

Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project Information Update — 26 January 2003

Analysis and activities

While continuing with participatory research activities, the project has entered its analysis phase. Case studies are being written up in preparation for comparison. Along with the research findings, we will also be addressing the strategies for communication and uptake of the outputs. Discussion of the latter has started with research partners in the case study countries, and will soon be broadened to a wider audience.

Poverty on Caribbean coasts

Concepts of poverty and development of pro-poor strategies involve complex social, cultural and economic issues. Eradication or alleviation of poverty often encompasses more sustainable livelihoods and empowerment of the poor.

One of the research findings is that coastal and marine resource management authorities seem to be relatively unaware of the literature on poverty, and seldom have included poverty as a dimension of (co-)management. Most countries have a "poverty unit", but its work is not well integrated into that of management authorities.

In other parts of the world, where coastal resources are severely depleted and the habitat degraded, the focus is on alternative livelihoods. In many Caribbean cases, resources are still adequate for their use to be sustainable once supplementary livelihoods are available. This can ease the pressure on resources without completely changing lifestyles in communities.

For example, fishermen displaced by MPAs in Belize are being re-trained to be fly-fishing and nature tour operators to obtain additional income in the tourist season, and facilitate increased compliance with fishing restrictions. Because some people consider tourism to be a fragile industry, and it is usually strongly seasonal, there are questions as to how sustainable tourism alternatives actually are. Another DFID-

NRSP project in the Caribbean (R8135) is looking at issues such as this.

Although an initiative may be considered a pro-poor strategy it does not necessarily mean that it was specifically intended and designed as such. Poverty and pro-poor orientation by stated objective is not common in coastal resource management yet. Statements such as improving welfare and the quality of life, without explicitly mentioning poverty, are fairly typical of planning documents for small-scale fisheries in the region, but no systems for measurement and evaluation exist within the fisheries authorities.

The attention of Caribbean governments to poverty has been relatively recent in most places. Poverty assessment studies provide fairly current data for most countries, but few provide details on coastal poverty.

Institutional analysis provides insight into how social and economic institutions interact with each other and contribute either to the perpetuation or reduction of poverty. Poverty in the Caribbean is often associated with youth and female-headed households, making age and gender important variables. The typology of C.Y. Thomas distinguishes between the chronic, structural and seasonal poor in the Caribbean, with fishers as an example of the latter.

Sea egg research goes regional

At the end of January two DFID-NRSP funded projects (R7559 and R8134) will cross paths in Laborie, St. Lucia. A team of two fishers and the government's fisheries biologist from Barbados will meet with counterparts in St. Lucia. They will exchange information and experiences related to sea urchin management in a community event, followed by a workshop to extract the lessons learned about co-management from the two fisheries. Hosts in St. Lucia are the Laborie Fishers and Consumers Cooperative, and the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute.



Belize MPA case study gets underway in Placencia area

Bob Pomeroy visited the coastal community of Placencia, Belize, in December 2002 to work with Friends of Nature (FON), a local NGO, on the MPA case study. FON has co-management agreements for Laughing Bird Caye National Park and Gladden Spit marine reserve with the Forestry and Fisheries Department respectively.

The project is assisting FON with development of a socioeconomic monitoring programme as part of the research. Plans were made for FON to undertake a household survey in three of the five communities (Placencia, Monkey River and Hopkins) in their management area. The survey will obtain data on demographic characteristics of households, FON's activities, rules and regulations, threats and problems, and material style of life. It will provide FON and this project with baseline data on households to assist in management and to serve as the foundation for future monitoring of socio-economic indicators. Data from the survey will be used in preparation of the case study.

An international team comprising researcher Bob Pomeroy; Shalini Cawich of FON; Ileana Solares of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico; and Tara Goetze, a graduate student from Canada, developed the household survey. They also reviewed secondary data needs for use in both the case study and socio-economic monitoring. The team meets again, in February, and it is expected that the FON case study will be completed by April.

Following up on the Barbados Fisheries Advisory Committee

The findings of research on the Barbados FAC last year have provided plenty of good ideas for follow-up by the newly appointed committee. The project provided a forum for developing these ideas into action plans that stakeholders on the FAC will pursue collaboratively within or outside of this research.

Several of the initiatives are co-management demonstration activities to enhance uptake of the project findings from an early stage. Such initiatives can then be evaluated for acceptance and effectiveness prior to project termination. A few of the ideas being considered include:

Ø Produce more public information on the FAC

- Ø Request to meet the minister on a regular basis for briefing on key issues
- Ø Request that the FAC have its own budget
- Ø Establish permanent or temporary special interest subcommittees for critical issues
- Ø Have a regular schedule of public meetings
- Ø Re-orient membership towards being more representative of fishing interests
- Ø Strengthen BARNUFO and its members to act more effectively as channels for fishing industry matters and feedback to the FAC
- Ø Strengthen the legal mandate of the FAC to include greater transparency on follow-up to advice tendered
- Ø Compare the FAC to other government advisory groups so as to learn from both the positive and negative differences
- Ø Set up, within the FAC, a system for self-monitoring and evaluation that allows better assessment and adjustment of its operations

Grenada studies still going on

We reported in an earlier update that the fishers in Gouyave, Grenada, were fairly keen to have their traditional rules in the beach seine fishery converted into legal fisheries regulations. We hope to test this out by convening a workshop that includes a legal adviser to thoroughly explore what such a conversion would entail and how it would be accomplished in the context of co-management.

Meanwhile, the project is grateful to be assisted by Sandra Grant, a fishery officer from Jamaica who is doing her Ph.D. in Canada with fieldwork in Gouyave. Sandra is continuing the collection of information on the beach seine fishery and its interactions with longlining.

Terminal workshop planning

Anticipating an on-time ending, the researchers are in the process of planning the three terminal workshops scheduled for the end of May. Let us know if you are interested in participating in any.

This document is an output from a project funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries. The views expressed are not necessarily those of DFID.

