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Notes & News: MSP survey – Integration in MSP – Fisheries and climate change – Balancing food security and conservation

Report on tools and skills needed by MSP practitioners

A new report is available on the tools and skills needed by marine spatial planning practitioners in North America, as well as various gaps that exist in providing those resources. Produced by the University of Rhode Island Coastal Resources Center, the report covers:

- Information, tools, and techniques that practitioners need to implement MSP, and mechanisms for delivering these materials;
- Organizations that could assist in building MSP capacity; and
- Constituencies that need these materials in order to implement MSP.

The report *Identifying Marine Spatial Planning Gaps, Opportunities, and Partners: An Assessment* is based on a review of MSP initiatives, analysis of a small subset of representative MSP cases in the US and Canada, and consultation with a sample of MSP experts. It is at <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/new-report-challenges-opportunities-marine-spatial-planning>

MSP processes in Belgium, Norway, and US achieving different degrees of integration

For a marine spatial planning process to be effective, the process should feature horizontal integration (i.e., involving a cross-section of stakeholder groups) and vertical integration (from central government down to local government, NGOs, and stakeholders). This is according to a new study comparing existing MSP processes in Belgium, Norway, and the US. The study concludes that while Belgium and Norway have achieved full integration in their MSP processes and therefore been successful, the US has not yet achieved vertical integration, owing to opposition to MSP from influential members of the US Congress and some stakeholder groups. The paper "Integration at the Round Table: Marine Spatial Planning in Multi-Stakeholder Settings", authored by researchers from the three countries studied, is available for free from the journal PLOS ONE at www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0109964

Study: Fisheries restrictions could help counter declines in fish catches due to climate change

A 17-year study has found that implementing stricter fisheries management measures can help overcome the expected negative impacts of climate change disturbances in coral reef fisheries. Published in the journal *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, the study examined the environment and fisheries catches before and after the severe El Niño event of 1997-1998, which killed half of the corals in the Indian Ocean. Management measures that were applied afterward to reduce fishing intensity and restrict destructive fishing gear were found to correlate over time with an increase in catches and fishers' revenues. The authors, Tim McClanahan and Caroline Abunge of the Wildlife Conservation Society, suggest the findings may provide a management solution for reef fisheries predicted to decline with global warming. The paper "Catch rates and income are associated with fisheries management restrictions and not an environmental disturbance, in a heavily exploited tropical fishery" is at www.int-res.com/articles/meps_oa/m513p201.pdf

Marine spatial planning could be key to balancing food security, livelihoods, conservation

One-fifth of Earth's human population lives within 100 km of a tropical coast and that figure is growing. With human-caused stressors degrading coastal ecosystems and climate change reducing reef fishery production, radical change in coastal environmental and fishery management is needed, according to a paper in the journal *Marine Pollution Bulletin*. The paper's authors, a team of 24 researchers from around the world, suggest marine spatial planning could provide the necessary change - forcing a better balancing of food security, livelihoods, and conservation. The paper "Transforming management of tropical coastal seas to cope with challenges of the 21st century" is available at www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X1400366X

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