

Caribbean Coastal Resources Co-management — Part 2: Guidelines for Success

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ABSTRACT

The term “co-management” is being used with increasing frequency in gatherings of Caribbean government fisheries management authorities, non-governmental organisations such as fishing associations, cooperatives, community-based environmental groups and other key fisheries stakeholders. Yet free sharing and common understanding of concepts, categories, phases and other dimensions of co-management are not widespread. Also missing are clear objectives of what the parties expect to be achieved through co-management. People who genuinely support the notion of improving collaboration for fisheries conservation and socio-economic development embrace very different perspectives of co-management. These conclusions were reached from institutional analysis case studies, undertaken between 2001 and 2003, on several fisheries co-management initiatives in the Caribbean. This research was part of the Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project that was implemented by the Caribbean Conservation Association. The initial stages of the project were reported on at the 55th GCFI in 2002. This paper summarises guidelines for successful co-management in the Caribbean that were developed as the major output of the project. The guidelines communicate some of the key concepts of co-management and suggest how to avoid some of the pitfalls that have befallen fisheries co-management initiatives to date. Key general points include the need for more co-management pilot projects designed to facilitate institutional strengthening through learning-by-doing, and the need for collective approaches to capacity building and the creation of critical masses of capacity to serve as agents of change.

KEY WORDS: Caribbean, coastal, co-management

Co-manejo de los Recursos Costeros de Caribe — Parte 2: Delineamientos para su Éxito

El término "co-manejo" está siendo utilizado con incrementada frecuencia en reuniones de funcionarios de gobiernos caribeños relacionados con el manejo de la pesquería, organizaciones comunitarias no-gubernamentales tales como asociaciones de pescadores, cooperativas, grupos comunitarios ambientalistas y otros usuarios clave del sector pesquero. Sin embargo, el libre intercambio de información y entendimiento común de los conceptos, categorías, etapas y otras dimensiones del co-manejo no están ampliamente diseminados. Todavía no existen objetivos claros y definidos de qué los participantes

esperan obtener a través del co-manejo. La gente que genuinamente apoya la noción de mejorar la colaboración hacia la conservación de la pesquería y el desarrollo socio-económico, tienen perspectivas muy diferentes sobre el co-manejo. Estas conclusiones fueron obtenidas del análisis institucional de casos de estudio, llevado a cabo en 2001 y 2003, durante el desarrollo de varias iniciativas de co-manejo de pesquería en el Caribe. Esta investigación fue parte de los delineamientos del Proyecto Co-Manejo Costero Caribeño, implementado por la Asociación de la Conservación del Caribe (CCA). Las etapas iniciales del proyecto fueron divulgadas en el 55 GCFI en el año 2002. Este documento resume los delineamientos para co-manejo exitoso en el Caribe que fueron desarrollados como el principal resultado del proyecto. Los delineamientos comunican algunos de los conceptos dominantes del co-manejo y sugieren como evitar algunas de las situaciones engañosas que han ocurrido al implementar las iniciativas de co-manejo de la pesquería hasta la fecha. Los puntos generales dominantes incluyen la necesidad de más proyectos piloto de co-manejo diseñados para facilitar el fortalecimiento institucional por medio de aprendiendo-haciendo, y la necesidad de enfoques colectivos hacia la capacitación y la creación de masas críticas de capacidad y conciencia a servir como agentes de cambio.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Caribe, costero, co-manejo

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project is to ensure that integrated coastal management in the Caribbean is done in a way that involves and benefits those who depend on the resources of coastal areas, especially where there is poverty. The specific purpose is to understand the various conditions required for establishing and sustaining successful arrangements for the co-management of coastal resources in the Caribbean. The people of the region, especially the poor and other disadvantaged groups, should be able and allowed to effectively engage in partnerships with government to sustain their livelihoods that are dependent upon coastal resources. This principle is reflected in regional policy such as in the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Guidelines for successful co-management are an output of the Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project.

At the 55th Annual Meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute in 2002 a paper was presented on this project that focussed on the driving forces and concepts of co-management (McConney et al. 2004). It presented the results of a survey of co-management initiatives around the region and concluded that, on the basis of those investigated, the Caribbean cases were mostly in pre-implementation or early implementation phases of co-management. Furthermore, although the term "co-management" is now used more frequently, and is rapidly gaining popularity in government and NGO circles, the concepts of co-management are often not well known or defined, especially among resource users. In many of the initiatives researched,

building the capacity of stakeholders to participate was a prerequisite for further progress and the sustainability of co-management arrangements.

The guidelines for successful co-management introduced in this paper were developed from a synthesis of lessons and experiences of co-management initiatives in the Caribbean and other regions of the world. These lessons were coupled with new information generated from case studies of coastal and marine resources co-management at selected sites in Barbados, Belize and Grenada. The guidelines embrace the wide range of aspects that can affect the sustainability and performance of co-management arrangements and activities from the resource and its fishery, to the cultural and institutional dimensions.

The authors have compiled a document entitled, "Guidelines for coastal resource Co-management in the Caribbean: communicating the concepts and conditions that favour success", that is currently in preparation along with a computer slide presentation of the guidelines. These products are being incorporated into a follow-up project on promoting the uptake and use of outputs from similar projects in the Caribbean. This new project, funded by the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID), is part of the Natural Resources Systems Programme (NRSP) for the Land Water Interface (LWI) in the Caribbean. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) leads this initiative in partnership with the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) and the Marine Resources Assessment Group Ltd. (MRAG) of the UK. The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus in Barbados is a collaborating institution.

The next section outlines the guidelines document. This is followed by extracts from the contents of the guidelines.

CRITERIA AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GUIDELINES

People who participated in the co-management research emphasised that the guidelines should focus mainly on communicating key concepts and conditions for successful co-management. Several different concepts of co-management exist, and this often causes confusion. Many co-management initiatives in the Caribbean have only recently begun. Therefore, sharing ideas and concepts at this stage is critical to foster a common understanding of co-management and to promote its potential for improving the livelihoods of coastal communities in the Caribbean.

The guidelines (McConney et al. In prep.) are written, for the most part, in everyday language. They contain information that most people with an interest or stake in the co-management of coastal resources should find useful. These stakeholders include fisheries and coastal managers and their staff; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community groups; fishers, tourism operators and other resource users; regional and international donor and development agencies, and national or regional policy-makers.

The guidelines do not provide 'blueprint' solutions. Instead, they offer general guidance on conditions necessary for implementing and sustaining effective co-management. The relative importance of these conditions vary according to local conditions. The sections ask and answer questions that are arranged to present the key concepts and conditions for effective co-

management. The layout (Figure 1) facilitates use as a teaching aid or as notes for a presentation.

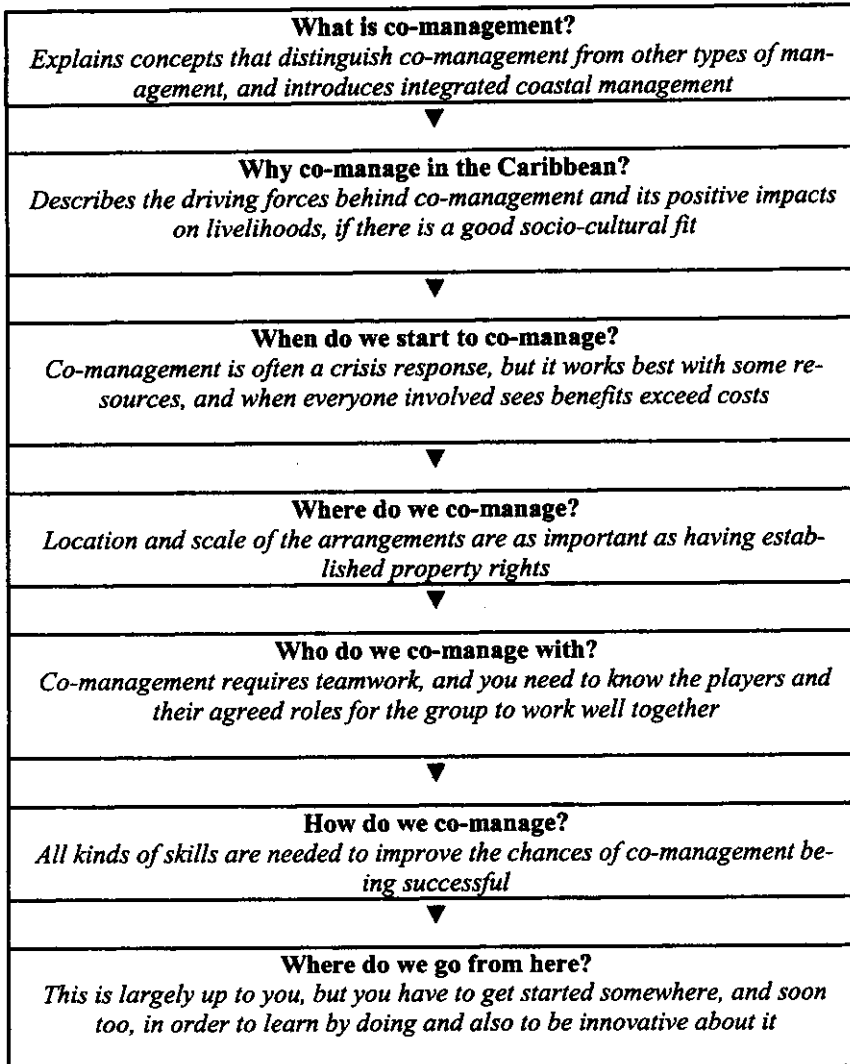


Figure 1. Document map showing the flow of the guidelines' contents

CONCEPTS AND CONDITIONS

The section headings of the guidelines are set out in these Boxes. After each Box is a brief summary of some of the points made about what favours successful coastal co-management.

Box 1 Introduction	
1.1	Background
1.2	Coasts of the Caribbean
1.3	Using these guidelines

The points in Box 1 were presented in the introduction to this paper.

Box 2 What is co-management?	
2.1	Analysing co-management means learning about relationships
2.2	Types of co-management
2.3	Phases of co-management
2.4	Integrated coastal management and adaptive management

The sections in Box 2 explain, as presented at the 2002 GCFI meeting (McConney et al. in press), a typology of categories and phases of co-management that recognises the diversity embodied in the concept. To be fully understood in use, the term needs to be qualified by descriptions of the nature of arrangements specifically being referred to at the time and place.

Three types of co-management are suggested as being the foundation for describing the relative balance of authority and responsibility between the government and other stakeholders (Figure 2).

<i>Government has the most control</i>	<i>Consultative comanagement</i>	<i>Collaborative comanagement</i>	<i>Delegated comanagement</i>	<i>People have most control</i>
	Government interacts often but makes all the decisions	Government and the stakeholders work closely and share decisions	Government lets formally organised users/stakeholders make decisions	

Figure 2. Categories of co-management

Three phases of co-management are set out, noting that correspondence between the types and phases is neither necessary nor desirable (Figure 3).

<i>Pre-implementation</i> →	<i>Implementation</i> →	<i>Post-implementation</i>
Realise need for change Meet and discuss change Develop new management	Try out new management Educate people in new ways Adjust and decide what is best	Maintain best arrangements Resolve conflicts and enforce Accept as standard practice

Figure 3. Phases of co-management

It is also important to understand that co-management fits well within the framework of integrated coastal management (ICM), and is perhaps the only approach that can serve the needs of poor people or otherwise disadvantaged stakeholders. Properly designed and evaluated adaptive management, not just management flexibility, is crucial for learning from experiences.

Box 3 Why co-manage in the Caribbean?

- 3.1 Demand for co-management
- 3.2 Poverty and pro-poor perspectives
- 3.3 Livelihoods: sustainable, alternative, complementary
- 3.4 Social and cultural fit

Change is often not easy. There must be good reasons for wanting to try co-management as an alternative to the conventional management by government alone that some describe as "command-and-control" due to its heavy reliance on formal regulation. This section (Box 3) sets out why co-management is becoming the appropriate choice for managing Caribbean coastal resources.

Stakeholders identified several reasons for demanding successful and sustainable coastal resource co-management in the Caribbean:

- i) Increasing conflicts among coastal and marine resource users,
- ii) Many coastal resources being fully or overexploited,
- iii) Coastal habitats being increasingly degraded by pollution,
- iv) Public sector reform and down-sizing of state agencies,
- v) Trend towards empowering NGOs and civil society,
- vi) Citizens' demands for greater legitimacy and transparency,
- vii) Donor agencies have co-management as a condition for funding,
- viii) Populations of indigenous people see it as a traditional right, and
- ix) Multilateral environmental agreements provide for cooperation.

Case study research revealed that agencies responsible for social services, welfare and poverty alleviation seldom have a working relationship with coastal management authorities. Managers of coastal and marine resources typically have natural science education that omits social policy issues such as

poverty. They will need to acquaint themselves with aspects of poverty. Financial institutions find it difficult to generalise about poverty in a region as diverse as the Caribbean. Poverty has only recently (since the 1990s) received systematic and quantitative attention in the Caribbean. However, poverty is now recognised as one of the critical constraints to development, and a systems perspective on poverty and pro-poor issues is required. As long as poverty is prevalent in coastal communities, managers' efforts to achieve sustainability and best use of resources will be frustrated.

These are some characteristics of poverty in the Caribbean:

- i) Women and men are almost equally vulnerable,
- ii) Poverty is often associated with female-headed households,
- iii) Male youth are considered particularly vulnerable,
- iv) Poor households exhibit large family size and low levels of education,
- v) Poor people are victims of crime, violence and declines in services,
- vi) Economic growth is fundamental to poverty reduction,
- vii) Limited opportunities to obtain on-the-job training perpetuate poverty,
- viii) Poor people suffer from the low wages in the informal sector,
- ix) Public poverty goes beyond individuals and households, to the State.

Critical to the success of co-management is the extent to which community-based organisations (CBOs) engage in poverty eradication and alleviation. This encompasses empowerment and the concept of "voice". Poor people need their voices to be heard in co-management arrangements or they will be unlikely to comply with what is decided.

Most Caribbean fisheries and coastal authorities also do not currently have a livelihoods perspective on management. The livelihoods concept includes the capabilities and assets that we use to carry out these activities. A *sustainable livelihood* is resilient to disruption and can be maintained or improved upon without depleting natural resources. An *alternative livelihood* replaces an unsustainable one, such as irresponsible or destructive fishing or pollution. A *complementary livelihood* is similar, but recognises that people who work by the sea often cling tenaciously to their main lifestyle as an expression of their culture and personality, preferring complementary work.

Co-management is more successful when it becomes part of the fabric of society and way of doing things in the lives of ordinary people. In general, there is not yet a very good fit for co-management, largely due to the novelty of civil society participation in natural resource governance in the Caribbean. Some argue that the colonial period, followed by persistent patronage politics, has fostered a climate of dependency among citizens that today's more participatory democratic movements have found difficult to eradicate.

Box 4 When do we start to co-manage?

- 4.1 Some resources are more easily co-managed than others
- 4.2 Resource use crises: conflicts, dependence and scarcity
- 4.3 Benefits to groups and individuals

Although it would be ideal to be proactive and have co-management instituted as the norm, it is more common for co-management to be introduced mainly under conditions of stress or crisis. The sections in Box 4 describe conditions that favour successful introduction of co-management.

A wide variety of coastal and marine resources exist in the Caribbean. Not all are equally suitable for the application of co-management. Those that are most challenging for co-management are often also problematic for conventional management. Some characteristics of resources that are generally more easily co-managed, and often also over-exploited, include:

- i) Sedentary creatures and ones that do not range far in their life cycles (e.g. most reef-related resources),
- ii) Resources whose distribution corresponds with human settlement (e.g. sea urchins in Laborie Bay, St. Lucia), and
- iii) Resources that fall under one jurisdiction for management (e.g. small coastal pelagics)

However, the nature of the resource is only one aspect of co-management. Understanding what can cause people to work together in management is often more difficult. Co-management is often introduced when there is a resource crisis such as conflict and/or scarcity, especially when people are highly dependent on the resources. Often, only when problems have reached crisis are people really motivated to invest time and effort in co-management. Even then, mutual acknowledgement of a problem does not mean that all parties will want to be part of the solution. Where there is a history of dependency on government, or a tendency to put responsibility on others, people are more likely to form groups to pressure authorities for action, than to form groups to take action. While such pressure groups can be important, they will not become co-management partners unless they are also willing to take management action.

Co-managers need to be concerned about benefits, or incentives, for all of the participating stakeholders so as to ensure that motivation is sustained, especially in delicate early stages where investments or costs can be high with few evident returns. Stakeholders have their own real costs and need real returns for themselves, often to justify participation to a larger constituency that they represent such as fishers, divers, or water taxi operators. A good incentive operates at the individual level without compromising the integrity of the group process.

Box 5 Where do we co-manage?

- 5.1 Boundaries and scale
- 5.2 Property rights

Just as not all resources are equally suitable for co-management, neither are all places. Some features, both physical and institutional, favour co-management more than others. The sections in Box 5 set out some of the location features that make successful co-management more likely.

Managers of coastal and marine areas in the Caribbean deal with several

kinds of boundaries. Some are physical, but many are intangible and conceptual boundaries devised by people to categorise or delimit various things. Transboundary and highly migratory species require international, regional and sub-regional arrangements for cooperation. These are provided for under the 1982 Law of the Sea and other, more recent, agreements. There is a need to undertake transboundary co-management of many Caribbean marine resources according to the provisions of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) is taking bold steps towards a regional co-management regime.

Having jurisdictional boundaries generally favours co-management because they allow stakeholders to know where their responsibilities lie. The closer these boundaries correspond to the distribution of the natural resources, the greater are the chances of management success. While boundaries that act as barriers can reduce the flexibility of co-management arrangements, knowing how the different types of boundary apply to the arrangements can help reduce conflict, assign appropriate responsibilities, and facilitate monitoring and evaluation. If boundaries are unclear at the outset of the co-management initiative, then it is appropriate for them to be negotiated within the context of the co-management arena.

Property rights were generally not burning issues in the fisheries and coastal management authorities or among the other stakeholders. This contrasts with the concern in other regions with establishing property rights as fundamental requirements for efficient resource management. Property rights encompass:

- i) Individual or communal exclusive access,
- ii) Expectation of streams of benefits from use,
- iii) Right to dispose of, damage and destroy, and
- iv) Ability to sell, transfer or divide ownership

Property occupies a large part of the literature on managing resources, especially fisheries. It is customary to think of four major property regimes that describe commonly understood sets of rights and rules. Categories of property regimes:

- i) Private or personal property,
- ii) State or public property,
- iii) Communal or common property, and
- iv) Open access or non-property

All except open access can be compatible with sustainable resource use. Open access is typically not sustainable in developing commercial fisheries. Partners in co-management are unlikely to contribute significantly to the effort over the long term if they do not expect to be able to maintain or increase the benefits of their investment in participation. A key to success is to reduce the openness of access to coastal and marine resources through the establishment of property rights. However, open access is likely to remain a feature of Caribbean coastal resource management for some time due to a deeply held belief that access to marine resources is a basic right rather than being only a privilege. The strength of this belief varies with location.

Box 6 Who do we co-manage with?

- 6.1 Stakeholders and partners
- 6.2 Trust and respect
- 6.3 Collective action and organisations
- 6.4 Decentralisation, delegation and devolution
- 6.5 External agents and resources

Co-management requires teamwork. Working together towards common goals requires collective action. Trust and mutual respect are essential for this to happen without undue conflict. The sections in Box 6 consider these dimensions of co-management, including how government structures power sharing.

Stakeholders are those whose interests, resources, power or authority suggest that they are likely to substantially impact, or be impacted by, management or its absence. Often it is implied that stakeholders are only those outside of the government such as NGOs, CBOs, fishing and other groups in civil society. In the Caribbean, where many co-management initiatives are led by State agencies, the inclusion of government is essential. If co-management initiatives are initiated by non-government organisations then these organisations should make all efforts to draw government in as a partner, even if in the context of conflict management. Even if the government shows little interest, by law it will need to become involved.

It may be necessary to try to establish stakeholder organisations in the process of introducing co-management. An incremental design to co-management can be important for success. It is not necessary to have all co-management stakeholders join the arrangement at the same time either by coercing those that are not ready or by delaying until all groups are ready. Recognising the differences in capacities, aspirations and interests of partners is essential.

Trust and respect are fundamental to durable co-management partnerships, but they are not tangible or easily measurable. If people perceive that there is insufficient trust or respect, then they will behave as if this is so and constrain the progress or promotion of co-management. While fishers knowledge of resources seems to be universally respected by authorities and policy-makers, there may be less trust of and respect for them as full partners in co-management given the typical deficiencies in their organisations mainly due to low capacity.

Community organising will be a critical component of introducing or strengthening co-management in the Caribbean. This involves the promotion and support of collective action. Collective action deserves special attention, especially in relation to fisherfolk organisations. The weakness of fisherfolk organisations in the Caribbean suggests that much will have to be done to promote sustained collective action if co-management is to be institutionalised. Crisis driven management responses are prevalent in both government and industry, and crisis responses often feature intense but temporary collective action. Sustained collective action is necessary to make co-management successful. It is an integral part of organisations. Two of the most common

challenges to collective action are lack of coordination and prevalence of free riders. A free rider seeks to obtain benefits without cost or effort. Problems of apparent free riding, must be distinguished from genuine lack of capacity to contribute, need to focus on survival as a priority (consider poor members), mistrust of leaders, expectation of free patronage benefits based on political experience and other factors that cause group members not to actively contribute due to inability or more attractive options. Sometimes the problem is lack of skills in mobilisation, causing the initial momentum to die down as the crisis passes and people tire of organisational ineffectiveness. Collective action requires constant attention to the means of mobilisation and keeping the group together.

Several countries have cooperatives and fisherfolk associations. However, it does not mean that these groups will automatically be suitable as representative organisations in co-management. It is likely that they were established with objectives that relate more to increasing exploitation, marketing and the incomes of members. Changes in outlook will be necessary for these groups to play major roles in management. These changes may be difficult and lengthy, especially if the organisation is still struggling with its original development mandate. Putting more focus on management may strain the internal cohesion of the organisation. Authorities should be prepared to support and strengthen the organisation as a whole rather than just steer it towards management roles. This serves the purpose of more comprehensively looking after the interests of members and may help to address issues such as of livelihoods and poverty.

Decentralisation, delegation and devolution are all about the extent to which stakeholders, other than the government authority, have the power to make decisions on their own. Research revealed very little decentralisation or delegation, and no devolution, of significant responsibility and authority by government authorities to fishers, except in Belize. Governments have relinquished more power in MPAs, especially in Belize, but also in other places such as St. Lucia and Dominica. There may be limitations in stakeholder and state agency capacity, and the legal framework that serve as barriers to decentralisation, delegation and devolution. If stakeholders are ready to assume more management responsibility than the government has offered to share through negotiation, then lobbying and pressure group tactics may become necessary. If these are used, the stakeholders should ensure that a viable plan exists to implement the tasks and additional activities that will result from a successful re-distribution of power.

Co-management stakeholders may receive assistance from external agents. Most liabilities can be avoided or reduced by sound strategic and action planning prior to requesting assistance. Any assistance received should then be more in keeping with the objectives and plans of the organisation and less likely to become side tracked. Assistance in advocacy should not be overlooked.

Box 7	How do we co-manage?
7.1	Participatory and strategic planning
7.2	Management objectives
7.3	Facilitation and information
7.4	Local and scientific knowledge
7.5	Stakeholder analysis
7.6	Decision-making, power and equity
7.7	Building capacity
7.8	Leadership
7.9	Communication, cooperation and coordination
7.10	Conflict management and negotiation
7.11	Compliance and enforcement

Previous Boxes provided the background or framework for appreciating what is involved in co-management. There are some ways or methods of doing co-management that favour success more than others. The sections in Box 7 present some of the skills that should lead to a sound arrangement or strengthen it.

Co-management is more likely to be successful, and objectives-driven, when it incorporates a participatory planning process. Learning by doing things together builds capacity, trust, respect and legitimacy of both content (the plan) and process (the planning). The type of participation needs to be decided early on since bottom-up is not always feasible or affordable. If stakeholders are not well informed, or do not have the capacity or time, it is not always appropriate to start at the bottom. The plan should be endorsed at a political or legal level in preparation for implementation. Prior to implementation the plan should also be widely publicised and disseminated for it to be actively adopted. Even though stakeholders should have bought into the plan, it may be ignored unless it is well known and becomes standard operating procedure. This helps to institutionalise the plan.

Although management planning is often thought of as a government exercise, NGOs and other stakeholders can take the initiative to invite government to plan with them for a particular area or resource. A process that has been used in several Caribbean marine and coastal management situations is shown in Figure 4.

The importance of having good objectives has recently been emphasised in both fisheries and marine protected area management particularly in the context of evaluating the effectiveness of management. This is to make sure that efforts at management are actually achieving the intended results, preferably in a manner that is not wasteful or otherwise inefficient. Where there is not much information about the resource or its use it may be necessary to formulate precautionary objectives.

In a co-management arrangement the local and traditional ecological knowledge of fishers and other sea users is more likely to become incorporated into the planning and management. Capacity is so limited in most small Caribbean fisheries and coastal authorities that the responsibility for science and management often resides in a few people who cannot provide the best

information on their own. They may need to rely heavily on resource users for detailed knowledge of the resources. Local and scientific knowledge can complement each other. Co-management is most likely to succeed if the resource is one that stakeholders already have good knowledge of. Exchange of knowledge and learning is very beneficial to all parties and includes non-harvest aspects such as marketing and distribution of seafood where insider knowledge or firsthand experience is essential for thorough understanding.

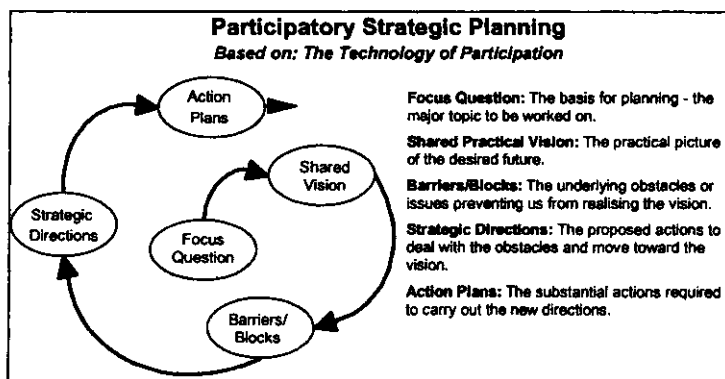


Figure 4. Strategic planning covers from vision through to action.

Stakeholder analysis helps to systematically determine who needs to be a partner in the co-management arrangement, and whose interests are too remote to make this necessary. It is an important analytical tool that also helps to promote transparency when the need to select co-management partners arises. For practical and other reasons some stakeholders may be excluded from the initial partnership, perhaps of their own choice. Special care must be taken to ensure that voiceless and disadvantaged groups that may include women, youth, the elderly, and poor people, are not excluded from the analysis. Multiple memberships in groups are common, especially in small island settings. It will always be necessary to be certain "who is speaking" at any given time.

Real and perceived power are factors in determining the interest and willingness of stakeholders to engage in co-management. The power advantages of the strong and the disadvantages of the weak make them both reluctant to co-manage because of nothing to gain and too much to lose, respectively. It is essential to be aware of power differences and dynamics. Co-management is likely to re-distribute power and to be resisted by those who want to avoid losing, or sharing, power. Fisheries management agencies are often low in the hierarchy of public service departments. Sometimes the fisheries authority will seek to become an ally of fisherfolk organisations in an effort to demonstrate a larger constituency in order to increase their power. Stakeholders should beware of such relationships where there is a danger of degeneration into co-optation or coercion.

Equity is about ensuring fairness to co-management stakeholders in several respects. It differs from equality in recognising that capacity, authority and responsibility will vary amongst the partners, but that each should play a role that is appropriate. One of the main factors is the role that government plays since this determines the type of co-management and how decisions are made and implemented. Equity is linked to power in that disadvantaged groups (perhaps including the poor, women, youth, elderly, ethnic or religious minorities etc.) may need to be informed and empowered in order to bring them to positions of equity within the co-management arrangements.

Building stakeholder capacity for co-management is essential in the Caribbean, and a critical first step in many places. Organisational capacity building is multi-faceted and much more than training. Its aim is to make organisations more efficient and effective within a well-defined vision or ideal model of what they hope to be and do. It is often a long-term process with different types of interventions tailored to bridge the gap between what the organisation can do at the moment and what it intends to do in the future. In many cases capacity can be built fairly simply if the stakeholders were to engage in collaborative activities in which complementary skills transfer was intended. This is from learning by doing within partnerships. It is an approach well suited to strengthening co-management institutions and is usually cost-effective.

Leadership is a key element of building capacity. Without good leadership it is unlikely that appropriate capacity will be built in any organisation. A book on leadership for fisherfolk lists characteristics that fishers from the region look for in an organisation leader (Almerigi 2000):

- i) Embraces, and is committed to pursuing, the group's goals,
- ii) Identifies the needs, and respects the values, of members,
- iii) Knows the problems and aspirations of the membership,
- iv) Values consensus decision-making and every contribution,
- v) Treats the members fairly, transparently and equitably,
- vi) Encourages flexibility, creativity, tolerance, self-discipline, and
- vii) Learns from mistakes and motivates others to excellence

In non-Caribbean countries it is not unusual for women to play major roles in leading fisheries-related organisations. Often they are related to the men who fish, and they use their presence on land during office working hours to look after the affairs of the fishers by going to important meetings and otherwise being the representatives of the workers at sea. While women in the Caribbean play important roles in fishery and other occupations, particularly in marketing, they are usually not in the forefront of fisherfolk organisational leadership. Given the strong roles played by women in Caribbean society and economies, their potential as fisherfolk leaders could be more developed.

According to co-management partners in the region there is need for considerable improvement in communication, cooperation and coordination. All three concepts are critical to co-management. As stakeholders discover that they share common interests it is likely that they will want to pursue the benefits of cooperation. Much conflict can be avoided through effective communication that can be either formal or informal. Formal and informal communication, cooperation and coordination have to be used wisely at the

appropriate junctures. Things may sometimes get done faster informally, but this can undermine formal structures and processes if used excessively. Dependence on informal communication may arouse suspicions if transparency and institutional memory are weakened by the absence of recorded decisions. Excessive informality reduces the legitimacy of the systems and structures of management.

There was little evidence of serious conflict in the case studies, and no evidence of formal mechanisms for its management should conflict arise. It was agreed, however, that more attention to formal conflict management was necessary to ensure that minor matters did not threaten the success of co-management arrangements. Conflicts are not necessarily negative. They may cause more equitable power relationships to emerge, correct bad environmental practices or improve policy. The issue is how to manage conflicts in order to reach (at least temporary) solutions in the most appropriate and least disruptive or harmful manner. The goal of conflict management is not to avoid conflict, but to supply skills that can help people express their differences and solve their problems for win-win, or mutually beneficial, outcomes. Not all disputes are conflict management candidates. Certain conditions should be met before and during the process in order to have a reasonable chance at reaching resolution. Conditions that facilitate conflict management are:

- i) All the disputing parties are known ,
- ii) Willingness to negotiate resolution,
- iii) Reaching resolution is important for all,
- iv) Parties trust conflict management method ,
- v) A mutually beneficial outcome is a possibility,
- vi) Parties have authority to make deals,
- vii) Funds, time and other resources are available, and
- viii) Resolution is desirable in the wider context

Many stakeholders and studies report that compliance with, and enforcement of, environmental legislation is generally poor in the Caribbean. Some MPA, fisheries or other existing regulations are weak or inappropriate. However, many are sufficient to make a positive difference and facilitate the sustainability of the resource if enforced or complied with. These are challenging areas for co-management because while all stakeholders may contribute towards compliance, it is often only the State that can deal with enforcement in a definitive manner. Other stakeholders may assist with enforcement, but the ultimate responsibility usually rests with the government. Even so, with very limited capacity and huge responsibility, many enforcement agencies have higher priorities such as border patrols, drug interdiction, combating smuggling of goods, and deterring illegal aliens. Co-management arrangements facilitate enforcement by incorporating the responsible agency as a stakeholder where possible.

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