

Fishery Management Councils: Decision-making, Communication, and Social Factors Associated with Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management

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Dissertation Research Overview
December 15, 2011

Presentation Overview

- Goals:
 - Research overview
 - Project goals
 - Next steps in research process

Challenges for Councils Considering EBFM

- **Institutional support:** government direction, legislative mandates, enforcement, monitoring and budgetary appropriations.
- **Scientific guidance:** availability of data and recommendations for specific protocols to transition from SSFM to EBFM.
- **Communication:** information exchange between Council members, SSC members, governmental oversight agencies, and stakeholders.
- **Experience:** Council and stakeholder knowledge and uncertainty associated with transitioning from SSFM to EBFM.

Research Objectives and Questions

- Overall goal of dissertation research: Identify social factors influencing Mid-Atlantic and New England Regional Fishery Management Councils' approaches toward EBFM.
- Research Objectives:
 - Characterize social factors influencing decision-making processes related to EBFM.
 - Characterize communication processes between Council members and stakeholders related to EBFM.
 - Identify types of social science data that would be useful for the Councils in transitioning from SSFM to EBFM.

Overview of theoretical concepts

- Planning Table & Workable Agreements
- Communication & Coorientation
- The “planning table” and “workable agreements” theoretical frameworks can be used to evaluate how social factors affect Council decisions about EBFM.

Planning Table & Workable Agreements

- Planning table:
 - Reference to which stakeholder groups have the political, financial, informational, historical, and/or experiential requirements to be included in management decisions or have “a seat at the table” (Cervero and Wilson 2006).
- Workable agreements:
 - Framework that suggests creating effective agreements requires stakeholders to acknowledge differences in values, interests, power, and perspective, and then build upon those differences to create options that are practicable and acceptable to all parties (Forester 2009).

Communication and Coorientation

- The Coorientation Model (CM) provides a framework to measure communication and understanding between groups (Chaffee 1968; Connelly 2002; Leong, McComas et al. 2008).
- The CM will allow for comparisons of beliefs about EBFM and measurements of the effectiveness of communication between Councils and stakeholders.
- Using the CM could help Councils determine what barriers stakeholders perceive in the transition from SSFM to EBFM.

Coorientation Model

- The CM could measure:
 - Accuracy of Council and staff members' perceptions of stakeholder groups' perspectives of EBFM.
 - How stakeholders perceive Council attitudes and decisions about EBFM.
 - If Council actions regarding EBFM reflect stakeholders' opinions about EBFM.

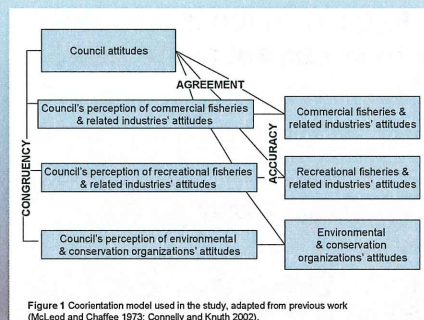


Figure 1 Coorientation model used in the study, adapted from previous work (McLeod and Chaffee 1973; Connelly and Knuth 2002).

Research methods

Mixed methods approach

- Qualitative research methods
 - Phase 1 (January 2011 – December 2011)
 - Phase 2 (January 2012 - April 2012)
- Quantitative research methods
 - Phase 3 (September 2012 – January 2013)

Qualitative Methods

- Information review
 - Council documents related to EBFM including: white papers, agendas, reports and presentations.
- Meeting observations
 - Opportunities to learn about: Council member and staff affiliations and responsibilities; organization and procedures; management priorities; opportunities for public input; and discussions/presentations related to EBFM.

Qualitative Methods (cont.)

- Preliminary introductions
 - Brief announcement of my student/research affiliation at the initial meeting I attended.
 - Informal conversations with Council members, staff, and committee members and fisheries-related stakeholders.
- Semi-structured interviews
 - Longer, in-depth individual conversations with Council members, Council staff, and SSC members about EBFM and communication with stakeholders.

Quantitative Methods

- Mail surveys
 - Distributed to: Council members, Council staff, and stakeholders from the commercial fishing industry, recreational fishing industry, and environmental NGOs within the Council's designated region.
 - Questions will aim to characterize communication processes and understanding between Council members and stakeholders related to EBFM.

Relevance to Management/Conservation Applications, Priorities, and Themes

- Outline recommendations for the types of social science data that the Councils could use to create a framework to transition from SSFM to EBFM
- Provide suggestions for opportunities to facilitate communication associated with Council deliberations
- May potentially offer useful insights for the six other regional fisheries management councils in addition to the MAFMC and the NEFMC

Next steps – research process

- In early 2012, I will be contacting Council members and staff to invite participation in individual, in-person interviews.
- In late 2012, I will be contacting Council members, staff, and fisheries-related stakeholders to invite participation in a mail survey.

Acknowledgments

- MAFMC and NEFMC Staff and Members
- Funding:
 - J.P.Morgan Chase: Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship
 - Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station

Thank you!

- Please feel free to contact me with any follow-up questions:

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