Setting the Stage
Rebuilding Sustainable Fisheries for the Future

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FISHERIES MANAGERS AND DECISION-MAKERS

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Outline

1) Why Fisheries Rebuilding is Critical

2) Challenges in Managing, Rebuilding Fisheries

3) International Context

4) What Works and What Does Not?

5) Where to from Here?- Role of Fisheries Economists and Managers
Why Fisheries Rebuilding is Critical
Need to take Action

- Last 50 yrs.- 366 Fisheries Collapses- ¼ of FAO world databases;

- Rate of collapse has not slowed- no overall improvement over 50 yrs;

- 6.3 billion humans, increasing to 8.9 by 2050;

- Global climate change will exacerbate global food crisis and pressure on fish stocks.
Managing, Rebuilding Fisheries

A) COMPETING FISHERIES INTERESTS ADD COMPLEXITY:

- Commercial - employment, income, licence and vessel values, access, historic shares, allocation, subsidies and benefits, processing, economic spin-offs;
- Recreational - access, entitlement, economic impacts-boats, gear, tourism, hotels, etc.;
- Aboriginal - rights, treaty entitlements, legal precedents, social and economic benefits
- Non-Consumptive Interests - resource conservation, preservation, tourism and non-consumptive values.
Managing, Rebuilding Fisheries

B) MANAGEMENT TOOLS:

- Good Science Needed for Decision-Making; Precautionary Approach in absence of information; risk assessment

- In Managing Fisheries, we Actually Manage People:
  - access, time and area closures, allocation, quotas, TAC’s, vessel and gear restrictions, capacity reduction, consultation, legislation, regulations, enforcement;

- Natural, Man-made Environmental Changes add Complexity
C) GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL CONTEXT:

- Annual fishing plans, catch limits, quotas, conditions, administered by management authority or body authorize /deny access;
- Competing interests challenge the process, its’ basis in Science, may influence decisions;
- Tendency to trade off short term interests, protection of status quo against long term benefits of rebuilding, conservation, economic benefits of longer-term approach.
International Considerations

- Challenges are similar to domestic situation—national self-interest and fisheries agenda of nations;
- Sovereignty-based competition;
- “Distant-water Fishing Nations” vs. developing economies;
- Challenge of effective international rules, regulations, enforcement, governance mechanisms in international waters;
- Lack of a global vision and commitment to protect and rebuild world fish stocks
SAD STORIES- NORTHERN COD

--“BEING IN LATITUDE 54 DEGREES 30--- WE FOUND GREAT ABUNDANCE OF COD, SO THAT THE HOOKE WAS NO LONGER OVERBOARD, BUT PRESENTLY A FISH WAS TAKEN. IT WAS THE LARGEST AND BEST FED FISH THAT I EVER SAW”—

• Captain John Davis off Labrador, 1586

• JULY 2, 1992, - MINISTER CROSBIE ANNOUNCES CLOSURE OF NORTHERN COD, GRAND BANKS COD FISHERY
What works? What does not?

- Spectacular fisheries collapses have been linked to science, overcapacity, overfishing, data limitations, environmental change, - e.g.- Northern Cod in Canada
- Successes:
  - Pacific Halibut Commission-originated in 1920’s due to declines, fishers concerns; excellent process with meaningful involvement of key players
  - Northern coho salmon rebuilding- British Columbia- example of long-term decision-making and political support for rebuilding.
What tools, approaches help?

- Real involvement of people in decision-making, future direction; open, transparent processes;
- Perception of fairness and equity;
- Habitat protection and restoration to preserve ecosystems; Sustainable aquaculture;
- Shift from single species to multi-species/ecosystem approach (challenging); climate change impacts;
- Marine protected areas and refuges; Certification;
- Broad public support for rebuilding, conservation, sustainability; global vision and objectives.
Where to From Here?

- RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:
  - People oppose change because:
    - change risk seen as greater than risk of status quo
    - fear of loss of self-interest, status, role, influence
    - they believe proposed change is a bad idea
    - people identify with those that embrace “old way”
    - fear of hidden agendas
    - skepticism of new ideas; lack of role models or examples of new activity.
Agents of Change- Participants!

- FISHERIES MANAGERS, ECONOMIST’S ROLES:
  - Economists need to make a convincing case of the longer term benefits of re-building in the face of global food supply challenges;
  - Climate change, food supply problems may be a catalyst, “tipping point” for societal awareness;
  - Processes that work stress involvement, inclusivity, wider long-term vision, “Aquatic Stewardship”;
  - Challenge is all about people and a new vision for fisheries rebuilding; Think global- act local!
THOUGHTS TO PONDER

“THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS FOR MANKIND—is the ascertainment of the place which man occupies in nature and his relations to the universe of things”

THE ESSENCE OF THE CHALLENGE

“SO THE FIRST BIOLOGICAL LESSON OF HISTORY IS THAT LIFE IS COMPETITION. COMPETITION IS NOT ONLY THE LIFE OF TRADE, IT IS THE TRADE OF LIFE- PEACEFUL WHEN FOOD ABOUNDS, VIOLENT WHEN THE MOUTHS OUTRUN THE FOOD. ANIMALS EAT ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT QUALM; CIVILIZED MEN CONSUME ONE ANOTHER BY DUE PROCESS OF LAW.”

W. & A. Durant, “The Lessons of History”