

**ecoOcean - games in Fisheries education, communication and science**

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**Abstract**

There is growing realization of the potential for games and experiments as powerful tools for education, outreach and research in many fields of science. Particularly in fisheries management we face a growing demand for stakeholder involvement, which requires new ways in reaching informed decision making. Games and experiments can be used for (i) teaching economic and ecological principles to pupils, students and the general public, (ii) outreach and communication with stakeholders in participatory assessment or management environments, and (iii) collecting scientific data in controlled research experiments. We developed a conceptual approach and realized the fisheries simulation game ecoOcean. This tool has so far primarily been used for dissemination purposes. The great success of the current version of the game is a strong motivation to proceed on these lines. The game shall be further developed to include a higher complexity and enable the simulation of management measures, i.e. the stakeholder can play through management measures. The paper shall raise awareness of the strengths of this new approach to stakeholder involvement. We will describe past and current approaches and draw a vision on future use of games in education, communication and science, using the conceptual approach we have taken with ecoOcean.