

Challenges of Effective Collaborative Process

West
Coast
Aquatic



What is West Coast Aquatic?

- Non-profit society based in Port Alberni
- Exist to support collaboration in natural resource management
- Work across BC and Yukon
- Focus on aquatic/marine ecosystems, fish, and water
 - Provide field-specific technical facilitation support

Where did we come from?

- Founded in 2001
- Treaty process with 14 Nuu-chah-nulth Nations – Co-management of marine environment and resources
- Change to supporting collaboration in a less formal, needs-based method
 - Worked with our Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners to identify what needs continue to exist that we address
- Developed a unique position as an explicitly neutral party that exists to support collaborative process

What does collaborative process support mean?

- Process leadership
 - Facilitation of meetings, workshops, etc.
 - Process design
 - Project management (scheduling, contracting, reporting, etc)
 - Relationship management
- We want to understand (research):
 - What are factors that enable effective process leadership?
 - For ourselves and from others

Why Collaborate?

- Multi-jurisdictional problem
- Desired outcome not achievable on one's own – need to work with others
- Mutual benefit/synergy
- Social license or political feasibility
- Others?

Areas of work

- Salmon Roundtables
 - Harvest
 - Stewardship and enhancement
 - Water management
- Salmon population rebuilding
 - WCVI Chinook
 - Nanaimo River Summer Chinook
 - Yukon River Chinook
- Collaborative Process Development
 - Coastal Marine Strategy

Similar Forestry Context

- Forest Landscape Planning
 - Parties
 - BC, FN governments
 - Licensee(s)
 - Community stakeholders
 - Desired outcomes
 - Balance of conservation and economic growth
 - Protection of Indigenous values and rights
 - Timber supply predictability for licensees and First Nations
 - Movement towards realizing shared decision-making in practice

Challenges in Collaboration

- Measurement
 - Justify benefits of taking a collaborative approach
 - Time-horizon of results
 - Measurable indicators of non-biological outcomes
- Process breakdowns
 - Lack of trust
 - Changing political mandates
 - Capacity (time, financial, expertise, priority)
- Outcomes
 - Institutional misfit
 - Inoperable outcomes (plan sits on a shelf)
 - Poor resource outcomes (unacceptable reduction in access to resource benefits)

Proposed Research

- Understand and document factors that contribute to successful collaborative process leadership, especially in light of these challenges
- Test effectiveness of these factors
- Share approaches, mobilize social science research, build community of practice.

Practitioner, applied focus