



Policy Briefs

The purpose of these Policy Briefs is to ensure effective dissemination of information collected and generated as a result of the World Bank-funded Study of Good Management Practice in Sustainable Fisheries, the ACP Fish II Feasibility Study (EC), and a Workshop on Fiscal Reform in Fisheries (DFID and GTZ).

World Bank Study

During 2003, the project 'Study of Good Management Practice in Sustainable Fisheries' was undertaken by SIFAR with funding from the World Bank. This resulted in an initial (brief) report followed by the substantive report which have contributed to a recent internal World Bank process aimed at justifying future investments in fisheries sector development.

EC ACP Fish II Feasibility Study

During 2002/2003 SIFAR/FAO undertook a feasibility study on behalf of the European Commission (European Aid Cooperation Office - AIDCO). This comprised an extensive consultation process with fisheries sector participants from over 60 ACP countries, together with the preparation of a range of major project proposals covering capacity building for more effective fisheries management in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

11. An approach to assessing fisheries management performance

Overview

The primary objective of assessing fisheries management performance is the identification of opportunities for improving the effectiveness of fisheries management⁽¹⁾. Little exists in the literature specifically on how to go about such an exercise. This is partly explained by the need to tailor each exercise to fit the particular circumstances of the fishery and its management system. There exists, however, a useful literature covering aspects of the fisheries management function, a sample of which is provided in the box below.

Assessing fisheries management performance is essentially assessing the success, or otherwise, of fisheries management. [Policy Brief 1](#) discusses what constitutes 'success' and some of the difficulties in arriving at conclusions as to how successful fisheries management has been. This Policy Brief tentatively suggests an approach to undertaking an assessment of fisheries management performance. It is intended that it be used with discretion and imagination. Those undertaking an assessment exercise should tailor the exercise to the particular circumstances of the fishery.

Key issues

A four stage process could usefully be employed in undertaking an assessment of the performance of fisheries management. The first stage is to develop a profile of the fishery and its management. The second stage would assess the performance of fisheries management. The third stage consists of an evaluation of the performance which is undertaken with the purpose of pointing to ways in which fisheries management could be improved. Finally, the fourth stage is reporting back so to encourage constructive use of the assessment. The assessment process involves finding answers to a set of questions and analysing those answers:

PROFILE OF THE FISHERIES AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

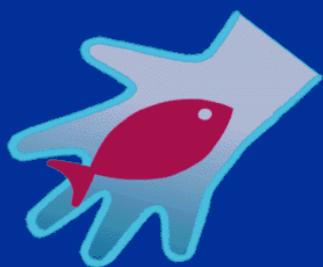
- Does a fisheries **policy** exist⁽²⁾? If yes, what are the objectives identified in that policy? Is the policy consistent with other areas of national policy? Is the policy consistent with best practice norms expressed in the [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#)? Is policy consistent with other international commitments?

If an explicit fisheries policy does not exist, are there stated objectives for the fisheries sector expressed elsewhere?

- Is fisheries and other related legislation consistent with policy?
- What information is available about the fisheries? What data collection is undertaken by the fisheries management authority (FMA)⁽³⁾, or at the behest of the FMA, to inform management decision making⁽⁴⁾? What data and analysis generated elsewhere is used to fulfil the same purpose? Is there additional data or analysis that could feasibly be gathered to achieve better informed decision making?

DFID Fiscal Reform in Fisheries Workshop

In October 2003, SIFAR organised a Workshop and Exchange of Views on Fiscal Reform in Fisheries - to 'promote growth, poverty eradication and sustainable management'. This took place in the context of a wider OECD-DAC Initiative, promoted through the UK Department for International Development (DFID), examining issues related to environmental fiscal reform.



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PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- What is the structure of the fisheries management authority? Is the structure adequate for managing fishing over the whole range of the target stocks? (In cases of transboundary stocks this might be as a result of co-operative arrangements between FMA's) Is it structured so as to enable participation of stakeholders in the fishery in a way that establishes legitimacy for fisheries management and ownership of measures agreed upon and implemented?⁽⁵⁾
- What is the process for arriving at fisheries management decisions?
- How does management deal with risk/uncertainty? Is there a practice of risk-prone decision making? Is the precautionary principle applied?
- Are environmental perturbations considered unusual events? Is such environmental variability accommodated in planning?
- Are specific **goals** set for each fishery? How do these accord with the historic performance of the fishery in terms of yield, and economic and social factors? Are the goals constrained by the best scientific advice available? Do the goals address identified problems in the fishery?
- Are the goals further developed into **operational objectives**? Are the operational objectives realistic, measurable and linked to a time-frame? Are they accepted by the stakeholders in the fishery? Have reference points been established for the particular fishery? Have performance indicators relating to the reference points been established?
- Has a **management strategy** been established to achieve the operational objectives? Do the management measures employed bring the desired results by establishing a set of incentives that induce appropriate behaviour in the fishery?
- Have **rights** in the fisheries, in whatever form they might be expressed, been clearly defined? Is there appropriate monitoring of the use of these rights? Are the rights enforceable and enforced?
- To what extent does fisheries management deliver on the objectives of policy, the primary dimensions of which are social, economic and biological?⁽⁶⁾

Some literature contributing to the developing of a methodology in assessing fisheries management performance:

- Casely, D.J and K. Kumar (1987) **Project monitoring and evaluation in agriculture**. John Hopkins University Press. Project monitoring and evaluation provides insights into assessment of fisheries management.
- Cochrane, K.L. (ed.) (2002) *A fishery manager's guidebook. Management measures and their application*. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper No. 424. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.
- FAO (1999) *Indicators for sustainable development of marine capture fisheries*. Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries, vol. 8. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (2003). **Building awareness and capacity: An action plan for continued sustainable development. 2001-2003**. Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans strategy and action plan attempts to explore the integrated management of fisheries with due attention given to economic, environmental and social concerns.
- Neiland, A.E. and C. Bene, C. (eds) (2004) **Poverty and Small-scale fisheries in West Africa**. Kluwer/FAO. This book addresses the importance of monitoring and performance assessment in small-scale fisheries with particular reference to poverty.
- OECD (2003) **Review of fisheries in OECD countries. policies and summary statistics**. Special chapter on Economic and Social Sustainability Indicators discusses the development and use of these indicators in OECD countries and key issues surrounding their use.

EVALUATION OF THE ASSESSMENT

- What are the key factors that have affected performance in each fishery?
- Does the assessment point to additional data/information that could feasibly be collected and would improve the quality of fisheries management decision-making?
- What recommendations for further improvement of fisheries management could be made?

REPORTING AND FEEDBACK

- The principal purpose of assessing performance is to encourage improvements in management. Reporting on the assessment and evaluation exercise should be oriented to this end, emphasising particularly the recommendations for future improvements.
- Openness and transparency with all stakeholders encourages the process of improving management performance. It is particularly important that all those who have participated in the exercise receive appropriate feedback so that they are able to see that their contributions have been constructively used and, in a sense, are in a better position to participate in the monitoring of those improvements.

(1) FAO uses this working definition of fisheries management: “The integrated process of information gathering, analysis, planning, consultation, decision-making, allocation of resources and formulation and implementation, with enforcement as necessary, of regulations or rules which govern fisheries activities in order to ensure the continued productivity of the resources and the accomplishment of other fisheries objectives” (FAO (1997). *Technical guidelines for responsible fisheries No. 4: Fisheries management*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations).

(2) For a discussion of policy see Policy Briefing 13: [Key concepts II: Fisheries policy, the policy process and policy analysis](#), in this series.

(3) A fisheries management authority is “the body which makes the decisions on how the fishery is carried out, and is responsible for all ancillary services, such as statistics gathering, assessment, MCS, consultation with fishers and other users of the sea, and resource allocation or determining the conditions of access to the fishery”. ([FAO Glossary](#)).

(4) For a summary of some basic data requirements see Cochrane, K.L. (ed.) (2002) *A fishery manager's guidebook. Management measures and their application*. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper No. 424. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

(5) See discussion of this question in Policy Briefing 15: [Some key considerations for improving fisheries management performance](#), in this series.

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