

# Fisheries co-management: The International Experience



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International Collective in Support of  
Fishworkers

**Expert Consultation on  
Coastal Fisheries and Area Co-management  
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# Fisheries and coastal area management



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- From a fishing community perspective, to maintain and improve livelihoods and quality of life, it is vital to protect and manage both
  - Fisheries, and
  - The coastal area and its resources



# Fisheries co-management

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- Fisheries co-management is a **partnership** arrangement in which local resource users, the government and other relevant stakeholders share the responsibility and the authority for the management of fisheries
- Fishers should, primarily, have the right to participate in key decisions about various aspects of management
- Fisheries co-management typically focuses on fishing (not on related aspects such as marketing, harbour management)



# Fisheries co-management

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Goals typically include:

- Sustainable management of fisheries resources
- Equity, empowerment, and redistribution of power
- Better quality of life for coastal fishing communities
- Efficiency (cost saving)



# Fisheries co-management

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Co-management is about:

- The devolution of management authority to user organizations and coastal communities
- The empowerment of resource users/ fishing communities



# Fisheries co-management

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The case for co-management:

- Centralized management systems have limitations
- Community-based systems and organizations need to work with government and other stakeholders (given the nature of the fisheries resource)



# Fisheries co-management

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- Several examples, from Asia and elsewhere (Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Brazil, Mozambique, Uganda, Norway, Japan, Canada...)



# Fisheries co-management

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- In India also, some examples of informal co-management arrangements





# Fisheries co-management

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Seems to work where there are:

- Effective **preparatory** processes, often led by communities, and based on experience of crisis (disappearance of key spp, higher investment, longer trips, declining CPUE, conflict between groups...)
- Strong, representative local organizations exist (or are fostered) that represent **economic interests** of resources users **as well as welfare of coastal communities**



# Fisheries co-management

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Seems to work where there is:

- Recognition of local institutions to participate in fisheries management
- A legal framework (eg. Philippines) in place (indicating that the government is committed to co-management),
- Investment in capacity-building and training of government staff
- Relevant stakeholders are part of the process (eg. exporters in Brazil)



# Fisheries co-management

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Why women should be part of co-management:

- Women are often directly part of the fisheries (preparing for trips, repairing nets, selling and processing fish...)
- Goal of co-management is to improve livelihoods and quality of life of communities (not only economic benefits to fishermen).
- There are links between a united community and better management. Women's crucial roles in social networking and keeping relationships must be recognized.



# Fisheries co-management

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Need to resolve issues of:

- What scale
- What fisheries management functions (when, where, how, who and how much to fish) should be delegated
- Which stakeholders should be involved
- How to establish coordination mechanisms



# Fisheries co-management

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- No standard model
- Process needs to be adaptive and iterative



# Fisheries co-management

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Some concerns:

- Responsibilities, but no rights  
(Philippines, Thailand, JFM in India)
- High costs: time and labour (time taken for meetings, surveillance activities...)



# Coastal area management

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- Fishing communities one among several players in the coastal zone (often the weakest)
- In all countries being negatively affected by developments in the coastal zone (industry, ports, pollution, tourism)



# Coastal area management

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- Participation of fishing communities in CAM processes essential to safeguard quality of life and access to coastal resources
- Legal framework for CAM rarely prioritizes the rights of fishing communities to the coastal zone





# Coastal area management

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## Current legal framework

- CRZ Notification of 1991 (under the Environment Protection Act)
- Recognizes customary rights of coastal communities to their habitat
- Notification not well implemented
- MoEF has indicated that a new Notification for management of the coastal zone is in process



# Coastal area management

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FAO's Code of Conduct:

- Article 10.1.2: “In view of the multiple uses of the coastal area, States should ensure that representatives of the fisheries sector and fishing communities are consulted in the decision-making processes and involved in other activities related to coastal area management planning and development”;



# Coastal area management

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FAO's Code of Conduct:

- Article 10.1.3: “States should develop, as appropriate, institutional and legal frameworks in order to determine the possible uses of coastal resources and to govern access to them, taking into account the rights of coastal fishing communities and their customary practices to the extent compatible with sustainable development.”

DHANYAVAD

THANK YOU