

# What conditions allow co-management to work?

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# What is fisheries co-management?

- **Power-sharing** between a community/organization & a government agency in a meaningful & effective way in the management and governance of a fishery
- = joint decision-making

# Why is co-management a good approach?

- Because much more ***energy, good will, & funding*** get mobilized to solve problems, with superior management outcomes.
- e.g. Washington State tribes and Dept of Fisheries fought each other in court for 10 years, to no avail, huge waste of time, energy, funds
- Now tribes lobby the legislature for increased funding for Dept of Fisheries because they are a true partner
- Now tribes and state divide up tasks & generate far better data on the fishery and have far superior ability to manage

## ....why is co-management a good approach?

- Co-managing communities can often access funding
- Volunteer effort is contributed by co-managing communities (10/1): volunteer gear, vessels, time
- Fishing-dependent communities of place have strong commitment to sustainable management. (nowhere else to go)
- Coastal communities are ones fighting to stop oil and gas development, protecting fish habitat (story of Unist'ot'en)

## ....why is co-management a good approach?

- Fishing-dependent communities have the best local knowledge about local stocks and local indicator (chaos theory)
- No under- reporting when locals participate in making harvest rules
- Co-created regulations have far higher legitimacy and thus higher compliance rates

## ....Why is co-management a good approach?

- Resilience, adaptability of C-M arrangement to new problems, e.g. climate change, stock status change, el nino effects, etc.
- Not locked into specific harvest rates or patterns; social-ecological co-evolution
- Exercise **conservation rights**: fight to close low-abundance fisheries when state tries to open them. BC herring fishery story. Haida Gwaii won case based partly on existing co-management relationship in MPA.

....Why is co-management a good approach?

**Peter Senge's 3 conditions for getting the best out of employees can apply to co-management**

People contribute more energy if they:

- (1) Feel part of a team
- (2) Feel that their contribution is valued
- (3) Believe in the purpose of the effort

# What conditions permit co-management to arise and persist? *4 kinds of conditions*

- **1. Conditions in the institutional arrangement:** the co-management agreement
- **2. Conditions in the community or partner organization**
- **3. Conditions in the state agency**
- **4. Conditions in the fishery**
- **YOU NEED ENOUGH FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS IN EACH OF THESE FOR CO-MANAGEMENT TO WORK WELL**



# 1. Conditions in the institutional arrangement: the co-management agreement

- Is the **scope** of activities adequate to achieve desired goal?
- Is the **geographic scale** of activities adequate to achieve goals?
- *Some arrangements are too small-scope and/or small-scale to have much effect, but can be training ground, 1<sup>st</sup> step*
- MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION: Is the **level of power** held by the community partner adequate to achieve goals?

## .....Conditions in the institutional arrangement: the co-management agreement

- **The level of power** held by the community must be high enough to give them a meaningful role in the fishery, some sense of control
- Lowest level of power: operational rights
  - Collect data
  - Analyze data
- Higher level of power: (who, when, where, how)
  - plan harvest, make & enforce regulations, protect habitat (conservation)
- Highest level of power: (what's it all for?)
  - Choose overall management approach, vision (e.g. owner-operator & fleet separation policy; turn around depletion)

.....Conditions in the institutional arrangement:  
the co-management agreement

- A legally friendly environment
- E.g., the Resource Management Act
- BC used the NZ Resource Management Act as a model to write a draft Forest Practices Act in the late 1980s, as part of a social movement to curtail corporate power in the forest industry ...the Tin Wis coalition

## 2. Conditions in the community or partner organization

- community of place, dependent on the fishery
- fish vitally important: economically, socially, culturally: will defend from habitat-destroying developments
- clear membership rules, relatively small size, shared norms
- multi-generational knowledge of local fish stocks & habitat

## ....Conditions in the community or partner organization

- strong leadership, clear purpose, capacity to engage
- can identify its interests with the public interest and show these interests are not being addressed
- has supportive issue networks in academia, NGOs, government
- Has access to logistical and financial resources

### 3. Conditions in the state agency

- State bureaucracy not too large to minimize importance of C-M & develop personal relations with community
- Scale & scope of mandate allows it to address power-sharing
- Has open attitude vs siege mentality

## ....Conditions in the **state agency**

- Has sufficient stature to be a change agent
- Understands the importance of local knowledge & value of combining it with natural science
- Has hands-on experience working with fishermen

## 4. Conditions in the resource

- Has boundary clarity (its migratory range known)
- Is adjacent (lives enough of its life cycle near community)
- Is well known and valued by the community
- Is fairly dependable in its availability
- Is sufficiently abundant to merit management effort



# What conditions are unfavourable to co-management?

- Conditions that lock in, prevent flexibility in adapting to changing environments, climate change (such as asserted property rights)
- Conditions that create class divisions in communities, even break apart families (parent choose to lease or sell ITQs “for their retirement” instead of giving them to their children)
- Condition that create inequality: creates unhealthy conditions: higher rates mental illness, imprisonment, childhood obesity, teenage pregnancy, etc.

# ....What conditions are unfavourable to co-management?

- Limited entry that uses market to transfer licenses: creates speculation in license. Do you want fisheries management to resemble real estate boom/bust? Maine lobster as counter-example.
- ITQs or QMS: youth pushed out of the fishery because can't afford to buy or lease. Coastal communities hollowed out as lose fishermen.
- British Columbia, Iceland, New Zealand have lease fees that are 70% or more of the catch value: only quota owners benefit, not working for fishermen & crew. BC now considering bringing in guest workers as crew because skilled crew no longer willing to work for so little.

# ....What conditions are unfavourable to co-management?

- Fishing and processing not benefitting coastal communities
- US and China buying up BC groundfish trawl ITQs and fish plants.
- Last cannery in BC closing this year: fish to be exported to Asia for processing. Huge job losses. Only quota owner benefits.
- How can any adaptive and visionary management occur if fishery is not even going to benefit country in whose waters they are fished? Who will fight to defend the habitat?