**I'm going to take** you back to the west coast of James Bay where I do some of my work with several First Nations including, but especially, the Fort Albany First Nation. I mentioned earlier that they were part of an environment assessment process for Ontario's first diamond mine known as the Victor Diamond Mine.

**Now, we're going to** use this case to help you work through how to describe a system and the importance of perspective and purpose in doing so. I'll remind you that we have several First Nation communities here, a very large resource extraction development here, in terms of the Victor Diamond Mine. We're talking about an environmental assessment process that will assess the impacts of this particular development on the ecosystem, but also on these communities.

**The case that** I'm going to get you look at is around public consultation around this environmental assessment, how the company and its consultants would consult with these First Nation communities. As many people recognize in Canada, we have new obligations under Supreme Court decisions to consult and accommodate many First Nations, and that's some of the context in which we're working here.

**The exercise** I'd like you to undertake is, we have two case study briefs on this Victor Diamond Mine environmental assessment public consultation process that I'm going to get you to read. It's very brief. The background on the case is laid out, as well as the perspective and purpose at the bottom.

**What I'm going** to get you do is read Victor Diamond Mine case brief number one, and then use the information in there and the perspective and purpose to describe the system, to describe the public consultation system. What are the key variables or components? What are the interactions? How are these connected? I'm going to get you to focus on components, rather than those measurable bits right now. How they're connected, what the system boundary is, what the environment or the context is, what the scales are, and the perspective and purpose are really laid out in the last section of the case brief.

**Please read** Victor Diamond Mine case brief number one, and describe the components, interconnections or structure, system boundary, environment context, scales, and perspective and purpose.

**You could begin** with a list and just think about what are those components, what are the pieces that would make up this particular system? Then start to draw it out and think about how those components relate to one another and what are the interconnections or how does the structure manifest itself? Then think about drawing a system boundary around it and think about what is outside that boundary. What is the context? What is in the environment? Then think about the various scales and you might need to do a separate diagram for this if that's your system of interest. You might need to think about what is the scale above and what is the scale below that particular system. Then, think about what is the perspective or the purpose that's embodied in this particular system diagram. You can just write that out.

**Starting off** with just a list of components then taking that list—you can use sticky notes or just circles with words in them—and thinking about how those components relate to one another and there you've got the initial stages of a systems diagram. It can be quite simple at first.

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**Inevitably, for instance**, there'll be a component that is government, for instance, and that's fine. It's fine and useful to start off in that way but as you work through these kinds of system diagrams, I'd encourage you to go through many iterations so to take that idea of government and say, *"Well, what aspects of government? What department? What ministry? What scale of government are we talking about? Are there individuals that we can actually talk about?"*

**When we talk about** components, you may start off with something very generic but then think about: how do we make this systems description more sophisticated? How do we effectively sort of blow up that component and think about, then: what are the various interconnections?

**All I'm looking for** now is an initial cut at this kind of system description. You can start with a list then begin with just some circles with words and then start to connect those words; draw a boundary. Then things that are out in the environment and then thinking about a scale above the system and a scale below and then think about perspective and purpose that are embodied in that system.

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