

# Contents

The Trouble with Big.....	1
History.....	2
Bylaws.....	5
Agenda.....	6
Committees.....	8
Consensus.....	9
Coordinating Committee.....	12
Plotting the Evolution.....	14
Further Help & Reading.....	16

## The Trouble With Big

On January 21, 1992, California Secretary of State March Fong Eu announced that the Green Party had qualified as the state's sixth official political party. With over 100,000 Greens successfully registered during the two-year qualification drive, the Green Party was not only California's 4th largest party, but the largest Green party in the world.

While Greens around the state rightfully rejoiced over the successful registration drive to achieve ballot status, most realized the work had only begun. The Green Party has a lot of problems. Greens are people who figure that solving the problems in our party will more likely result in a better planet than trying to solve the problems of the Democratic and Republican parties.

California is a big state. There's a lot of trouble with big and molding a big Green Party from the state's diverse geographic and social elements has not been easy.

There is never enough time in a single weekend meeting to give adequate discussion to all the issues and demands we face. As most Green activists are immersed in local projects, the agenda process is chronically late and delegates arrive at statewide meetings insufficiently prepared. Few are familiar with the Bylaws or have much local input on agenda items.

Delegates arrive at the statewide speaking a hundred different dialects of consensus process and facilitation. Decision-making for the national Greens and the California Green Party has been consistently plagued by the lack of a single language of plenary process.

As a result of time constraints, lack of preparation and process hell, statewide meetings can be very disillusioning. Lots of delegates throw up their hands and don't come back. A tenacious (or, some would suggest, masochistic) core group must constantly welcome a parade of new faces. The constantly shifting composition of statewide meetings adds to the existing injuries the insults of discontinuity and lack of trust.

The purpose of this booklet is to help our statewide body evolve into the exhilarating vehicle for change we all know is possible. As a former member of the statewide Coordinating Committee, one of my frequent roles was leading all-too-brief orientation meetings for new delegates. This booklet offers a more coherent version of our statewide process than I could possibly give in a half-hour workshop.

As a proponent of consensus in the Green movement, I feel a somewhat uniform understanding of our history, bylaws, structure, process and group dynamics is crucial to our molding a new party true to our values. This is not the One True Word on the subject. Others with equal experience might explain things differently. I welcome such dialogue as part and parcel of this wondrous process we call the Green Party.