

# RESEARCH SUMMARY REPORT: UNDERSTANDING HOW COLLABORATION WORKS IN THE TCCAC

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## Research Summary

How can we improve climate-change based collaborations? This thesis research, titled “Exploring collaboration in environmental management and governance: examining qualities, outcomes and relationships” involved first looking at what has been found in past studies of environment- related collaborations and then using this information to explore and better understand how this collaborative process actually works in practice, particularly in a climate change context. There were three key areas of interest being explored in order to better understand this:

- a) **Collaborative qualities:** attributes of stakeholder interaction, such as shared understanding, commitment, relationship building, and diverse views represented.
- b) **Outcomes:** results which come about from the process, such as developing management or adaptation plans, implementation, better decision making (i.e. better governance).
- c) **Relationships** between these two: which qualities influence which outcomes?

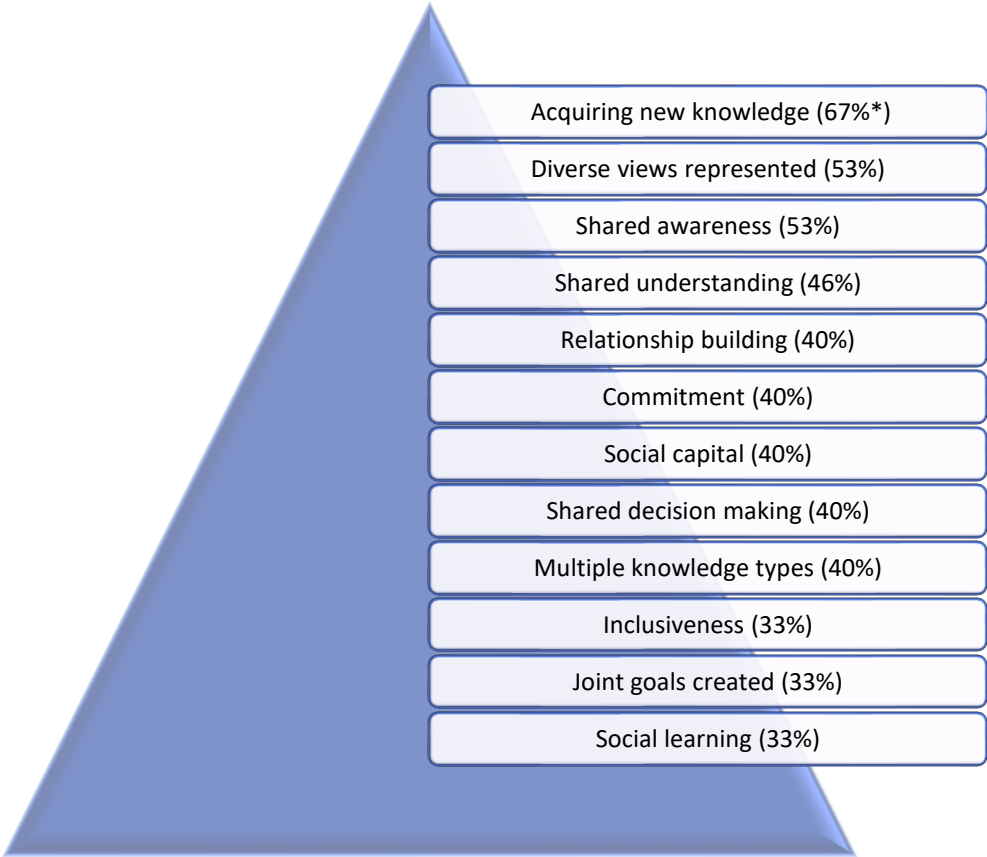
One of the goals of this research was to explore each of these areas of collaboration through case studies, in attempt to better understand how collaborative climate change adaptation works in New Brunswick. The Tantramar Climate Change Adaptation Collaborative (TCCAC) was selected as a case study of interest for this research, and provided an excellent example of how collaboration works to positively address the urgency of climate change-related impacts, such as flooding. Through a questionnaire (completed in February 2018) and interviews (completed in April 2018), the aim was to identify which collaborative qualities and outcomes were most important to group members; which of these qualities influenced outcomes; and explore how these are actually evident in group meetings, events, and other TCCAC activities. Perceptions of

the effectiveness of the TCCAC process and outcomes were also of interest. These results help develop an understanding of how the TCCAC group functions effectively, which outcomes have resonated most with group members as a result of collaborating, and how the relationships between these qualities and outcomes can validate that the collaborative is effectively working at influencing climate adaptation action in the Tantramar region. The following report provides a summary of results from this research for the TCCAC case for those who are interested in the dynamics of the collaborative.

## Summary of findings

The following figures show *the top collaborative qualities* and *top outcomes of collaborating* which group members felt were the most important in the TCCAC, along with some ways in which these were evident in the group:

### 1) Top Collaborative Qualities Important in the TCCAC:



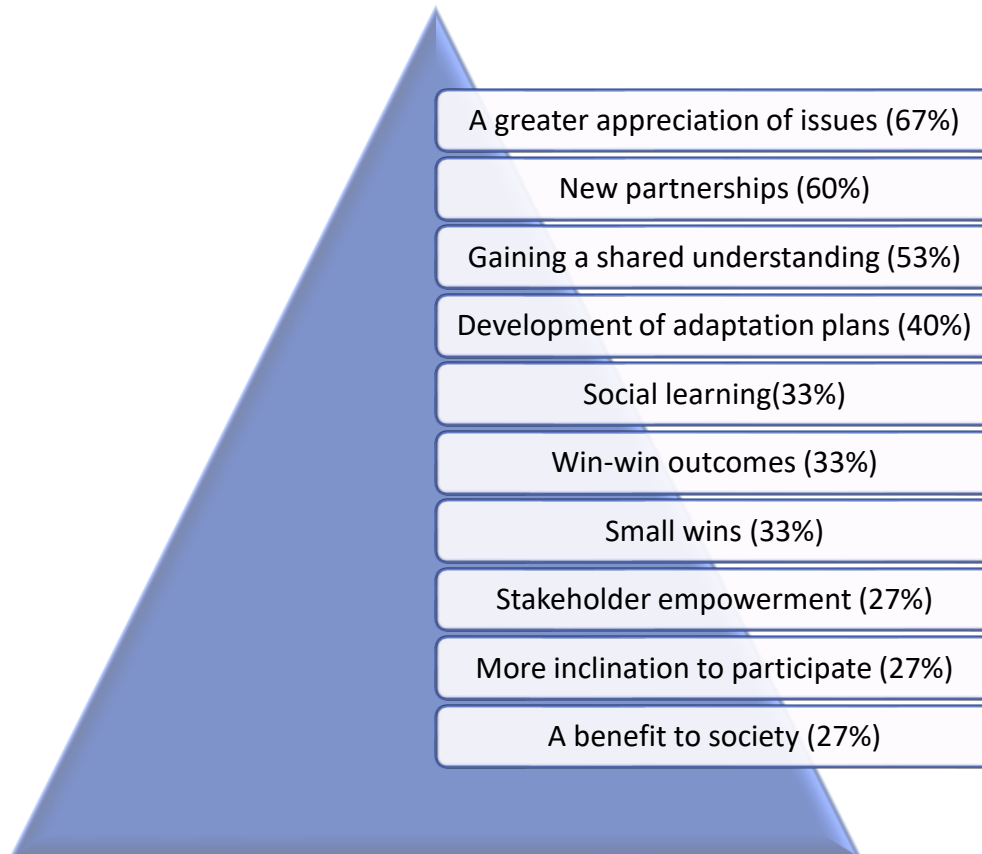
\*Percentage of respondents who selected this quality

**Note:** Social capital is the combination of elements of trust, reciprocity, and cooperation; Social learning is learning by doing with others

**What were some of the ways in which these *qualities* were evident in your collaborative? Through...**

- Sharing research, data, and other information for communicating knowledge (such as showing flood maps), as well as sharing through outreach activities and workshops
- Ensuring a shared understanding of climate change and what it means for Tantramar
- A safe, comfortable setting created for discussions where everyone can contribute
- Bringing in new people who have different areas of knowledge/expertise
- Effective communication during meetings, as well as through social media and email
- Group brainstorming sessions with informal and open conversation
- Addressing common concerns related to climate change in Tantramar, such as sea level rise and flooding, dyke infrastructure, and emergency response
- Bringing in a facilitator when needed for planning sessions

## 2) Top *Outcomes of Collaborating* Important in the TCCAC



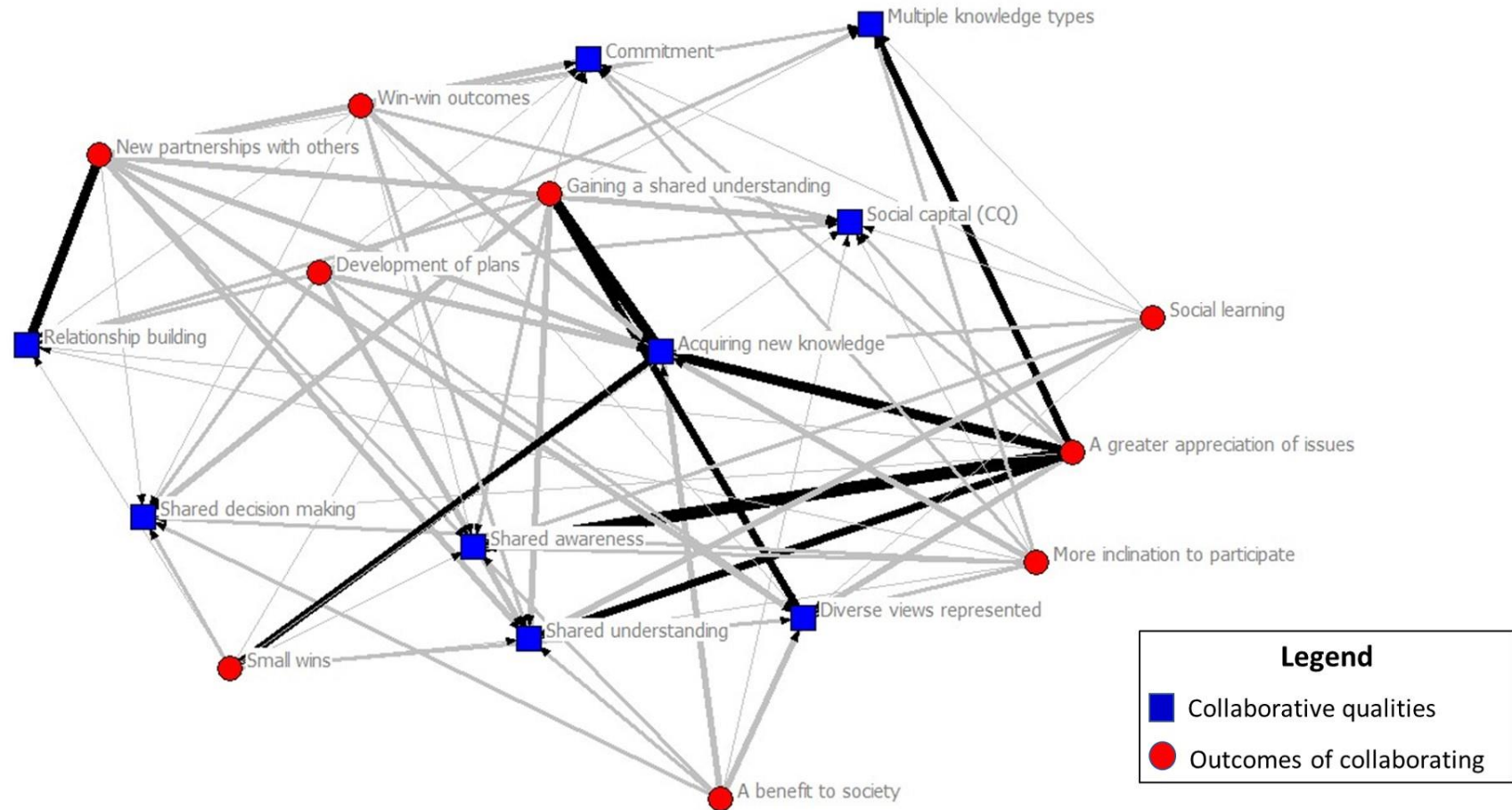
**Note:** Win-win outcomes are benefits for both humans and the environment OR benefits for all the members collaborating; Small wins are immediate positive improvements

### **What were some of the ways in which these *outcomes* were evident in your collaborative? Through...**

- Being educated on climate change in Tantramar and recognizing the need for local action
- Effective communication and initiating cross-border relationships
- Seeing issues differently or in a new way after hearing from other perspectives
- Acting on or making decisions together, and faster
- Learning to become resilient, such as with learning how to prepare for emergencies
- Having a high level of productiveness during group meetings

3) The **relationships** between qualities and outcomes which were selected by your group varied. The diagram below illustrates the connections between qualities (in blue) and outcomes (in red) which were selected. The lines indicate connections between these qualities and outcomes, and the bolder black lines highlight those relationships which were selected most frequently by questionnaire participants. As shown, **a greater appreciation of issues** was an outcome highly influenced by several qualities:

**Questionnaire Results: Connecting process to outcomes in the TCCAC**



## What are the implications of this?

- Important qualities, outcomes, and relationships can aid in better understanding how your collaborative functions and has achieved success through meetings, workshops, educational events, and more.
  - ➔ **Acquiring new knowledge** was by far the most important quality, showing the importance of learning in the collaborative, especially in terms of having a clearer understanding of climate change and how it will impact the Tantramar region.
  - ➔ **A greater appreciation of issues** was the most important outcome, showing the importance of the collaborative in addressing issues as a collective and understanding effects of climate change (and subsequent need to adapt).
  - ➔ This quality and outcome were inevitably connected and resonated with group members, demonstrating the success of your working group sessions and other activities.
  - ➔ Linking these qualities and outcomes together helps us see how the TCCAC process works effectively and moves towards adaptation goals and/or milestones with the group as well as the broader collaborative.
- Understanding which of these have been important in the group also encourages the continuation of progress with TCCAC efforts. They can be informative for both new individuals joining the group, as well as current members which strive to continue effective work with adapting to climate change in their communities in the Tantramar Region. The results help characterize the “group dynamic”, revealed through several qualities that participants felt were most important in the collaborative.
- With the challenges and vulnerabilities that communities face in the Tantramar region, the qualities and influence on outcomes show the key areas in which the collaborative has worked most effectively to address common climate related issues. This demonstrates how the TCCAC’s efforts and success has been realized.
- The results can also potentially suggest how other collaboratives focusing on climate adaptation initiatives can function more effectively to have successful collaboration.
- Facilitators brought in will also be able to have a better understanding of the dynamics of the collaborative, understanding of what has been most important to group members and how that has influenced the results which the group has achieved. This helps provide a means for moving forward with problem solving, planning, and improving (and implementing) adaptation action.

## Collaborating on Climate Change Issues in Tantramar

- 64% of respondents believed that the TCCAC process was/is “very effective”.
- 57% of respondents believed the outcomes that the collaborative process delivers are “moderately effective”.
- 50% of respondents identified that, when considered together, the process and outcomes of the TCCAC is “very effective” in addressing complex climate change issues.
- Overall, results show that group members feel that the TCCAC has been effective in achieving climate adaptation goals- promising results for collaboration in Tantramar!

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