

ISDF Report #4: Trust & Distrust, Winners & Losers

Posted on [Feb 2, 2014](#) by [Mike Hampton](#)



**Is mutual trust and respect
being developed between stakeholders**

Status: Amber

**Findings: Early indications of
disregard for some views.**

Impartial Report: "The Knysna ISDF community engagement status quo report released on the 4th of November contains a diversity of views and ideas which were recorded indicating that acceptance of diversity in opinions, needs and aspirations and sense of togetherness is being developed [BUT] the friction between the municipality and civil environmental groups mentioned earlier in this report and discussed in criterion 5.1.8 is a stumbling block to mutual trust developing across all sectors. The civil environmental groups are challenging the fairness of the process itself and an "us and them" perception is developing."

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): Again, note that "civil environmental groups" is an incorrect description. There are some of those people objecting but the majority are normal citizens concerned about the validity of the process. Sufficient money has been raised to take the Knysna Municipality to court regards the legality of awarding the ISDF tender to Knysna Creative Heads Consortium. This would never have been possible unless there were deep concerns with regards the management of this important process. The fact that the court case has yet to begin is because Susan Campbell, the lawyer motivating the case, is exhausting all avenues of resolution with the Municipality so that they don't waste taxpayer's money defending their detachment from us and their illegal awarding of the tender to Knysna Creative Heads Consortium. I have handed Alan Winde this NMMU report and made the same appeal to him - please don't waste the taxpayer's money.

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Do participants accord with a shared goals and vision?

Status: Green

**Findings: Common goals are articulated
and agreed upon.**

Compromises, reconciliation are evident.

Impartial report: "A diversity of ideas and concerns are being tabled and gathered by the consultants at this stage. Points of agreement include the necessity for change in the social economic setting of Knysna with a focus on encouraging tourism, sport facilities development and even agriculture. The Community Engagement Status Quo Report states noticeable trends and general issues and problems as well as solutions are emerging. It is however too early in the process to state that a shared goal and vision has been reached."

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): The future is shared so we all have to have a stake in it. Some people fight all change whilst others seem to want to turn Knysna into just another city. The serious objectors i've presented on this website, including myself, want development BUT we want it to be responsible. And giving the tender to property developers with pure conflict of interest was as irresponsible to our future as the Knysna Municipality could possibly have been (and where was the oversight from Knysna's politicians? to stop it). There is no shared vision. Big business, the DA, the ANC and the Municipality are making us dance on a board instead of creating the board with us.

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Are there obvious winners and losers?

Status: Amber

Findings: Power differences are not

Findings: Power differences are not readily acknowledged. Some interest groups are more vocal and dominant than others.

Impartial report: "In the Knysna ISDF stakeholder engagement process the stakeholder receiving the most attention in the process is the Knysna Municipality who has informed most of the workshops convened for the purposes of gathering data to populate the Status Quo Report. The heavy reliance on municipal officials to populate the report has given the Knysna Municipality more power than the civil groups in this regard. It has allowed the information from the Knysna Municipality to dominate where the process is then seen to merely legitimate decisions already made or to give the appearance of consultation without any intent on acting on other contributions even if this is not intentionally the case. The civil environmental groups have also shown interest in the process but have not been engaged within a workshop setting as of the writing of this report. The imbalances of power in compilation of the status quo necessitate an amber rating."

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): How can that summary not be interpreted as Status: Red???

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Is the process responsive, flexible and adaptive?

Status: Amber

Findings: Responsiveness, adaptation and reflection characterizes the process.

Impartial report: "The process as laid out appears to be responsive consisting of a range of different communication mediums (workshops, mobile road cafes, internet site and expos). The diversity of mediums some being mobile or remotely accessed is intrinsically flexible. The consultants are aware that some registered participants are concerned about the lack of communication and the complaint regarding wider participation. They are responding by planning bigger seminar events for broader participation in the up and coming phase two. They are also planning to speed up the start of the second phase of the process where innovative solutions and suggestions in response to the problems and priorities identified in the status quo findings is to take place. Whether the speeding up of the process is a good thing in light of some of the comments regarding notice periods of meetings and the timeous dissemination of information (found is 5.1.9) is an aspect to be observed and commented on in criterion 5.1.9. It does however reflect flexibility and adaptability in the process itself which is encouraging and deserves a green rating."

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): The second phase should never be sped up until queries about the first phase are handled to the public's satisfaction.

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Are enough resources and time allocated to the public participation?

Status: Amber

Findings: Some processes move too fast for role players to stay abreast, some role players lag behind.

Impartial report: "The public opinion is reflecting a need to slow down the process which would be advised. The consultant wishes to speed up the process. This is in response to registered participants expressing a concern that little communication has been forthcoming. The consultants wish to begin the next phase of the process earlier than planned where greater (seminars) public engagement will occur and where registered participants will be invited and more frequent communication with them will take place. Speeding up the process is not advised but more frequent communication with registered participants is encouraged. Due to the need expressed from stakeholders for more time an amber rating is given for this criteria."

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): Stop it where it is, sort the legal matters and objections, and, then, so that a whole new phase isn't possible wasted, continue.

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Is there integration and linkages to provincial, national and global processes?

Status: Green

Findings: Efforts are made to ensure compatibility with provincial and national plans and global trends. Provincial and national role players are consulted and make input.

Impartial report: Provincial and national government sector departments are represented on the ISDF Steering Committee which is an advisory and administrative body. The committee are to ensure that the consultants are aware of relevant legislation and are informed of and have access to any relevant plans and policies. Officials from surrounding municipalities and national and provincial departments attended the launch event demonstrating their support and involvement in the process.

Mike Hampton (Knysna Keep): Good.

Read **['ISDF Report #5: Independent Summary'](#)**.