

Meeting No.7 – Conflicting Interests

Fishing Rights

Meeting Objective:

Choose a chairman and a secretary and then negotiate a settlement.

Lake Uppyajumpa is one of the largest and most beautiful lakes in the country. Over the last twenty years it has been the site of a bitter dispute over fishing rights. The dispute revolves around the local people (who were granted an unlimited right to fish by a treaty in 1953) and commercial fishermen. The conflict was exacerbated by the commercial fishermen's use of new trap net technology three years ago, which has increased their catch substantially. To make matters worse, sports fishers began to fish in the lake in record numbers. Although the competition between the commercial fishermen and the local people concerns millfish, sports fishermen are involved because trap netting also catches blue trout. The State Natural Resources Authority has conducted a scientific study that shows the number of fish in the lake has decreased by more than 50% and further overfishing could reduce the fish population to zero in the next twenty years.

The local council interceded in the dispute by initiating a series of licensing regulations. The local people, together with the Government, then sued the Uppyajumpa council. The court has brought the parties together to negotiate a settlement on fishing rights in the lake.

The parties, including the Local People's Association, the Local Council, the Government, the State Natural Resources Authority, the Commercial Fishermen's Association, and the Recreation and Conservation Association are now gathering to negotiate an agreement for another ten years. The parties must reach a final decision. Although the court hopes for a total consensus, it will accept an agreement reached between any four groups.

You are the representative for:

Local People's Association

The local people were granted unlimited right to fish by a treaty in 1953 and would like it to stay the same.

They would like the commercial fisherman to stop making a profit out of their lake.

The local council was charging the local people 100 baht for a license (plus proof of address and tax statements to show they do not get any profits from the sale of fish)

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You are the representative for:

Local Council

The local government had introduced a licensing scheme – everyone has to have a license.

It costs local people 100 baht for a license (plus proof of address and tax statements to show they do not get any profits from the sale of fish)

It costs commercial fishermen 2000 baht per month.

It costs sports fishermen 1000 baht per year.

Anyone caught fishing without a valid license can be fined 20,000 baht.

The Government has sued the council to stop the licensing scheme because it goes against the 1953 treaty giving unlimited fishing rights to local people.

The local council would like to reduce the amount of fishing and make as much money as possible so that it can look after the lake (re-stock the lake with fish)

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You are the representative for:

Government

The government wants everyone to follow the law. At the moment the Local Council's licensing scheme goes against the 1953 treaty giving unlimited fishing rights to local people.

The government wants the commercial fishermen to make and export as much fish as possible because the big city restaurants pay a lot of money for Uppyajumpa millfish and this is good for the countries economy.

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You are the representative for:

State Natural Resources Authority

The State Natural Resources Authority has conducted a scientific study that shows the number of fish in the lake has decreased by more than 50% and further overfishing could reduce the fish population to zero in the next twenty years.

They would like to see anything done that will stop fishing so that the fish population will recover and increase naturally over time.

They believe that trap netting should not take place.

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You are the representative for:

Commercial Fishermen's Association

The Commercial Fishermen's Association will protect the commercial fishermen at all costs so that they can continue to fish. They would like unlimited fishing and any license fee should be as low as possible.

The local council was charging each commercial fishermen 2000 baht per month for a license.

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You are the representative for:

Recreation and Conservation Association

The Recreation and Conservation Association protects the rights of sports fishers. Sport fishers only catch blue trout in this lake. They return all the fish they catch.

They are against the use of trap netting by the commercial fishermen because it catches and kills the blue trout.

They don't see why they have to pay for a license because they don't kill any fish.

The local council was charging each sports fishermen 1000 baht per year for a license.

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You are the secretary.

You must record the proceedings of this meeting and write up the minutes before next Friday. The following is a list of the representatives who are at this meeting:

- Local People's Association
- Recreation and Conservation Association
- Commercial Fishermen's Association
- State Natural Resources Authority
- Government
- Local Council
- Secretary
- Chairman

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You are the chairman.

You have to get the group to reach an agreement. The agreement must be accepted by at least four of the following groups:

- Local People's Association
- Recreation and Conservation Association
- Commercial Fishermen's Association
- State Natural Resources Authority
- Government
- Local Council