makers, build relationships between the Park and communities, and implement tourism plans. Partnerships between community and universities were suggested as one way to move things forward. International tourism is expected to grow, as are the number of communities becoming tourism destinations. Tourism needs to be complemented by other activities to maintain economic diversification. Tourism dovetails with other industries, such as forestry and agriculture, when it is given an educational slant.

Geoff Wall identified three stages to tourism planning. The first is problem identification (as we have done at the community meetings and symposium), the second is to examine how widely felt these problems are, through surveys or the like, and the third is to hold smaller community meetings to address the problems in an inclusive fashion. It is important to remember that not all issues are well suited for public forums. Relationship building is critical.

Several people raised concerns about communities dropping out of planning processes. One of the reasons is volunteer burn-out, another is lack of education and outreach to community members and a third is First Nations land ownership has not been settled. Alison Gill suggested that one way to shortcut the process is to ask a local person to write a discussion paper that suggests a way forward for the planning process. A short discussion paper or survey can have a major impact on local decision makers. It is important to include business groups in the process.

First Nation's culture is one of the main features of the region to be celebrated and shared with visitors. First Nations want to be involved and need to be respectfully included. Unfortunately, some First Nations people who initiate tourism ventures face racist attitudes.

Barb Beasley recapped Day Two by emphasizing the importance of adopting a positive attitude and a proactive approach in dealing with tourism. If we think of ourselves as care-takers or educators of tourists we will go a long way towards developing appropriate systems for managing tourism activity and growth. We are just beginning to partner with academics to acquire the resources we need for planning.

The third day of the symposium provided information on the rationale for coastal zone planning and some of the processes that it requires. Tony Bennett (Director for Area C, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District), Mike Amrhein (Director of the Secretariat for the Central Region Board) and Andrew Day (Executive Director for the West Coast Vancouver Island Aquatic Management Board) described the status of coastal zone planning within the Clayoquot Biosphere Reserve Region and the reasons for pursuing it further. The Central Region Board has been asked by the Province to develop a work plan for

¹ Tofino was engaged in developing a CTAP in the late 1980s. The plan was never implemented because of lack of funds (M. Fraser, pers. comm.)

coastal zone planning. The Regional District is encouraging a process that would gather public participation and information to better inform decision-making on zoning and applications for licenses and tenures. The Aquatic Management Board supports coastal zone planning because it will help prevent cumulative impacts, match use to capacity on an area basis, and minimize risk. The Aquatic Management Board sees a greater role for Nuu-chah-nulth traditional management approaches as resource management shifts from licenses to area-based tenures. The Board's role will be to clarify the intent and priorities of the process, help to design an appropriate process, help to attract the resources that would make it happen, and help maintain a sense of humour. Community members raised concerns about fish farming, and how much local control there would be (rather than provincial) over a planning process.

Kelly Vodden (Centre for Coastal Studies and Inner Coast Natural Resources Centre) presented several examples of coastal planning processes in different parts of Canada. Some of the key elements of successful processes include: setting clear objectives, good leadership, effective public involvement, sufficient time, starting on a small doable area, recognizing existing aboriginal rights, incorporating traditional knowledge in a respectful way, and sharing information. Kelly suggested the Community Mapping Network of BC as a good option for bringing information together from a number of different sources and making it available widely.

Nadine Crookes (Ahousesht First Nation and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve) presented a conceptual model for how to incorporate traditional First Nations knowledge and management approaches in a meaningful fashion. The "totem of sustainability" based on knowledge from Central Region Nuu-chah-nulth elders and Hawii (hereditary chiefs) stacks symbols of spirituality, ceremony and ritual, roles and responsibilities, and the ecosystem around a core of respect - "*ʔiisaak*". The totem will be used to organize data on traditional knowledge in a database so that it can be meaningful to communities involved in planning processes. In response Barney Williams Jr. (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation) emphasized that it is good to make everyone aware of the things that are important to his people. He described several ceremonies, rituals, roles and responsibilities that continue to be carried out.

Craig Paskin (Tofino) described principles for facilitating meaningful public participation in planning processes. A good process has three foundations: it has core values, it is orientated toward making decisions, and it is driven by objectives rather than techniques. The public has a right to make sure that their values are incorporated into decisions that will affect their lives. The public needs to understand how decisions are made and how they can influence decisions. Techniques like open houses should not drive the process. Instead, the tools need to serve the objectives and match the desired level of participation. Approaches range from providing information on a website to empowering the public through citizen juries and referendums.

Rosaline Canessa (Dept. of Geography, University of Victoria) shared her expertise on how maps can be used to explore trends, conflicts and problem areas in planning processes. Information gathering is the critical starting point. Rosaline suggested the Pacific Coastal Resources Atlas on the Community Mapping Network website for acquiring baseline data and then adding experiences and observations from local people who live on the water to validate information. The main value of GIS is to provide a focal point for discussion and get all relevant parties (not just techno-geeks) involved in analyses. Maps can illustrate where different interests conflict and focus attention on building a community vision. Scenario building allows people to see how their values and priorities will play out if they make different choices.

The general discussion addressed concerns about the security of sensitive material in GIS, the difficulty of attempting to reach consensus in multi-stakeholder processes, the frustration of not being heard in public processes if views are counter to the power brokers' views, the challenge of engaging in transformation with First Nations whose culture is based on tradition and continuity, and finally, the challenge of understanding one another. Mark Kepkey closed the session on coastal zone planning by

urging participants to share what they had learned with others, and encouraging people to tune in to future information sessions.

The afternoon of the third day provided an opportunity to hear about processes and organizations that address issues of community health.

Mary Martin described the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Healing Project. Working with survivors of residential schools, Mary and Levi Martin use cultural teachings and provide workshops on unity, healthy grieving, language and self-esteem to help people overcome trauma. Mary and Levi cover Ahousaht, Hot Springs Cove, Toquaht, Tla-o-qui-aht and Ucluelet. The program also reaches the communities of Nanaimo, Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle and other places where Tla-o-qui-aht people live.

Stan Boychuk (Clayoquot Biosphere Trust) and Glen Jamieson (Mt Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve) presented information about the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserve Network. The Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve has uniquely benefited from a \$12 million federal endowment fund that supports research, education and capacity building in the region. The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve (including all watersheds that flow into the Strait of Georgia from Nanaimo to Horn Lake) is working towards opening a world-class nature interpretive centre. They hope to generate funding by selling their own digital currency to collectors. As close neighbours, the two Reserves hope to collaborate on some projects, as well as share ideas within the network of 12 Canadian and 411 international Reserves.

In response to the question, how is the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve doing, Sharmalene Mendis (University of Saskatoon) described the results of her public survey. She found a lack of understanding about the Reserve and a desire to know more. Many people shared the same views regardless of their different camps. They valued the Biosphere Trust in providing a forum where people could speak wearing a different hat.

Symposium participants commented on the important role of the CBT in building trust, spearheading discussions, promoting environmental and social values, transcending political boundaries, engaging youth, raising awareness, and providing support to communities to pursue local projects.

The symposium wrap-up was done by Rod Dobell (CLARET Co-chair, University of Victoria) and Barney Williams Jr. (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation). Rod spoke about the difficulty of reconciling different cultures and different values. In his view the gulf is not vast and unbridgeable. CLARET and the CBT have been working to find the shared context, to facilitate the discussion. Barney said that an elder told him today that he was excited and sees us working toward unity. His prayer and hope is that we continue that process. Barney explained that he knows how important it is to keep hold of his culture and his people. He is willing to share if we are sincere.

Gary Shaw (Tofino) led a discussion on the next steps for CLARET. There were a number of suggestions for future events: a symposium hosted in a First Nations village using traditional protocol, a celebratory dinner, a GIS session to work through a small planning problem, allowing youth to design part of the agenda for the next Symposium, a workshop on Hahuulthe and the roles of different people in Nuu-chah-nulth communities, and a language course.

Levi Martin (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation) led participants in a closing prayer in his language.

On the fourth day of the symposium, Andrew Day, executive director of the West Coast Vancouver Island Aquatic Management Board, led a focused discussion on the general topic of fisheries management on the West Coast. Andrew began by describing the history of fisheries on the West Coast, and, in particular, how it came to pass that west coast communities have fewer fishing licenses than in the past; and fewer benefits as well.

Members of the audience contributed their perspectives on the situation. People commented on the decline of benefits to west coast communities as well as some recent successes in aquatic management initiatives.

NINE MAJOR THEMES OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The following list highlights some major themes of discussion at the Clayoquot Symposium 2003. These themes were identified by analyzing the text of the symposium proceedings. The analysis involved the use of a “grounded coding system” to develop unifying themes out of a flow of specific comments by participants. The themes raised most frequently were compiled into a list, which was then revised for meaningfulness and accuracy, including the option of combining or splitting themes to better reflect the actual experience of the symposium.

In any effort to highlight key aspects of a complex discussion, subjectivity plays a role. Other themes could be generated using different approaches. Therefore, the following material should be understood as a non-definitive starting point for further reflection and development of ideas for action in the communities.

The themes are representative of some major concerns of our communities. However, in order to build a path of action, these ideas require further critique and development. For example, we might ask of Theme #7, exactly whom in our communities do we need to empower, given the diversity of perspectives and conditions? For another example, we might ask of Theme #5, exactly what is the nature of the challenge that we see in the First Nations’ concept of “*ʔiisaak*”, and does the translation as “respect” really do justice to this challenge? In the future, the Clayoquot Alliance for Research, Education, and Training intends to pursue just such critique and discussion.

1. The value of First Nations’ traditions and culture

“There are many historical things passed on to me from elders. Ernest David, Paul Hayes. Paul never said much, but when you sat down with him, he could talk for hours and hours. He told many stories about the fearlessness of Tla-o-qui-aht, about Kennedy Lake, about the area. There is so much to be told. The real stories will come out. There will come a time when they will say, ‘Okay, I’m ready to tell you.’ Then we will have the real truth.” – Tom Curley

Symposium participants repeatedly noted that First Nations have much to teach us about community health. These cultures have lived productively in the region for millennia.

Several First Nations people spoke eloquently about the power of their traditional knowledge and teachings to bring about positive change in people and communities. Many projects, including the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council’s Healing Project and the Ahousaht Holistic Centre, demonstrate this power. Whereas other themes in this summary point to a need for deliberate planning exercises, First Nations cultures can enrich this European-descended approach with a more holistic view. Simply to look at planning not only as a question of information and analysis, but also as a question of community health and healing, is a lesson in holistic management we should heed.

Day Three of the symposium directly addressed the question of integrating First Nations and European-descended planning approaches. Participants heard a presentation of First Nations “*hahuutʔ*”, very roughly meaning their management and ownership systems, that attempted to make it accessible to other cultures. The key image in this presentation was a “totem of sustainability” that incorporates spirituality, ceremonies and rituals, roles and responsibilities, and ecosystems in a holistic model whose core relationship is “*ʔiisaak*”, roughly meaning respect.

Some people expressed doubts about how compatible First Nations and European-descended management approaches really are. Does “integration” inevitably privilege one or another perspective?

During the symposium wrap-up, there was a suggestion that First Nations, CLARET, and CBT host workshops focusing specifically on *hahuuʻi*. Many would like to understand more about First Nations approaches to problems that have vexed our communities for decades. First Nations participants agreed that there is a great need for other cultures to understand this key concept better.

2. Working with youth

“Communities belong in schools, and schools belong in communities.” – Ken Andrews

Youth were conspicuously absent from the symposium. Many participants suggested that this is a common oversight, and one that needs to be corrected. Youth should not only be attending events like this, but they should be helping us to plan at least some of them. The successes of the Ucluelet Elementary School’s Youth Leadership program, and the role of young people in maintaining the Tin Wis resort, leave no doubt about their ability to commit and follow through on important initiatives. CBT and CLARET need to make youth involvement a priority in their activities.

Many of our communities’ greatest anxieties center around the condition of our young people. Drug and alcohol abuse is openly practiced by youth in many communities. There is often little occasion or impetus to take part in the activities that draw almost a million tourists to our region each year. Employment options are limited mainly to tourism-oriented services, and the perceived lack of alternatives may be driving our youth away.

In addition to involvement in projects and planning, youth need to be involved with their elders. In First Nations communities, this can be an especially powerful connection to make for building a sense of identity and healing. In other communities, there is also concern that youth are “orphaned” by their parents’ hectic schedules during tourist season. Mentorship programs and similar initiatives may provide an avenue for youth to engage.

Ultimately, youth need to speak for themselves. This happened at a Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council youth forum held in the same month as the Clayoquot Symposium 2003. Clearly, more of the same is called for.

3. Environmental health as an integral, threatened component of community health

“We can’t address the health of ecosystems, but we can address the ecosystems of health.”
– Craig Stephen

Symposium participants emphasized that the health of our communities is closely intertwined with the health of our environment. They also expressed many concerns that the booming tourism industry poses a threat to environmental health. Special places for cultural and spiritual connection are being lost; fisheries are at risk of contamination; and habitats are being disturbed. For First Nations, these relationships are felt especially strongly as a holistic need to be connected and productively engaged with one’s environment. Accordingly, the topic of a healthy, safe, clean environment was the focus of a break-out group on Day One.

Almost every major theme identified in this summary suggests ways of ensuring environmental health. Effective engagement of young people; heeding the vast knowledge of First Nations and other long-time residents; self-empowerment; diversifying our economy and those that participate in it; increasing community access to adjacent resources – a healthy environment requires working in all of these directions, building the will and the capacity to ensure environmental health over both the short and the long term.

4. Economic diversification and equity among communities

“Tourism does not profit or benefit Ahousaht; but we are affected by it. We see lots of boats and kayaks going by; but we don’t see any benefits. We are right in the middle of a prime area for tourism, but we don’t get a share.” – Sid Sam

“Other sectors are dropping in activity and they need to be part of the life of the town. We need to maintain balance if we are to survive. It is not a good idea to base everything on tourism. I don’t want to live in a community like that.” – Danielle Edwards

A key component of community health is a diversity of economic activities. Such diversity makes us less dependent on the ups and downs of individual industries. It also helps us to take best advantage of the wide range of natural and social assets found in our communities. Symposium participants expressed a repeated concern that the growing dominance of tourism in some communities works against diversity. However, academic guest speakers and others noted that the full range of tourism operations could actually be considered more than a single industry. They also reported that tourism generally has not experienced the boom and bust cycles that we experience with logging and other traditional livelihoods.

In some of our communities, tourism boom and bust are actually a *seasonal* phenomenon, and this is a concern. Some challenges of a single-industry situation do arise. When an entire community is caught up at the same time in the hectic pace of the tourist season, there is little continuity of volunteer resources, community gatherings, and adults’ availability to youth. There is also an intense seasonal pressure on existing infrastructure. Many academic guests and community members noted that working in tourism is a choice that people usually make gladly. Yet there was also wide recognition that we need to encourage both old and new industries, providing employment for all types of people in all parts of our region.

The challenges of one-industry towns are matched in our region by challenges of a “one-town industry”. While Tofino, and now increasingly Ucluelet, are experiencing extremely rapid growth in tourism, First Nations communities like Hot Springs Cove, Esowista, Ittatsoo, Maaqtusiis, and Opitsaht see few of the economic benefits. Taking a cue from First Nations, symposium participants recognized that the health of one community depends in large part on the health of the whole region. Therefore, they called for a regional approach to economic and tourism planning, as well as activities that build understanding of the challenges each of our communities face. The Clayoquot Symposium is itself an example of this kind of event.

5. Respect (*ʔiisaak*)

“When our friends came across the water, we First Nations said they can live there because we’re not living there. You’re welcome. We showed you how to survive in this environment. We all know what happened. Nothing was signed. Nothing was asked. We shared. Respect: The understanding and love of another human being. Even our word for you, *mamaʔni*, which means people coming across the water – that is a term of respect.” – Barney Williams, Jr.

Just as “*ʔiisaak*”, or respect, forms the core of the totem of sustainability presented during Day Three (see Theme #1), so it was an ethical thread that ran through discussions on all topics during the symposium. First Nations people were especially emphatic that respect for each other’s perspectives is the foundation of community health. This has not been the overriding principle so far in the economic development of the region, resulting in the expropriation of First Nations’ traditional territories and a dramatic inequity in the distribution of benefits across communities.

Several people also noted that respect is not only a concept to be applied to our relationships with each other – we also need to respect ourselves. This may in fact be just as great a challenge as respecting each other, but it is the first step. Many community health projects described by participants focus on exactly this aspect of *ʔiisaak*.

In the context of management and planning, respect for each others’ knowledge, and respect for the ownership of that knowledge, is critical. Protocols exist in local communities for the proper treatment of this knowledge. In addition, CLARET has engaged the communities to develop a Standard of Conduct for academic research in the region. This Standard will be revised over time as our communities learn more about the rich implications of *ʔiisaak* as a principle of behavior.

As a core concept of community health, the theme of *ʔiisaak* is linked to many of the other major themes identified in this summary. While other themes identify specific assets, challenges, and approaches, *ʔiisaak* sets the basic ground rule of how we proceed.

6. The importance of community events

“We completed a program with the Women’s Resource Centre that was integrated into the community. Women learned to do crafts, and there was open discussion on issues that impact women – which was important because many were afraid to come out of home. Because the gathering wasn’t titled ‘family violence’ or ‘abuse’, they were able to come and speak. At the Holistic Centre we try to get away from naming programs negatively, so people are drawn to a positive name for an opportunity to discuss issues.” – Pam Frank

Community events can play a number of crucial roles in promoting community health. They can help us to build a common identity and mutual respect. They can also be key components in healing various medical and social illnesses that affect our communities. Finally, they can provide the incentive and the spirit that is required to galvanize the volunteer resources of our communities.

These community events do not need to entail focused discussions of healing, culture, or other identified needs. Nor do they need to be grand, expensive affairs. Some of the most striking past successes described during the symposium discussions involved such humble activities as a handful of women making crafts. In fact, calling an event “family violence workshop” might do more harm than good for the cause. If we can bring people out repeatedly to have fun together in a non-threatening context, often the ultimate goods emerge naturally. On more than one occasion, the Westcoast Women’s Resource Society was praised for its work in putting on exactly these kinds of community events.

One major challenge is how to achieve broad participation in community events. For some events, this may not be an acute problem. For other events, such as this year's Clayoquot Symposium, the absence of entire social groups can limit the effectiveness. One solution that was proposed is to take the findings of such forums directly to the absent groups for further exploration, refinement, and partnering.

7. Self-reliance and self-empowerment

"The natural resources here have huge value. So do the cultures. Because of that, you have the power to say to developers: 'No, unless you meet our rules.' What does the developer give back to the community in terms of facilities and infrastructure? You need a strong, confident council to stand up to the forces." – Alison Gill

Our communities have seen much turbulence in recent decades, and much of that has been caused by decisions made outside the region. Fisheries, forestry, social services, and other components of our economies rise and fall with little feeling of control at the community level. Recent trends in provincial legislation may worsen this state of affairs – for example, Bill 48 and Bill 75 expand the types of development that the province can approve over the opposition of local governments. True community health requires that we increase the level of self-reliance and empowerment at the community level. Community control of social services was in fact the topic of one small focus group during the Clayoquot Symposium 2003.

How can we achieve greater self-reliance? One important area to work on is to building on what we already have – distinct local cultures, a wealth of natural resources, and a creative and rooted population. We also have some limited support through laws like the federal Health Act.

With the foundation of a strong shared identity and a commitment to work together, it becomes easier to be self-confident and assertive in managing our natural and cultural wealth. Councils can work from a strong mandate in regulating development. We can begin to look to ourselves, rather than to external forces, for the resources we need.

8. Community access to resources and places

"Starting at least ten years ago our territory got carved up into different designations: parks, tree farm licenses, marine protected areas We were not told that these designations are coming in. There was no consultation. Suddenly one day no hunting is allowed because the campers will call in and say those crazy Indians are shooting at us again." – Stephen Charleson

In working towards greater self-reliance, our communities need to focus on regaining access to the resources that we have lost over the past.

Tourism, which was the focus topic of Day Two, poses many challenges for community access to resources. Many local people expressed a concern that tourism activities and development are crowding them out of cherished locations and resources. Parks have curtailed First Nations' abilities to practice harvests and ceremonies that date to pre-historical times. Tourists harvest First Nations' subsistence foods for recreation. Resorts have been built in secluded places that are special to us.

Key commercial activities have also largely been removed from our communities, and this issue was a focus of Day Four, hosted by the West Coast Vancouver Island Aquatic Management Board (WCVI-AMB). Fisheries license ownership has declined dramatically in our region, and the impacts are both economic and cultural. An entire way of life is at risk.

Increasing community access to resources requires work on a number of fronts simultaneously. The WCVI-AMB is engaged in a number of initiatives with governments – for example, it recently succeeded, together with partner organizations, in having the local gooseneck barnacle fishery re-opened after 5 years of closure. Collaborative planning initiatives, with real power-sharing by governments, are another avenue for securing community access. This was the topic of the morning of Day Three. Of course, the most far-reaching and monumental work being done right now for community access is treaty negotiations between local First Nations and other governments.

9. Clarifying decision-making processes

“We have heard in this symposium that the communities are suspicious and tired of processes. I would argue that they have had too much experience of *bad* processes.” – Craig Paskin

“Some parties will involve the community in processes that don’t respect our beliefs. At what point do we decide that we’re just not power players, so people don’t end up being exasperated at the end?”
– Valerie Langer

Much of the symposium discussion looked at different types of planning as a means of promoting community health: tourism planning, integrated coastal zone planning, and regional economic strategies. Academics, in particular, frequently recommended these kinds of processes to address concerns raised by the participants. While there was little criticism of locally controlled planning processes such as the Official Community Plans in Tofino and Ucluelet, there was much suspicion about provincial and federal planning processes. For example, recent experiences with the Central Region Board were cited as cause for suspicion that the provincial government is unwilling to grant real decision-making power to regional co-management processes.

Will our participation in a planning process pay off in influence over ultimate decisions, or will our perspectives be ignored and our time wasted? During Day Three, we discussed ways of clarifying exactly what communities can expect from a planning process. If communities know what to expect, then they can make effective decisions about investing in the process.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) provides a framework for clarifying the level of power-sharing in a process, as well as objectives, scope, and other elements. Appropriate power-sharing does not happen through promises – it happens through careful design. The IAP2 framework can help our communities to identify the kind of processes we want. Several participants in the symposium suggested that CBT might facilitate the use of frameworks like this, in order to ensure that planning and decision-making processes are well understood and in line with community needs.

Another key way that processes can be clarified is by involving community members directly in technical analysis. Symposium participants were introduced to several new computer-based mapping tools for helping us to penetrate the “black box” that normally surrounds the work of technical consultants. These tools can also help to bring information into a process – like sounds, pictures, and stories – that normally gets left out.