

Benefits of Stakeholder Participation in fisheries management

A Good Practice Guide to Participatory Research in Fisheries Science is released this January 2009 as part of the EU GAP1 project. The participants are focused on optimizing their collaborative efforts to provide robust scientific advice for fisheries management. Drawing on the conclusions from this work, the aim is to establish good practice between various stakeholders in fisheries while jointly developing scientific fisheries case studies.

Specific benefits that can be expected to be realized from good participatory practice include:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Improving sustainability
- Value for money
- Changing perceptions and attitudes

GAP1 Stakeholder Participant: "The hardest thing for scientists is to explain to fishers the long term benefits".... "it's important to learn about ways of working with fishers and how to convince them of the value of science in helping them to conserve the resource".... "They need to respect traditional/experienced-based knowledge and see that it can be used in a systematic way valuable to science".... "Scientists should welcome fishers to science events and come and talk with fishers."

Good Practice Guide report for download (535KB):

<http://www.gap1.eu/Downloads/D1. GAP Good Practice Guide.pdf>

Fisheries stakeholders frequently challenge the validity or interpretation of scientific advice because the policy decisions arising from it can have a negative impact on their lives. This 'tension' between society, science and policy is particularly evident when environmental sustainability concerns appear in conflict with maintaining livelihoods of fishermen and their industry. Consequently, the interplay between policy makers, scientists, stakeholders and the public at large is an increasingly crucial part of policy making, for which the process is equally as important as the outcome. Active engagement of fisheries stakeholders through their participation in scientific research provides a way to help reduce tension and build collaborative working relationships that yield long-term benefits to resource management.

The purpose of the report is to provide guidance on good practice for stakeholder participation in fisheries research. The contents summarise and build on the outcomes of a workshop attended by both fisheries stakeholders and research scientists, with input from other invited experts. The Good Practice Guide is founded on the experienced-based knowledge, views and opinions of the participants and is specifically intended to help fisheries stakeholders and scientists to formulate collaborative research case studies. Together with the experiences learned through planning of specific case studies, this document will be used to aid the development of a code of conduct for initiating cooperative research processes.

Good Practise Guide (Short Brochure version) (762KB):

http://www.gap1.eu/Downloads/good_brochure_web.pdf

Good Practice Guide report (535KB): (Mackinson, S., Neville, S., Raicevich, S., and Worsøe Clausen, L. (eds) 2008. "Good practice guide to participatory research between fisheries stakeholders and scientists." GAP project deliverable 1, 23pp.)

<http://www.gap1.eu/Downloads/D1. GAP Good Practice Guide.pdf>

Project information

The GAP₁ project is funded under the 7th Framework, Science in Society programme of the European Commission. It contributes to the wider aspiration of the Science in Society programme by engaging the public and providing better conditions for collective choices on scientific issues relating to sustainable management of the marine environment.

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Notes to editors:

On May 5-7th a GAP1 conference and workshop will take place in Norwich, UK. The press is welcome.

Further details to be distributed in our newsletter:

<http://www.gap1.eu/News/News.htm>

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