



Sharing learned experiences

By Peter Edwards

"Sharing is Caring" is a term frequently used in a variety of settings. Of course it depends on what is being shared, with whom and for what purpose. It could range from material goods, time or information.

In the context of Global SocMon and our Regional Partnerships, I'd like to spend a moment to remind us of the benefits of sharing our learned experiences. Through you, our partners, socio-economic monitoring and other social science applications have been implemented across the globe. There have been a myriad of experiences over this period. This includes successes, failures, lessons learned and new insights for future application of social science approaches that lead to improved natural resource management outcomes. This hopefully will result in benefits to the people dependent on these resources.



Global SocMon through our partnership with WorldFish currently hosts a database with information that varies from site descriptions to full reports and accompanying raw data. In recent times we have been engaged in repeat capacity building efforts, workshops and hosts of

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other activities. Some of these activities should have produced some outputs and perhaps outcomes that should be shared. We need to keep updating the SocMon database and as such, I encourage you all to work with your partners to decide the best ways to summarize the great work that you have been doing over this time. Products that could be shared can range from site descriptions, field reports, workshop summaries and more as determined by you and your partners.

Getting the word out to the wider coastal management community and especially our donors and funding agencies is key. Demonstrating how funds are being used to build capacity is important for attracting future support and our ability to increase our activities. If you have not done so already, please work with your partners to produce relevant products that can be shared with us. I also urge us all to read each others experiences so we can draw from lessons learned all over the world. After all, open and transparent sharing of information is the essence of peer to peer learning and good stewardship. Please browse the current data base so you all can see how you can assist in spreading the good word.

Integrating social sciences to ensure human well-being in marine conservation

By Supin Wongbusarakum



A well-attended symposium titled, *Integrating social sciences to ensure human well-being in marine conservation* was co-organized by Supin Wongbusarakum, SEM-Pasifika coordinator of the Pacific Island region, and joined by presenter Vineeta Hoon, South Asia SocMon coordinator at the 5th International Marine Conservation Conference (IMCC5) in Kuching, Malaysia on 26 June 2018. The symposium highlighted that social scientific tools and methods, and inclusion of local stakeholders are becoming more widely embraced by marine managers, conservation practitioners, and researchers, to provide a means of measuring human well-being. It showed examples of social science integration into a range of frameworks, tools, and approaches in different parts of the world to address critical marine conservation questions.

Vineeta's presentation highlighted key learning from efforts to integrate socio-economic monitoring with bio-physical monitoring for adaptive management in coastal communities of South Asia where poverty is an important issue. She discussed how participatory appraisal tools were used to ensure that the voices of the most disadvantaged people were included in the monitoring, and how visualization techniques in conjunction with focus group discussions were effective in creating joint learnings. Examples included studies at selected sites in India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and

Bangladesh in 2002, 2011 and 2015. In these studies special care was taken to integrate bio-physical knowledge while conducting the community-based socio-economic assessments. The talk highlighted the tools that were found to be most effective in:

- ensuring that no stakeholder group is left out,
- integrating socio-economic and bio-physical monitoring,
- creating joint learnings, and
- communicating the knowledge to a wider audience.

Other papers in this symposium included: Biocultural approach to developing indicators and incorporating local priorities and perspectives to foster linked human and environmental well-being in marine and coastal systems; Working towards incorporating human well-being and cultural importance into the West Hawaii Integrated Ecosystem; Developing and implementing a human well-being framework for restoration planning in the Puget Sound Assessment; and Puna I'a, biocultural linkages, and the well-being of governance in Tairapu, Tahiti.

Many symposium participants complemented the session organizers and stated it was the best symposium they attended at the IMCC5!

From one to many: The journey to social and natural sciences monitoring in the Pacific Islands

By Supin Wongbusarakum

Supin Wongbusarakum and Matt Gorstein gave a presentation at the 5th International Marine Conservation Conference (IMCC5) to illustrate experiences and lessons learned from efforts to integrate social and natural sciences in monitoring the conditions of human communities and marine and terrestrial ecologies in the Pacific Island region.

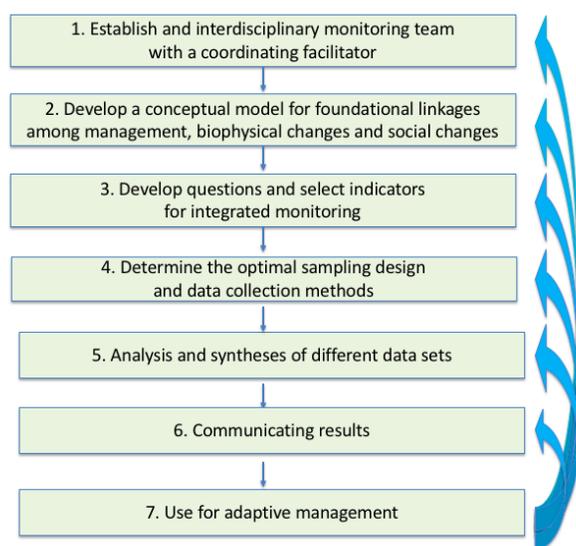
While integrating monitoring is desired and increasingly recognized by different collaborative partnerships at regional and site levels as a better way to gain a holistic view of social-ecological systems, and to generate

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results to help solve marine environmental problems and to better support human well-being, there have been challenges in designing and implementing integrated monitoring. The presentation emphasized that better strategic planning for the integrated monitoring design and challenges in interdisciplinary research need to be addressed. Different cases were used to illustrate challenges and efforts to address them. These included: Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Areas in Hawaii, the NOAA Habitat Blueprint Site Manell-Geus in Guam, and NOAA socio-economic monitoring efforts with the Micronesia Challenge countries (including Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau).



Process for integrating monitoring



The talk shared how the governmental agencies, research partners, conservation organizations, and communities came together to integrate the different distinct types of

monitoring - despite their methodological differences and the various points at which they were initiated - to move towards integrated research practices. It ended

with recommendations based on the lessons learned that may better help support policy relevant research and better bridge sciences with marine management decision-making.

Prioritizing marine science in South Asia at IMCC5

By Vineeta Hoon

The 5th International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC5) had fairly good representation from South Asia. Several of SocMon South Asia site partners and those from the South Asia node of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN-South Asia) from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India attended the congress.



Some of the symposium participants

Naveen Namboothri from the Dakshin Foundation, Bangalore, Vineeta Hoon from Center for Action Research on Environment Science and Society (CARESS), Chennai, India, and Vardhan Patnakar from National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bangalore, took the effort to organise a symposium followed by a focus group on *Prioritising Marine Science in South Asia*. Approximately 30 people attended.

Discussion topics included the status of coral reef conservation and research and status of socio-economic monitoring and bio-physical monitoring in each of the South Asian countries. SocMon continues to be a NGO-led effort in all of the South Asian countries. All SocMon site projects have been community-based monitoring efforts. The emphasis has been on joint learnings both

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by the community and the facilitating team. The main reasons why socio-economic and bio-physical monitoring have not been integrated in a satisfactory manner is because:

1. Funding for them comes separately and at different time periods; They are carried out by separate teams and agencies;
2. It is not mandatory that the two should be integrated under the project mandate; and
3. It is up to the coastal managers and administrative bodies to collate all the information carried out by the different researchers and agencies and build it into the management plan.

The symposium and focus group ended with the decision to form a South Asia network with those in attendance to build on the understanding gained from many country-level SocMon efforts and critiques of fisheries development in developing countries, and to articulate why marine conservation issues in the region are distinct and need special attention.

Investigating the data to decision environment

By Maria Pena and Hilary Lohmann



CERMES in collaboration with our Fulbright Fellow, Hilary Lohmann is conducting research on the use (or not) of SocMon in

decision-making at coastal management sites. Hilary has been working with Maria Pena and Patrick McConney at the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), The University of the West Indies, Barbados, since March on a ten-month Fulbright Scholarship from the US State Department. Her primary research has focused on reviewing historical cases of the SocMon initiative from around the Caribbean to evaluate if and how their results were turned into recommendations, and considered in decision-making. This project looks at the context in which SocMon is implemented and what impact SocMon makes in protected area and management

decisions. With her data collection phase completed, she is now developing a number of outputs to share the research findings.

This research is critical to the SocMon Caribbean node as it will greatly assist us in understanding how decisions are made at coastal management sites and will serve to improve the implementation, sustenance and applicability of socio-economic monitoring within the region.

Promoting SEM-Pasifika

By Supin Wongbusarakum

Supin Wongbusarakum presented *Participatory socio-economic monitoring: Involving local partners and communities when applying social science in conservation* at the Hawai'i Conservation Conference in Honolulu, July 2018. The *Socio-economic Monitoring Guidelines for Coastal Managers in Pacific Island Countries (SEM-Pasifika)* have been promoted and implemented among different countries in the Pacific Island region since 2008. In Micronesia alone, conservation partners have conducted more than 20 assessments that followed the proposed steps or used the guide's suggested indicators. Most of these assessments were conducted in conjunction with a socio-economic monitoring training workshop involving local conservation partners and community members at the assessment sites and were technically supported by social scientists.

The process and outcomes of these assessments, commonly selected indicators, and the extent to which the results have been used to support decision-making in planning or in the management of the coastal and marine resources were discussed. The presentation highlighted key lessons learned regarding best practices related to carrying out participatory processes, establishing appropriate enabling conditions, and meeting the challenges of collaborative research among scientists, conservation practitioners, and communities for conservation planning and adaptive management. Examples from socio-economic monitoring efforts in Micronesia and Hawai'i Community Based Subsistence Fishing Areas were used to illustrate opportunities for improved natural resource management and conservation from collaborative engagement.

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