

Eliciting values and negotiating trade-offs in participatory management strategy evaluation

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Abstract

Management strategy evaluation (MSE) is a formal numerical protocol that quantitatively assesses the risks of alternative management schemes, which, when part of a participatory process, are deliberated upon and approved by stakeholders. Hence, participatory MSE is touted as socially responsible and responsive, but is often imbued with a naive view of how humans behave in conflict situations. Few concrete suggestions exist of how this social modality of MSE might be implemented in a world where fisheries disagreements all too often segue into vituperative conflict, mainly because the power to make actual policy decisions is generally reserved to bodies allied with governments. While stakeholders are often consulted, they rarely can change policy decisions, and this leads to intransigent postures and frustration, which then impedes fisheries governance. Here, we review some formal and results-based approaches to eliciting stakeholder values and negotiating trade-offs that can help mediate resource conflicts and lead to more inclusive and ethical MSE protocols. These include FAO recommended negotiation and mediation techniques, post-normal science, structured decision-making, Delphi, Bayesian belief networks, and practical ethics. We conclude with a case study of how MSE was combined with practical ethics in a novel value- and ecosystem-based management approach to address the Pacific herring fishery conflict in western Canada.

Keywords:

management strategy evaluation, values, trade-offs, negotiation, participatory, stakeholders, governance, ethics

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