

Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project Information Update — 3 March 2003

Gouyave seine fishers have their say on traditional rules

We reported briefly on the Gouyave Grenada seine fishery case study in the Information Update of 25 September 2002. The case is about translating the customary fishing rules into fisheries regulations or some other formalised rule system. There are many questions about what would be the sharing of power and authority between the state and the community under a formalised system.

Gouyave is known as the fishing capital of Grenada. There is a cluster of about 10 beach seine haul sites near to this west coast town where artisanal longlining for tunas is now the main fishery. The beach seine fishery supplies bait for the longliners (mostly open, outboard-powered vessels with small manual gear). There are several types of interactions between these fisheries, and the management of one is sure to impact upon the other.

James Finlay (recently retired Chief Fisheries Officer) documented about 15 fishing rules that were accepted throughout most of Grenada. In many cases these concern how to determine the right to fish in a particular location and situation.

The fear is that these rules are being lost, or not being observed, by the present generation of fishers. Consequently, unnecessary conflict may arise. In addition, there are space conflicts with other coastal users and developments that may constrain beach seining. Some people feel that seining should be given priority use of space.

In an October 2002 project workshop, seine fishers, longliners, fish vendors, net owners and fisheries officers met to discuss how the legalisation of traditional rules should proceed. Out of various options that spanned the spectrum from state-led to community-based approaches, the group chose a scenario where seine fishers would work with a legal adviser to prepare a new formalised rule system before a

series of community consultations was held to review the proposals and reach consensus on preferred arrangements.

The workshop developed criteria for selecting representatives on this drafting panel, but found it more difficult to conceptualise how the rules would be legalised in operational terms. What role the fishers would have under a more formal regime was uncertain. Issues of enforcement, a sense of relinquishing power, and how flexible or rigid the new system would be remained unclear. A follow-up workshop, to be held soon, will explore the legal options for achieving the fishers' vision of the system that would work for them as a formal co-management arrangement.

Types of co-management

In the introduction to many of our workshops we remind participants that there are many types or arrangements that constitute co-management. It is not a single arrangement, and it does not have to progress from one type to another to get "better". While the notion that community-based co-management is the ultimate goal still persists, there is growing recognition that communities may not always want this responsibility. Often it is sufficient for consultation or collaboration to be meaningful. Stakeholders want a say in decision-making, but not necessarily to actually implement management decisions.

In this project we simplify the situation to three main types of co-management. These are:

Consultative management	Collaborative management	Delegated management
Government asks questions but makes all the decisions	Government and fishing industry work closely and share decisions	Government lets organised people in industry make most decisions



Phases of co-management

Just as there are several different types of co-management, there are also a few recognisable phases. We have simplified the situation to use three main phases that are fairly easily noticed.

(1) Pre-implementation à
◆ Realise need for change ◆ Meet and discuss change ◆ Develop new management
(2) Implementation à
◆ Try out new management ◆ Educate people in new ways ◆ Adjust and decide what is best
(3) Post-implementation
◆ Maintain best arrangements ◆ Resolve conflicts and enforce ◆ Accept as standard practice

Several documents on these and other aspects of co-management can be obtained from the web site www.co-management.org and its links.

Critical conditions workshops

We have recently held workshops on the critical conditions for co-management as seen from the national, rather than case-specific, perspective. These sessions were held in Belize (17 Feb.), Barbados (24 Feb.) and Grenada (27 Feb.).

The case study partners and other stakeholders got together to discuss the applicability of over twenty factors of co-management success that are reported in the literature. After commenting on how they did or did not apply to their situation, the relative absence or presence of each factor was assigned a score on a scale of responses. The participants found that the exercises helped their analysis of co-management in their countries.

Although the exercise was relatively simple it brought out the fact that co-management varied widely by situation within countries, such as by fishery or location. However, there were several factors that cut across these dimensions and seemed to apply in a more general fashion.

We tackled some of the “softer” aspects such as the extent of trust and mutual respect, and the degree to which co-management was a social and cultural fit. We also covered more technical points such as the definition of boundaries and clarity of management objectives. These results will form part of the case study and comparative analysis documentation.

Terminal workshops are in May

Dates have been set with case study partners for the project's terminal workshops. They are:

- Ø Barbados — Monday 19 May
- Ø Grenada — Thursday 22 May
- Ø Belize — Wednesday 28 May

Project findings will be presented at these workshops and participants will be invited to share views on draft guidelines for successful co-management in the Caribbean.

Told about communication and the uptake of project outputs

Following the sessions on critical conditions, the workshop participants were asked to provide guidance on the communication and uptake of project outputs. For example, what form should the guidelines take? How could we encourage people to try them out, sharing good and bad experiences as part of an integrated regional learning process?

Very pertinent and practical advice was given, ranging from the preferred physical and virtual formats of the guidelines for various types of users, to the activities that should be undertaken to promote the guidelines. Not all of what was suggested can be done within this project, but we hope that follow-up will be possible to spread the outputs wider and in different forms.

Most people stressed that the guidelines had to be in simple everyday language. The typical book report was popular, summaries for policy-makers were suggested, and music or theatre for youth. Brochures or posters are for everyone.

If any readers have examples of the types of formats and promotion that they have found to be particularly effective by experience, we would welcome suggestions.

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