Traditional Knowledge Management in Marine Conservation

from the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas (FLMMA) Network
Adaptive Learning at site Level

Initiation
- Request
- Assess interest & awareness raising

Action Planning

Collect and analyze data (communicate)

Implement plan & monitor

Monitoring Plan (and skills)

Ongoing Management
Collect data – community monitoring

Analyze data and information

Present results

Socialize information
Traditional knowledge and Culture

- Founded in our village & our home
- Fishing ground ownership, legends, folklore, tales and history
- Allied to our spiritual believes and values
- Connected to our natural resources (tree, fish, birds, turtle fishing rules, gods)
- Social groups function, role and skill (chief, fishermen, builder, men and women, generations)
- Special knowledge of the vanua (land and sea) and its resources (seasonal calendar, prediction potential etc)
- Tabu processes (location, timeline, reasons)
Community workshop
Fiji Today

- Strengthening sustainable resource management and use
- Onus on resource owners to lead resource management
- Traditional and local knowledge are to be fully tapped
- Effective participation of community and resource owners
- Changes are considered and adapting
- Traditional cultural values allow for the effective implementation of management decisions
Abundant catches during spawning aggregation
Traditional Ceremonial Menu
Harvested beche-de-mer
Traditional resource use means

- Community interdependent and sharing is priority in doing things.
- The people are connected.
- Decision making is simple.
- Spiritual believe plays a major role.
- Can prohibit things.
- Good understanding of their natural assets.
Importance of indigenous knowledge to the sustainability of life and settlements on the islands. Nunn (2007) stressed TK allowed the people to quickly recover from disasters and are more resilient.

TK adds in more value when methods of resource management determined by local people are applied to ensure the sustainable use of environmental resources.

Tabu (tool widely used in FLMMA) do not assume homogenous effect to villagers but depends on site context.
Polluted coastlines
Traditional Knowledge challenges

- Many issues relating to the use of environmental resources are new to local communities hence logical to receive advice and assistance from outside the communities.

- TK & close social relations lost in international and national resource management initiatives, are strengths to be emphasized in resource management.

- People live with the dilemma of choosing between incomes from immediate and unsustainable use of resources and the more remote future benefits of conservation activities.
TK and practice Challenges

- Increased population
- Improved technology & fishing is unlimited
- Good catches
- Traditions weakening
- Lack of compliance
Destructive methods
Uncontrolled villagers
Poaching
Ploying tactics and dirty dealings with villagers
Traditional knowledge vs emerging changes
Documentation of the visible & invisible learning and appropriate adaptive strategies to be incorporated into action plans
Pigs roaming in protected areas
Highlights

- Resource management is a success
- Traditional knowledge is utilized
- Resource management varies across sites
- Traditional social support
- People are deciding what works for them
- Increase demands to open tabu
- Sense of tabu belonging to everyone
- Site representation is not working
Improvements to resource management

- Future of inshore resources depend on support in conservation

- Outside input incorporated to ensure local communities learn and benefit from the experiences of others and not to be left to learn only from their own first-hand experiences

- Govt - community integration and support
  - National sustainable development policies to enhance community based work
  - Regulations to respect traditional rules and bylaws
  - Legislative support

- Participation and inclusiveness
Improvements to resource management

- Strengthening leadership and management at all levels from village, district and province
- Resource conflict management methods and skills
- Integrate resource management to improving community livelihood
- *Tabu* enforcement not communities role (state is the owner)
- Prolonged investment in resource management
Vinaka Vakalevu

Semisi Meo (meo_s@usp.ac.fj)

For more information...
Please visit: www.LMMAnetwork.org
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