

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

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Case Study Name:	Is Adaptive Management Helping to Solve Fisheries Problems?		
Authors:	Carl J. Walters		
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Region:	n/a		
Country:	n/a		
Ecosystem Type:	n/a		
Social Characteristics:	n/a		
Scale of Study:	global		
Resource Type:	Fisheries,		
Type of Initiative:	Other ... (policy development)		
Community Based Work:	Resource management, monitoring		

Keywords:	Policy, experimental, management, monitoring, leadership, implementation, complex, biomass, fish, historical
Summary:	<p>Adaptive management has been widely recommended as a way to deal with extreme uncertainty in natural resource and environmental decision making. The core concept in adaptive management is that policy choices should be treated as deliberate, large-scale experiments; hence, policy choice should be treated at least partly as a problem of scientific experimental design. There have now been upwards of 100 case studies where attempts were made to apply adaptive management to 8 issues ranging from restoration of endangered desert fish species to protection of the Great Barrier Reef. Most of these cases have been failures in the sense that no experimental management program was ever implemented, and there have been serious problems with monitoring programs in the handful of cases where an experimental plan was implemented. Most of the failures can be traced to three main institutional problems: i) lack of management resources for the expanded monitoring needed to carry out large-scale experiments; ii) unwillingness by decision makers to admit and embrace uncertainty in making policy choices; and, iii: lack of leadership in the form of individuals willing to do all the hard work need3d to plan and implement new and complex management programs.</p>