

# NEIEM Workshop      How to Engage with local leaders

Make your presentation and report jargon-free and easy to understand

- It is not the same type of material you would share with funders, academics, or a group of your peers
- Help the politicians understand why they should care about the issue

Give economic examples

- Find data or research that quantifies the economic gains or losses associated with your work.

Connect the issue to a number of voters and constituencies

- It's not just about environment and animals
- Help politicians see that the problem can negatively affect different kinds of voters, for example fishing communities, local citizens, the tourism industry, boating, shipping, recreational fishing, etc.

Make sure presentations and reports are concise

- Your report should be no more than 3-5 pages
- Summarize a 3-5 page report with a 2 paragraph letter including bullet points that are easy to understand and repeat

Give examples of who has done it

- How many communities, states, or countries have passed similar bills or policies?
- What have been the effects?

Consider creating a 1-page **story card** that tells a compelling story about a person affected by the problem.

- Interview someone impacted by the problem to understand what changes they hope for
- This 1-page flyer puts a name and a face on the issue

Be persistent and professional

- It may be difficult to meet with politicians—they may try to avoid you.
- Politicians may be happy to meet with you, take photos, and then do nothing.
- Keep reminding them why the issue is important
- Continue working to provide data to support your arguments

Form networks of support

- Work and collaborate with other institutions, groups, NGOs, and organizations in your community
- Don't reinvent the wheel. Find out what others have done and support ongoing work.

Seek out political champions

- Politics is its own world. Connections and networks are the currency of the political realm.
- Seek out a politician who has demonstrated an interest in this topic and share your work with them.
- Ask what kind of data or research might help them argue their point.