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Evidence for persuasion as part of the ecosystem approach

Key words: Evidence-Based, Livelihoods, Engagement

Abstract:

A well-designed and implemented ecosystem based management approach involves the engagement and agreement of stakeholders. In practice, it is almost impossible to have all stakeholders in agreement and to keep those agreements in place over extended periods of time. By using lessons from four case studies, the authors demonstrate different approaches to creating ecosystem-based interventions that are initiated by gathering evidence for persuasion.

The paper supports the concept that ecosystem-based management approaches are more likely to be adopted when there are evidence-based reasons to act. This often requires that a range of stakeholders readily understands the both how and why to adapt.

Experienced practitioners can readily identify the important elements of an ecosystem and weigh-up the options and likely outcomes of any intervention. However stakeholders that depend on ecosystem service for livelihoods may require additional evidence. Evidence for persuasion takes time to develop and can take many forms.

This paper compares the different approaches used in gathering evidence for persuasion using case studies from four different ecosystems. The case studies represent different biological and social environments. Yet, each case study also has in common, a pressing need to maintain and improve the livelihoods of the stakeholders. The case studies come from the Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Eastern Indonesia.

Each case study has a unique setting and scale of evidence for decision making, Maldives was atoll focused, Kimble Bay was ridge to reef, Vanuatu was catchment focused and Nusa Tenggara was community food security focused.