

# Toward A Durable Vision for Sustainable Management of the Delta

Delta Vision  
Blue Ribbon Task Force  
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# Why a vision now?

- Wide agreement that current ways of managing and using Delta cannot continue
- Growing recognition of risks (ecological, seismic, climate change effects, land use changes)
- Recognition that partial solutions will not succeed; a comprehensive approach is needed
- Recognition that the stakes and challenges are large; a long-term vision of a desired future is critical to mobilizing private and public energies and sustaining effort

# Delta is a “wicked” problem

- High stakes to society
- Conflicting values
- Large uncertainties re causes, options for action and likely results of actions
- Established policies, institutions, investments and practices supporting current uses and behaviors
- Fragmentation of societal capacity to understand and to act

# Broad action needed

- State of California policies and investments will be critical, but insufficient alone
- Must energize and mobilize other governments (including federal), but most importantly, private individuals, firms and non-governmental organizations
- Must get public policy incentives and distributions of risk and liabilities aligned with vision
- Should work with key private institutions to support vision (e.g., financial institutions, insurers)

# EO S-17-06 charge: A durable vision

1. I hereby initiate the Delta Vision and establish an independent Blue Ribbon Task Force to develop a durable vision for sustainable management of the Delta.
- (d) ...Sustainable management of the Delta means managing the Delta over the long term to restore and maintain identified functions and values that are determined to be important to the environmental quality of the Delta and the economic and social well being of the people of the state...priority functions and values will be identified..

# A vision provides direction, energizes and sustains, but a vision alone is insufficient

EO S-17-06 directs Delta Vision BRTF:

- 1 (e) “to develop a strategic plan...to implement...public policy changes, public and private investment strategies..
- 1 (f) Develop recommendations on institutional changes and funding mechanisms necessary... may include...oversight, land use and implementation authorities.”

# A vision is not (but can inform):

- Legislation
- Executive action (governor or agency)
- Allocation of public resources
- CEQA, NEPA or other governmental regulation
- Engineering of any project
- Public or private investment

# Opportunity of a vision

- Define “the problem”
- Clarify values
- Identify a desired future
- Establish priorities
- Make judgments about sufficiency of understanding for policy making
- Identify the institutions, policies and incentives which will energize multiple sectors of society toward the vision
- Identify major strategies

# Available ideas (at least 29 ideas, visions, principles, scenarios..)

- Principles (examples):
  1. SCG
  2. Delta Protection Act
  3. 1998 business coalition
- Visions, scenarios, developing ideas:
  1. SCG (two potential visions + specific ideas)
  2. BDCP (four options)
  3. DRMS (12 to 15 building blocks and 3 test scenarios)
  4. External submissions (9)
  5. PPIC (8, sorted to 5)
  6. Ecosystem Restoration Program
  7. Suisun Marsh

# More information coming

- Science program's two work shops on in-Delta and around Delta conveyance
- External reviews of DRMS Phase 1
- Assessments of BDCP options
- State of Delta knowledge reports
- Ecosystem Restoration Program draft conservation strategy
- Surface storage plan formulation report

# Define the problem

- Various definitions offered, often related to role (e.g., AB 1200 focus on levees)
- Common elements of problem:
  1. Decline of species (including listed species) and their food
  2. Unreliable water supply
  3. Lower than desired water quality
  4. Delta now a human designed system
- Important dimensions of difference:
  1. Spatial scale? (only Delta? or more?)
  2. Which factors? (Water? Eco? Land uses? Other?)
  3. What causes? (Poor understanding? Poor policies? Perverse incentives? Other?)

# First example of problem definition: Who uses water from the Delta?

- Common definition:
  1. “Southern California”
  2. Water exporters (esp. SWP, CVP)
- Alternative definitions:
  1. From whole watershed
  2. Accurate list of how water diverted and used
- Question: Are current policy making processes adequate to understand and manage water use re Delta?

# Two more examples of problem definition: Flood risk and ecosystem protection

- Common definition of flood risk:
  1. Delta levees and in-Delta water flows
- Alternative definitions add:
  1. Out-of-Delta flood management
- Common definition of ecosystem protection:
  1. In Delta mitigation of projects
- Alternative definitions add:
  1. Shift from project mitigation to ecosystem in Delta
  2. Include out of Delta ecosystem policies

# Clarify values and principles

## Common elements (e.g., 4 of 9 from SCG):

1. Must change
2. Delta ecosystem a treasure
3. Reliable water supply and quality are important and Delta should play role
4. Out of Delta actions needed

## Important dimensions of difference:

1. Water uses, especially exports, and conveyance
2. Determination of “rights” especially to water and distribution of risks and liabilities (e.g., for levees)
3. Types of policies (e.g., direct public action vs. incentives for private action)

# Identify a desired future

- **Common elements:**
  1. Reliable water of desired quality
  2. Enhanced ecosystem
  3. In Delta uses valued and continued, especially agriculture, legacy towns and recreation
- **Dimensions of difference:**
  1. Animating idea? (e.g., eco? reliable water? agriculture? Delta as a place warranting special status beyond current uses?)
  2. Time frames? (next few years vs. decades)
  3. How comprehensive?
  4. What to do in near-term future?

# Establish priorities

- **Common elements:**
  1. Ecosystem
  2. Water availability, quality and reliability
  3. Delta as place with valued uses (especially: agriculture, legacy towns, recreation)
  4. Effective governance
- **Dimensions of difference:**
  1. First priority to? (eco? agriculture? in Delta uses?)
  2. How to address other services from Delta?
  3. What assurances and/or transition strategies are needed for current uses?

# Make judgments about sufficiency of understanding for policy making

- Common elements:
  1. More known now than a decade ago
  2. Still significant gaps, especially in making science relevant to policy
  3. Expectation that adaptive management is needed
- Dimensions of difference:
  1. Whether enough is known to make major policy decisions?
  2. What information is missing? (On species? On factors affecting water quality? On impacts of alternative conveyance designs? On institutional dynamics?)

# Identify the institutions, policies and incentives which will energize multiple sectors of society toward the vision

## Gaps:

1. Little on these issues in available ideas, visions or principles (SCG urged to defer)
2. Analyses of current institutions, policies and incentives not reviewed (but some do exist)

## Strategy for DV, starting in 2007 and through 2008 strategic plan:

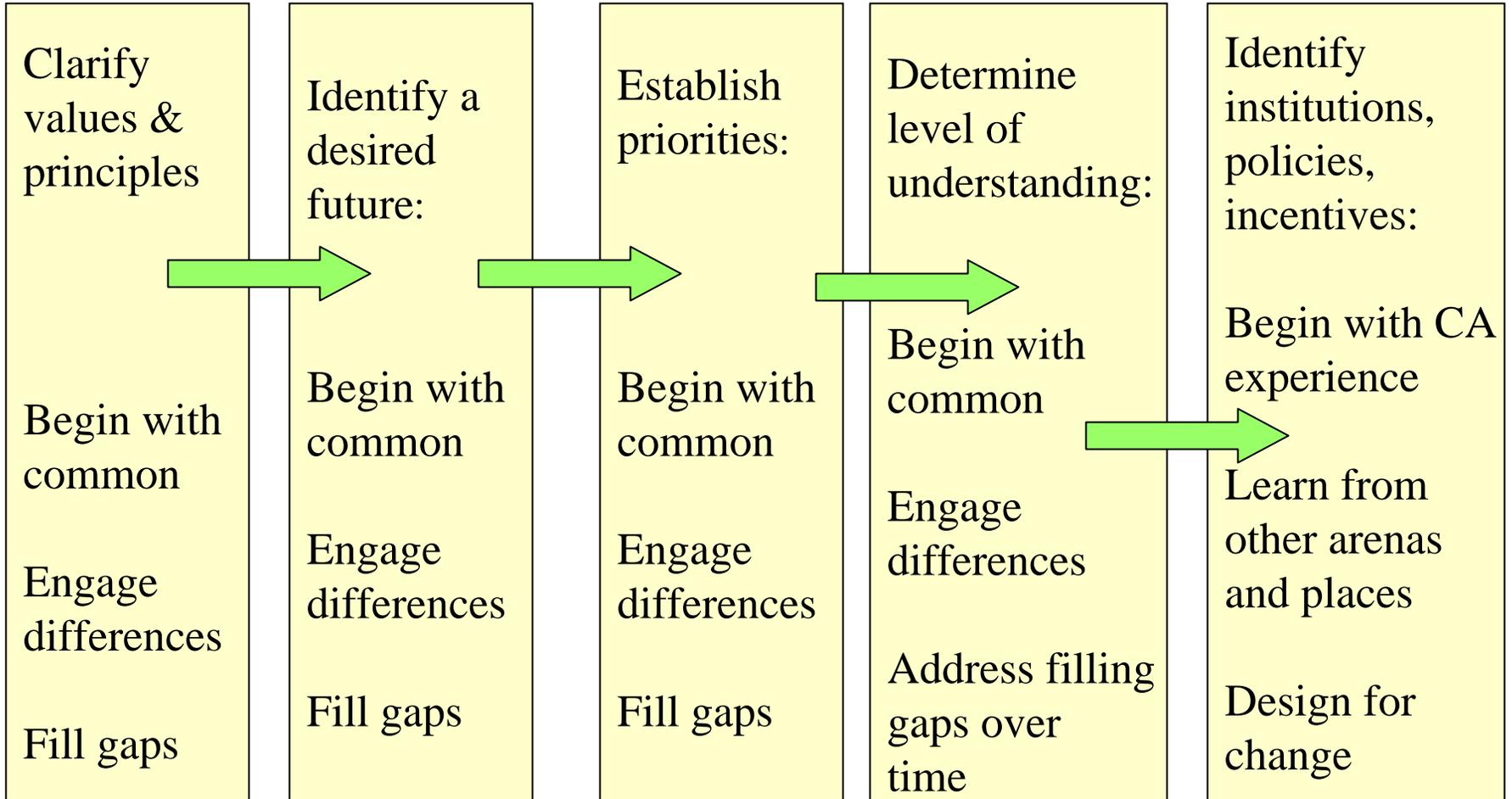
1. Begin with CA experience
2. Learn from other arenas and places
3. Design for change and durability

# Identify major strategies

**NOTE: This is the major focus of Delta Vision in 2008**

- Common elements:
- Dimensions of difference:
- Gaps:

Filter for inclusion throughout process: Decisions regarding what is required to meet EO charge or will be addressed later.



Forward to the Strategic Plan