

# FISHERIES CO- MANAGEMENT

An international overview and letting go the reins

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# Co-Management – “ The participation by resource users in fisheries management.”

“The exercise of power by whom, under some specified institutional and governance arrangement framework, for the delivery of sustainable fisheries management with idealistically agreed triple bottom line outcomes for the community covering economic, social and environmental objectives.”

# Co-Management Models

- (a) a consultative model where government takes the decisions but consults with stakeholders.
- (b) a co-operative model where government and stakeholders co-operate in decision making.
- (c) delegated models in which management authority for some functions is delegated to stakeholders, or committees and government is informed of the decisions taken.

# Co-management outcomes across the world.

- Most of power remained with ministers and officials.
- Over exploitation was an important driver in participative decision making.
- Co-management and self interest increased conflict.
- Co-management successful – in outcomes for environmental responsibility, compliance, administration or quotas, delivery of training, education and linking fishermen's experience to science and that of biologists.
- Effective communication and social cultural homogeneity an important ingredient for success.
- Community based management – is not co-management.

## Maine Lobster Fishery Experience.

(b) Agricultural Research Institute in Hague prepared a report on “sharing responsibilities in Fisheries Management” on issues of governance

- Openness
- Participation
- Accountability
- Effectiveness
- Coherence

# Conclusions

Conclusions highlighted 3 ideas.

- I. A greater presence of local government in fisheries management.
- II. Increasing participation.
- III. Delegation of decentralization of powers and responsibilities run by professionals.

# Successful operation of MAC's as Co-Management Bodies.

- (a) clear set of objectives and outcomes to be delivered.
- (b) Clarity and Certainty around ownership or access to the resource.
- (c) Effective Two Way – Communication between Stakeholders and Committee Membership.
- (d) Consistency in Stakeholder Objectives and Representation.
- (e) Effective Leadership.
- (f) Clear well articulated set of operating procedures.
- (g) Non-politicisation of decision making and transparency.

# Successful Development of Decision Making

- **Smaller Fisheries** - Spencer Gulf Prawn Fishery, Exmouth Gulf, Australian Abalone, Challenge Scallops etc.
- A single company(?).
- **Larger Fisheries** – Western Rock Lobster, Northern Prawn fishery and East Coast Trawl.

# Observations Around Industry Engagement with MAC's

- Industry behaviour – self interest, short term.
- Significant parts of industry not engaged.
- Leadership is critical – typically under invested, (need to look at own governance and funding arrangements.)
- Effective on issues of direct management, research, compliance, cost recovery. At 'sea' on issues of equity between stakeholders, marine planning, broader policy.
- Industry performance generally better than other stakeholder groups.

# Co-Management - delegated

- i. Defining fisheries management expectations around,
  - a) management objectives
  - b) sustainable harvest
  - c) environmental management limits
  - d) usage limits by sectorial groups
  - e) rules on by catch
  - f) research, compliance and process for changes to management
  - g) role, function, responsibility of MAC's and all stakeholders
  - h) management performance measurement and reporting
  - i) independent audit of performance
  - j) mechanisms for review and longer term management planning

- i. Establish clear set of allocation and re-allocation principles and allocated defined property rights of access for all stakeholders, their registries and processes for adjustment overtime.
- ii. Define appropriate business rules and market mechanisms for dealing with shifts by stakeholders in the utility or use of fish over time with whatever constraints are appropriate to fulfill economic social/environmental objectives.
- iii. Determine longer term planning horizons in the use of marine resources so that fisheries management can be considered in a wider context with greater certainty. This in itself as for the Co-management Council of Victoria, represents a real challenge in stakeholder engagement and is very much a politically charged process.
- iv. Define clear business rules around intervention by government and where not related to management induced resource failure, mechanisms for compensation or relief as appropriate.
- v. Clearly specify the limits of the power of the minister and/or government towards making decisions on behalf of community, decisions made by the co-management body, their transmitted to law, legal review and accountabilities of decision making including transparency of decisions and coherency of policy.

# Preconditions of Fully Delegated Decisions Making by Co-Management Bodies

- **Governments/Community need to have settled**  
Resource Allocation.  
Marine Planning.  
Reallocation and mechanisms for adjustment.  
Business Rules and Intervention.  
Limits of Power.  
Fishery Management Framework including administrative law and property rights.
- **Governments must retain Responsibility for**  
Law and Order.  
Independent Audit Performance.  
Broad Marine Policy.  
Maintenance of Legislative Frameworks and Powers.  
Rights of Intervention and consequential administrative arrangements.  
Retention of property right framework and its independent administration.  
Management of independent appeal mechanisms.

# Conclusion

## ❖ Full Delegated Co-Management Decisions Making.

**Is it Possible?**

Yes

**Can it Work?**

Smaller fisheries,  
Yes.  
Larger fisheries,  
Some Doubt.

**Should it be Progressed?**

Yes, in various forms  
initially for the smaller  
fisheries.

**Will it lead to Better Outcomes?**

Not Guaranteed.

**Will it be Embraced by the Community?**

Ever so slowly. So much  
depends on industry and stakeholder  
leadership, including ministers.

**THE END**