

The Role of Collaborative Research in Co-Producing Knowledge

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SW CSC Translational Ecology Short Course

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Session Goals

- Understand the theory behind collaborative research
- Trace the history of collaborative research as a discipline
- Introduce the principles of collaborative research and apply them to project planning and development
- Use an interactive activity to engage with the challenge of planning a collaborative research project

Collaboration to Produce Knowledge With Greater Impact

Engaged, collaborative approaches to knowledge production tend to yield knowledge that is more likely to be used by decision makers

- Decision makers understand the information better and feel a greater sense of ownership
- Information is more likely to meet their specific needs
- Information is more likely to fit organizations' decision making processes



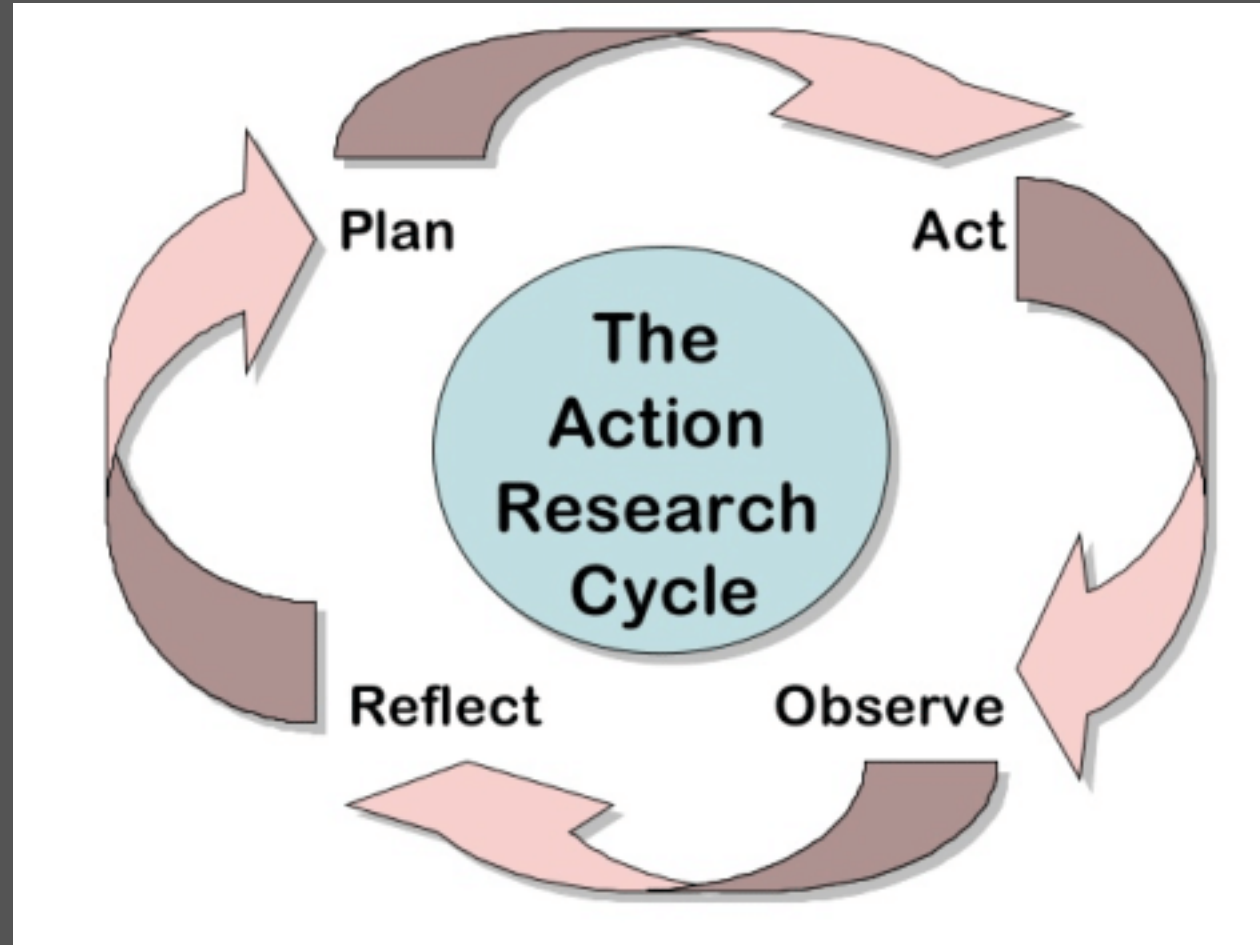
Modes of Engagement

Mode	Objective	Origin of Research Question	Type of Relationship	Interaction Over Time	Stakeholder Representation
<i>Contractual</i>	Testing and verification of technology	Researcher(s)	Researchers contract with stakeholders for services or resources	Variable	Views and opinions of stakeholders are not emphasized
<i>Consultative</i>	Surveying and diagnosis, testing, and adaptive research	Stakeholder or researchers	Researchers consult with stakeholders, diagnose the problem, and try to find a solution	At specific stages of research	Field staff, social scientists, or local representatives
<i>Collaborative</i>	Learning from stakeholders to guide applied research	Stakeholders	Partnership	Continuous	Stakeholders themselves, local representatives, trained research team members
<i>Collegial</i>	Understanding and strengthening local research and development capacity	Stakeholders	Partnership + local knowledge is developed	Continuous, on-going	Stakeholders themselves

What is Collaborative Research?

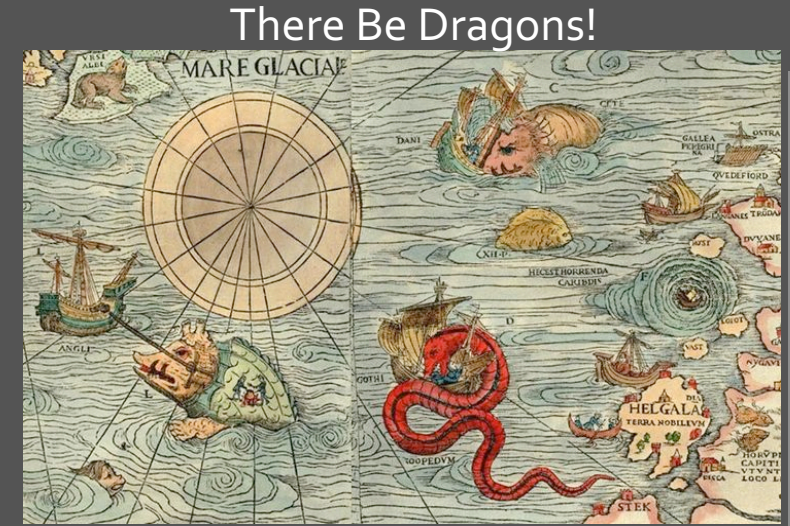
- The act of **co-creating knowledge** with the people most likely to **use** that knowledge to make changes in their organizations, communities, and/or environments.
- Research that involves research participants/collaborators as **partners** in the research process (Fluehr-Lobban 2008).
- “[T]he key element of participatory research lies not in methods but in the **attitudes of researchers**, which in turn determine **how, by and for whom research is conceptualized and conducted**” (Cornwall and Jewkes 1995)

Roots of Collaborative Research

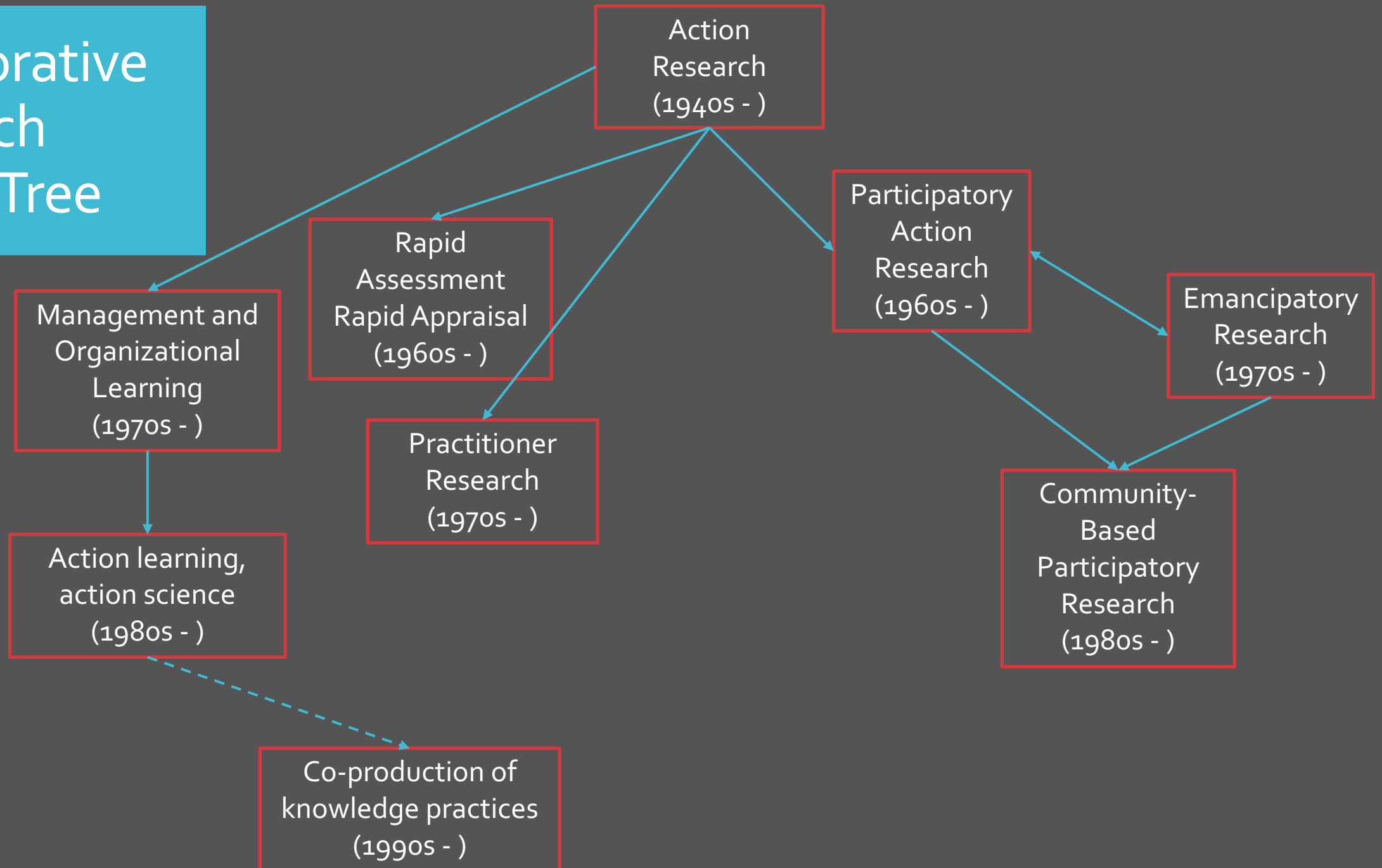


History of Collaborative Research Approaches

- Action Research (1940s -)
- Community Based Participatory Research (1960s -)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (1970s -)
- Management and Organizational Learning (1980s -)
- Coproduction of Knowledge (1998 -)



Collaborative Research Family Tree

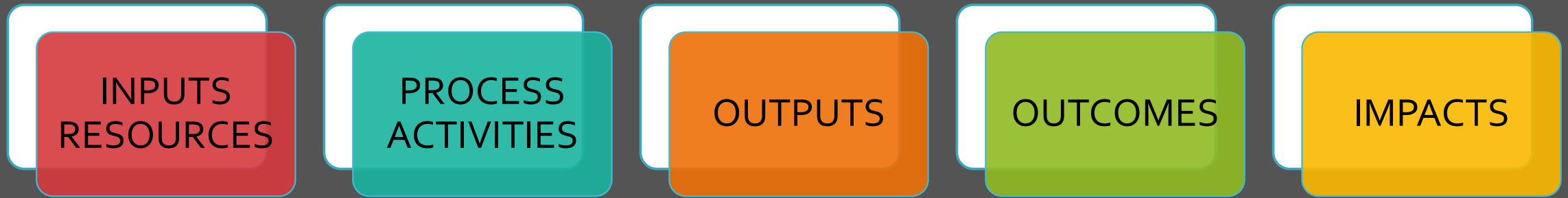


Unique Aspects of Collaborative Research

- Building relationships
- Acknowledging and sharing power
- Encouraging participation
- Making change
- Establishing credible accounts



Collaborative Research in Practice



Project Logic Model

Collaborative Practices: Project Inputs

- Consider your research team's capacity to engage in collaborative research
- Ensure that your partners are interested and you have permission to work with the organization or community
 - When possible, financial inputs from partner is an indicator of commitment
- Develop reciprocal relationships
- Agree on project goals

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Collaborative Practices: Research Process

- Joint problem definition and question development
- Joint data collection and analysis

- Documenting the findings from both the natural resource research and the collaborative research process (capture local understandings and perceptions)

ACKNOWLEDGING
AND SHARING
POWER

ENCOURAGING
PARTICIPATION

ESTABLISHING
CREDIBLE
ACCOUNTS

Collaborative Practices: Outputs

- Co-create outputs
- Consider how the outputs will be used by your collaborators

ACKNOWLEDGING
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- Who owns the data?
- It's okay to still do peer-reviewed publications
 - Be transparent about needing them
 - Consider opportunities for your collaborators to co-author

MAKING CHANGE

Collaborative Practices: Outcomes and Impacts

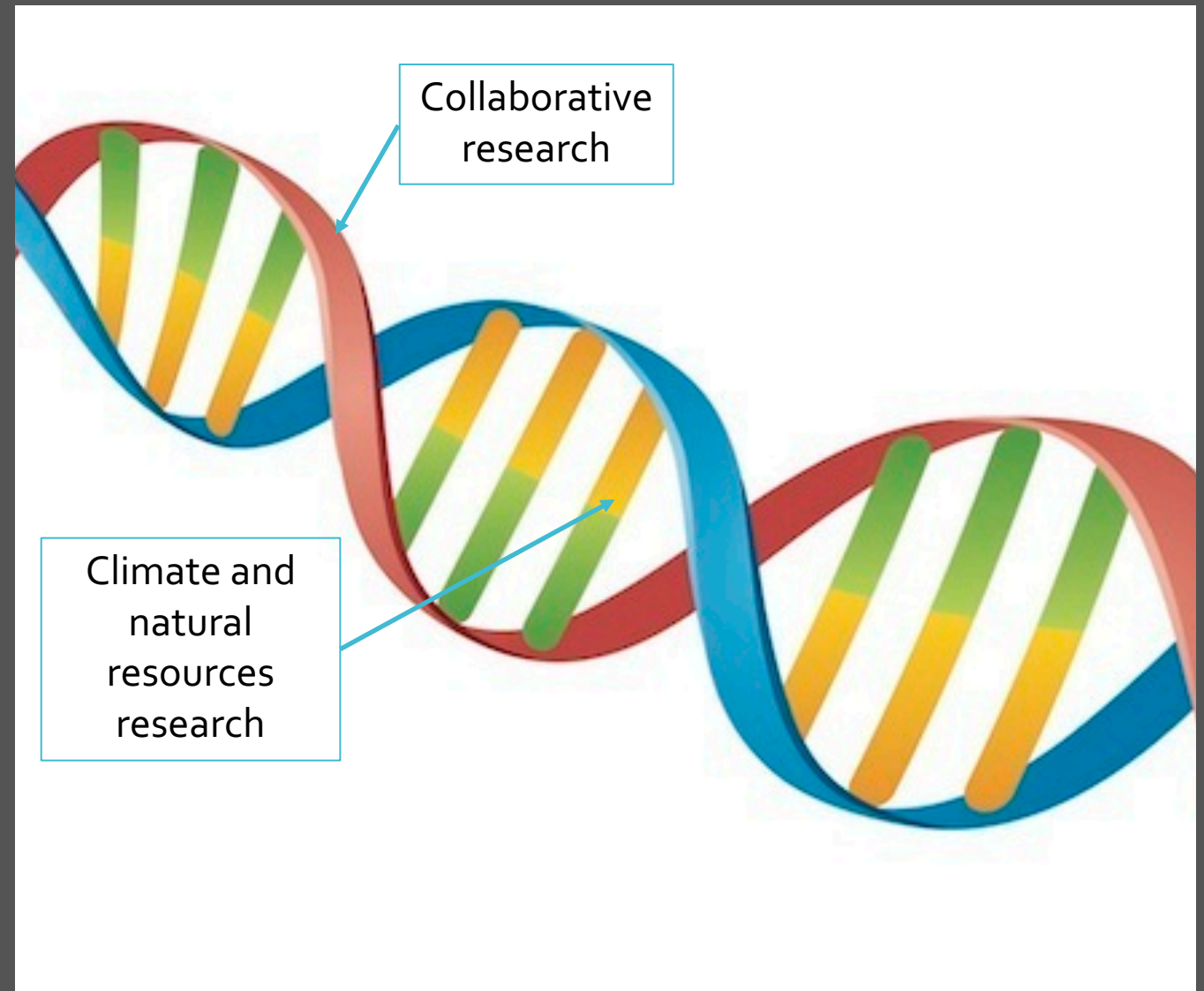
- What does the organization or community want to do with the information?
 - Change in incremental steps?
 - Large-scale transformation?
- What can you do to help support action and change?
- How can you continue your collaboration into the future?
- **Collaborative research does not end when the project does.**

MAKING CHANGE

Planning Collaborative Research

Principle	Project Consideration	Program Consideration
Collaborative research is a discipline that requires specific skills and training.	Integrate capacity into project.	Look for collaborative research capacity when funding new projects.
Collaborative research requires intentionality (planning and design).	Consider collaboration as the support structure around your project. Plan and allocate resources accordingly.	Be flexible with funding to allow additional time for co-development of research questions and research design.
Ensure the research is what the organization or community needs and can use	Use pre-existing relationships to identify key questions, timelines, and formats. Create space within the project to re-define questions.	Adjust funding mechanisms to allow agency questions to be addressed (timing/timelines/levels).
Partners have roles, responsibilities, and knowledge to contribute	Engage in transparent, clear discussions early in project about roles and responsibilities. Document partners' questions, concerns, and contributions.	Work with stakeholder agencies to make them aware of roles and responsibilities in collaborative research (i.e. turnover). Ensure program objectives align with partner organizations' objectives.
Attitude toward collaboration affects all aspects of the project	Commit to meeting the needs of partners.	Focus on projects that indicate genuine commitment to collaboration.

Collaborative Research and Climate Research



Activity: Recognizing Diverse Priorities in Collaborative Research

- Get into groups of 3-4 people (try to find people you don't already know).
- Read through your case study
- Select your persona from the case study
- Using the Wall et al. set of indicators, consider which ones would be most important to you (in your persona)
- Using sticky notes, write down the top 3-5 indicators for you persona (one indicator per note)
- Compare your list with your collaborators
- Place your sticky notes on the wall in groups according to the indicator

References Cited

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Questions?

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