



Module 2. Familiar Lens(es)

Enhance Awareness

Cross Cultural Communication:

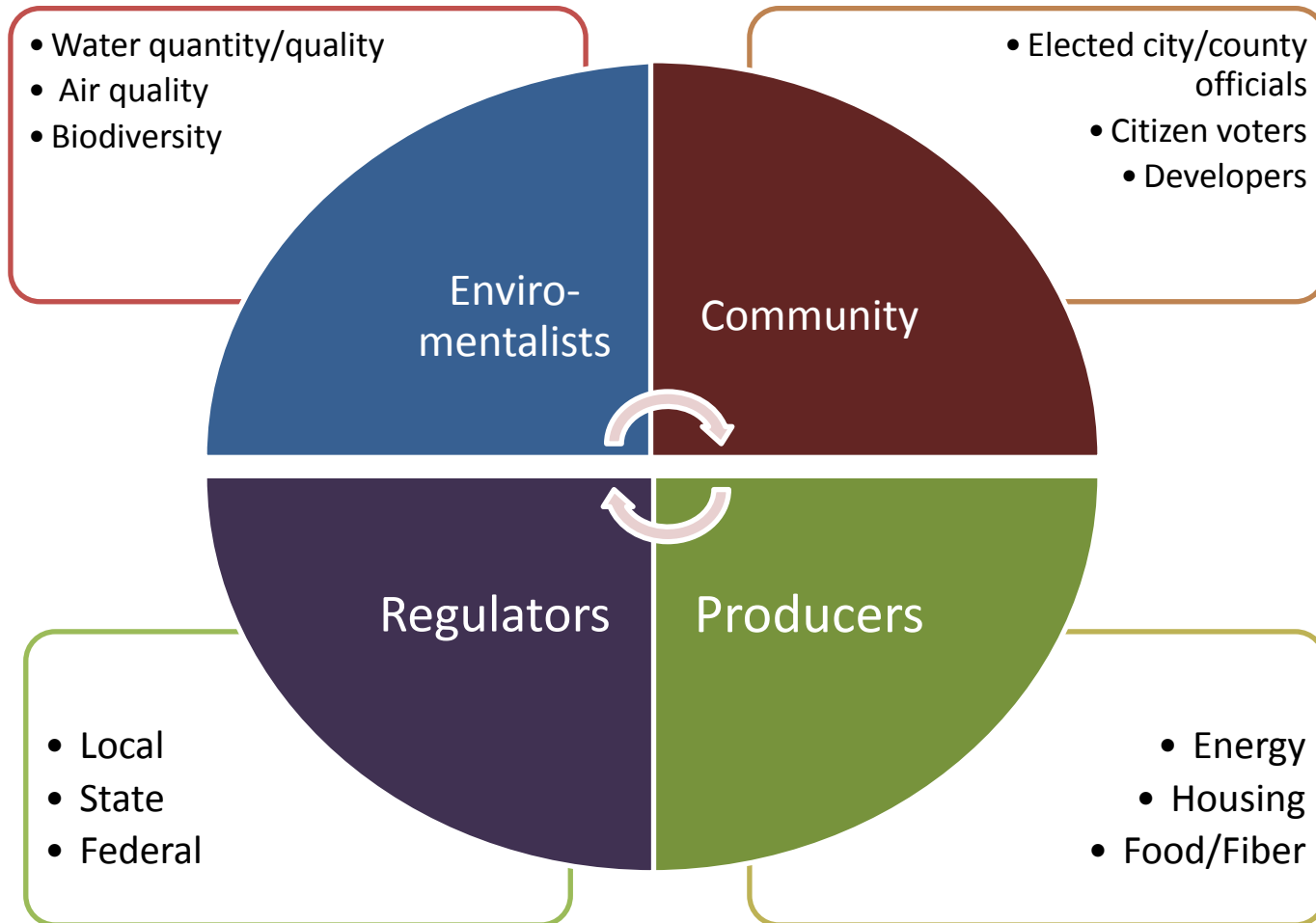
Communities & Conservation

people.tamu.edu/~j-packard/courses/wfsc681/

What is a cultural lens?

- “a metaphor for a point of view”
(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lens>)
- “If you are talking from your point of view, you would talk about **what you want, need or feel** like.
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perspective %28cognitive%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perspective_%28cognitive%29))
- “In **conflict resolution** a technique of using "I", "me", "my" language encourages...the other person to be more understanding and cooperative“
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perspective %28cognitive%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perspective_%28cognitive%29))

Diverse Stakeholder Lenses: shaped by life experiences



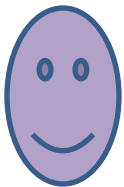
Examples: diverse lenses



saving a way of life, based on using what nature provides, ...to see wildlife and experience nature ... *“as during my youth”*



a dynamic, adaptive process of sustainable **harvest to meet human food and material needs**. ..*“if the land can produce, it should produce”*



the **equitable management of resources in the public trust**, *“consider multiple use, agency mandates, and voters”*



a **moral imperative** for the long-term protection of public goods (air, water, nature) ...*“humans do not have the right to destroy it”*



“Pat’s” lens

- *“ You know, [this is] destroying my backyard... destroying my childhood.”*
- *“I really almost weep when I think about the woods that I loved as a kid, as to what they are today and what has happened. I know it is changing and I doubt if it can ever change back. When I was a kid, I roamed this woods and hunted them. There were beautiful big trees everywhere and not a whole lot of underbrush. “*
- *“My job is to maintain the integrity of the business while recognizing the facts of life. There are going to be new highways, new subdivisions, new businesses, new shopping centers...there is no escaping having to sell property.”*



“Chris’s” lens

- *“I would be hard pressed to tell you right now that I would be willing to tie up something in a conservation project that could be utilized in the future – to take it out of somebody’s hand that could be utilizing it in the future for that community. Not to benefit necessarily an individual, but the community.”*
- *“ you plant, and you manage and you harvest that timber and provide a good for the public.....You are helping to create jobs and you are helping people....you are providing a service and products that people use everyday....”*
- *“You’ve got to get in there and you’ve got to cut, you’ve got to manage with fire, you’ve got to bring up that new forest underneath the old one.”*



“Lyn’s” lens

- *“So, the citizens ... benefit by having clean water in the river ... they don’t necessarily see direct benefit to individuals, but it is a societal benefit.., what we call ecosystem services. “*
- *“Well, our goal is to protect the natural vegetation and, and to do that you have to make sure that the conditions that result in that vegetation,... in Long Leaf pine uplands it’s fire. In big river floodplains,... it’s flooding.”*
- *“for a land owner that’s got a small tract being managed for multiple uses, certainly there’s nothing wrong with removing some trees, let’s say for firewood, while retaining most of the other trees ... There would still be considerable land conservation benefits”*



“Kim’s” lens

- *“We have a moral imperative to protect nature...”*
- *“Whether it’s a human disturbance or a natural disturbance, it will regenerate itself and it may not be the forest I prefer, but it’s the one that nature rolled the dice and said, ‘that’s what’s coming up’.”*
- *“So there are... a lot of people who appreciate nature. They benefit a great deal, directly, personally, from protection of land... we all have a stake in protecting biodiversity... many people would not understand ... what they gain personally from it, but each of us does.”*

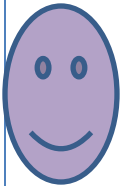
Which lens is familiar to you?



Pat: saving a way of life



Chris: harvest to meet human food and material needs.



Lyn: equitable management of resources in the public trust



Kim: a moral imperative

Why would a lens be familiar?

- “birds of a feather flock together”
- Similar life experience
- Viewpoints are adopted as a “membership badge”, a signal of who is accepted within a social group
- Familiar language is more easily understood within a social group

Why would an unfamiliar lens be rejected?

- “either you are with us or you are against us”
- Different life experiences lead to different interpretations
- Different viewpoints signal who is an outsider, not accepted within a social group
- Unfamiliar language is difficult to understand, and a common coping style is to reject it



summary

- This training module helps identify diverse cultural lenses expressed through the words of stakeholders with diverse life experiences
- You are encouraged to identify the lens(es) most familiar to you due to your own personal life experience, and to reflect on why a lens is familiar
- The utility is in being able to speak from your own perspective, because conflict resolution research has shown “I” messages are less likely to escalate conflict than “you” messages