Meridian Institute
Connecting People to Solve Problems

Todd Barker

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Summary

A Senior Partner at Meridian Institute with 20 years of experience facilitating policy dialogues, negotiations, and strategy development processes. Expertise in the areas of agriculture and biotechnology; chemicals, pesticides, and toxics; climate change and energy; environmental cleanup; natural resources; mining; nanotechnology; security; and water and watersheds. In recent years, has focused extensively on issues relating to food and agriculture in developed and developing countries. Earned an M.S. from the University of Michigan in Natural Resource Policy and Administration.

Meridian Experience

Meridian Institute 1999–Present

Meridian Institute designs and facilitates collaborative processes that help diverse parties identify critical issues, build relationships and trust, construct innovative solutions, and implement durable decisions. These collaborative processes address challenges at the local, state, national, and international levels, and involve leaders from government agencies, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and international institutions. Meridian also assists organizations in conducting strategy development and planning.

Senior Partner

Serves as program director for the organization, involved in program and project development and workload distribution. Also involved in all aspects of strategic planning, human resources, finance, IT, and marketing. Designs, manages, and leads policy dialogues, negotiations, and strategy development projects involving teams of facilitators. For these projects, conducts convening assessments, designs processes, secures financial support, plans and facilitates meetings, helps participants develop consensus documents, and conducts implementation activities such as press releases and briefings. Selected highlights are summarized below:

- Worked closely with eight major foundations for more than two years to help envision and then launch AGree: Transforming Food and Ag Policy. This project leverages strategic consultation, convening, and facilitation expertise and will bring together key stakeholders in an effort to build agreement on the transformation of U.S. food and agriculture policy.
- Served as project director for the Innovations for Agricultural Value Chains in Africa project. Led scientists and innovators in collaborating with key players in the maize,

cassava, and dairy value chains in order to identify innovative post-harvest management and processing technologies that reduce post-harvest crop loss.

- Developed several free daily e-news services—including Food Security and Ag-Biotech News, Nanotechnology and Development News, and the AGree News Feed—that provide succinct summaries of articles from news wires, peer-reviewed journals, and publications from industry, government, and nongovernmental organizations in order to assist readers in making informed decisions.
- Led the Meridian team facilitating two Clean Energy Innovation Forums among state governors, governors' energy advisors, cabinet-level officials from state energy, environment, and air departments, and public utility commissions in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. The Forums focused on barriers and challenges relating to the deployment of clean energy technologies.
- Please see http://merid.org/staff/tbarker for a full list of projects completed.

Previous Experience

The Keystone Center

Keystone, Colorado 1993–1999

Senior Associate

Served as a convener, facilitator, and mediator of negotiations and policy dialogues aimed at resolving a wide variety of controversies. Conducted convening assessments, convened parties for negotiation, and developed and finalized consensus documents.

Washtenaw County Mediation Program

Ann Arbor, Michigan 1992–1993

Mediator

Mediated disputes between consumers and businesses. Interacted with attorneys general, state and federal agencies, and other consumer affairs offices to solicit and share information.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Washington, DC 1992

Research Fellow

Analyzed EPA-supported air-quality programs on Indian reservations to provide the EPA and tribal employees with a better understanding of program development and implementation problems. Examined two tribal consortia administering programs to explore tribal concerns that the consortia were diminishing tribal sovereignty.

U.S. Forest Service

Seattle, Washington 1991

Physical Science Technician, Pacific Northwest Research Station

Collected and analyzed samples for a study assessing the health effects of smoke from wildland fires on firefighters. Developed methods for quantitative analysis of aldehydes and other pollutants.

Education

University of Michigan
M.S., Natural Resource Policy and Administration
1996

University of Michigan
B.S., History
1990