



# Sustainability & Teamwork

## When Competing Interests Collide

Description	Identifying major infrastructure projects where claims can be made for and against their sustainability and exploring these claims through the positions of stakeholders
Task Type	Following preparation time, can be an in-class or tutorial activity or could be used as an assessment piece
Time	Very flexible, from an in-class discussion to an assessment with several weeks to prepare. Some out-of-class preparation/research time is necessary
Level	Most appropriate for developmental or final level
Class Size	Any class size but larger classes should given time to work on the problem as individuals or groups
Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of the activity students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Identify the different aspects of sustainability that are inherent in a major development project.</li> <li>✦ Critically analyse the likely position of the relevant stakeholder groups. (Develop an argument and counter argument in two contexts)</li> <li>✦ Synthesise these positions to develop an argument for and against the sustainability of the project concerned.</li> </ul>
Method	<p>Provide students with the Student Instructions including the questions they are to focus on and any Additional Materials.</p> <p>The method used will depend on the extent to which this is an in-class or take-away exercise. See <i>Student Instructions</i> below.</p>

<p>Concluding Activity</p>	<p>Link this to learning about sustainability from the student activity. Issues to address might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✱ What do we mean by sustainability?</li> <li>✱ How do stakeholders view sustainability differently?</li> <li>✱ How can competing interests be resolved?</li> <li>✱ What should determine whose interests take precedence?</li> </ul>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Oral/In Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✱ Debate between representatives of each stakeholder group</li> <li>✱ Presentation by each 'project' group</li> <li>✱ Class critiques the arguments put forward by other groups</li> </ul> <p>Written:</p> <p>Write a report that outlines the project, identifies the stakeholders and their positions and suggests how the competing interests should be addressed and resolved for maximum benefit.</p>
<p>Tips</p>	<p>If students come from different countries ask them to choose a project from their own country. This allows students to consider a project relevant to their background and will also allow cultural difference that may influence attitudes to all aspects of sustainability to be explored.</p> <p>The material for the Gunns' Case Study available at <a href="http://www.graduateskills.edu.au/">http://www.graduateskills.edu.au/</a> gives an indication of the type of material students are being asked to prepare and subsequently discuss.</p>
<p>Student Instructions</p>	<p>Students should be given the attached instructions/information to identify a project and the stakeholder's positions. Once this exercise is completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✱ If it is to be assessed as a written piece then the work prepared will be collected and marked.</li> <li>✱ If there is to be an in-class component then the jigsaw method should be used. Students should be told:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✱ You will work in groups of X (depending on the number of stakeholders). Everyone will be given some background material on the Project. Each group will then be given some material relating to X stakeholders with differing views about the Project. One group member will be assigned to each stakeholder. You should read the material for the stakeholder you've been assigned to but don't discuss it with the rest of your group.</li> <li>✱ The groups will then be rearranged so that those with the same information become an expert group on each stakeholder's views. Each of these expert groups will consider the information given and decide how each</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>member will present their views to 'non experts'. For example, if you're part of the Organization's Stakeholder Group how could you best explain the company's position to other stakeholders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ The original groups will then reconvene and will now contain an expert on each stakeholder's views. You will then consider and discuss the issues based on the background information you've been given, and the contributions of each expert who will argue the interests of their respective stakeholder.</li></ul>
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## Aspects of Sustainability: When Competing Interests Collide

Very large infrastructure development projects often result in a clash of competing interests.

Examples of this type of project include:

- \* Mines
- \* Dams
- \* Desalination plants
- \* Railways
- \* Large manufacturing facilities
- \* Ports
- \* And many others.

There are usually a number of stakeholder groups who take positions for and against the project. Both the supporters and the opponents often claim to be advocates of 'sustainability'.

Those proposing and supporting the project typically makes claims along these lines:

- \* It will help development in area
- \* It will create jobs
- \* It is necessary to support/expand the population
- \* If it does not go ahead money/jobs/people will be lost to other areas/countries

Those opposing the project typically makes claims along these lines:

- \* It is unnecessary
- \* It will cause environmental damage
- \* It will damage other activities, eg tourism, agriculture
- \* It is at odds with other development in the area
- \* It is too costly

Your task is to identify a real-life project, the background to it, the stakeholders involved and their positions. You should write an outline of the project and the position of each stakeholder group. You should also consider how the various stakeholder groups claim to be supporting sustainability and identify what this says about the different aspects of sustainability relevant to the project.