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Capacity Development for Oceans, Coasts, and the 2030 Agenda

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Oceans, coasts, and marine resources are vital to human health and well-being. Protecting the long-term sustainability of our oceans will depend upon the adoption of effective ocean governance practices and the strengthening of the necessary capacities and institutions. The recently adopted UN Sustainable Development Agenda (2030 Agenda) offers a unique opportunity to advance sustainable ocean governance.

The last decade has seen a shift away from conventional marine management, typically characterised by single species, single issue approaches, and towards an approach that views oceans as holistic systems with human components.¹ Marine ecosystem-based management (MEBM), as this approach is generally known, represents the best known practice to ensure the long-term sustainability of oceans and the benefits that they provide. Most governments and practitioners worldwide are transitioning to MEBM in policy and practice.² Its implementation, we suggest, is fundamental to delivering on the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts.

Despite the vital significance of MEBM to the future of ocean health, longstanding obstacles have hindered its full adoption by most governments

and management organisations. Fostering its adoption and implementation will require Capacity Development (CD) measures focused on strengthening local and regional capacities and supporting key institutions as they transition to MEBM and beyond. Many governments and organisations are calling for and engaging in CD. Little guidance exists, however, on how to fund, design, implement, and measure the impact of efforts to strengthen ocean governance capacities. This leads to inconsistencies in discourse and practice, and, as with marine management that ignores the human dimension, may bring harm to intended beneficiaries.³

To address the need for guidance on strengthening capacity to support the transition to MEBM, the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies hosted a series of knowledge exchanges involving international experts with decades of experience in capacity development in marine and coastal management. The keystone event in this series was the 2016 Potsdam Ocean Governance Workshop, in which global participants contributed both policy and technical experience gained in community-based, government-to-government, and regional ocean governance initiatives, as well as global capacity development initiatives from across the world's oceans and seas.

¹ McLeod, K., Leslie, H. (eds) (2009). *Ecosystem-based Management for the Oceans*. Island Press, Washington, DC, pp. 369.

² Long, R. D., Charles, A., Stephenson, R. L., (2015). Key principles of marine ecosystem-based management. - *Marine Policy*, 57, pp. 53–60.

³ E.g., Campbell, L.M., Gray, N.J., Hazen, E.L., Shackeroff, J.M. (2009). Beyond baselines: rethinking priorities for ocean conservation. - *Ecology and Society*, 14, pp. 14–21. Levine, A. S., Richmond, L., Lopez-Carr, D. (2015). Marine resource management: Culture, livelihoods, and governance. - *Applied Geography*, 59, pp. 56–59. Rossiter, J. S., Levine, A. S. (2014). What makes a “successful” marine protected area? The unique context of Hawaii’s fish replenishment areas. - *Marine Policy*, 44, pp. 196–203.

Re-envisioning capacity development

This policy brief draws on knowledge gained through these exchanges to provide three central policy recommendations, each presenting vital aspects of this new capacity development paradigm to implement the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts by strengthening ocean governance human and institutional capacities:

■ **Message 1:**

Place capacity development in the service of the transformation of ocean governance.

Achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda in relation to oceans, coasts, and marine resources fundamentally relies upon strengthening capacities and institutions to achieve marine ecosystem-based management.

■ **Message 2:**

Promote a new paradigm of capacity development.

Capacity development based on good practice is essential to achieve the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts.

We must adopt a new vision for capacity development with a focus on donor coordination, effective development cooperation, long-term investment, localisation, and regional ocean governance and its application at national and local scales.

■ **Message 3:**

Apply capacity development and ocean governance across boundaries and contexts.

Capacity development in practice can help make ocean governance more effective across boundaries and contexts, thereby overcoming longstanding obstacles to cross-sectoral, cross-scale, and ecosystem-based governance. Core components of capacity development in practice include: localising fully and from the outset; aligning to ecosystem governance scales; recognising the importance of values and relationships; and focusing on delivering lasting, sustained capacity.

1. Place capacity development in the service of the transformation of ocean governance

Achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda in relation to oceans, coasts, and marine resources fundamentally relies upon strengthening capacities and institutions to achieve marine ecosystem-based management.

Transformative agendas such as the 2030 Agenda and, more broadly, the transition towards the management of oceans as holistic ecosystems require transformed institutions.⁴ Global consultations on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda found that local and national capacities and strengthened institutions will be among the foremost factors to its success – or failure. Many governance organisations are now calling for and engaging in capacity development (CD) to support the transition towards marine ecosystem-based management (MEBM). This trend is reflected by the sizeable increases in the funding of and commitment to initiatives for CD in ocean and coastal management in recent years.⁵ However, little guidance exists on how to approach, design, implement and measure the impact of CD for ocean governance.

Capacity development or capacity building?

While the 2030 Agenda emphasises the essential role of capacity development as a common thread throughout its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a clear definition is lacking in the Agenda. Throughout this IASS Policy Brief we use the term “capacity development” rather than “capacity building”, even though the latter term is used in the 2030 Agenda and is common in ocean and coastal management practice. Developing, rather than building capacities, speaks to an approach that takes existing strengths and capacities as its foundation while also seeking to address deficits within a particular place and context. This approach is perhaps best defined as the process through which individuals, organisations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain their capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. Components of capacity include knowledge, skills, systems, structures, processes, values, resources and powers that, taken together, confer a range of political, managerial and technical capabilities.⁶

⁴ United Nations Development Programme (2014). *Delivering on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Opportunities at the national and local levels*. Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1909UNDP-MDG-Delivering-Post-2015-Report-2014.pdf>

⁵ National Academy of Science, Committee on International Capacity Building for the Protection and Sustainable Use of Oceans and Coasts, National Research Council (2008). *Increasing Capacity for Stewardship of Oceans and Coasts: A Priority for the 21st Century*. Available at: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12043.html>

⁶ Adapted from: United Nations Development Programme (2009). *Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer*. Available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/capacity-development-a-undp-primer.html>

Establishing greater consistency in CD – how we talk about it, define it, fund it, structurally organise it, and practice it – will go far to enabling the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for the oceans and, more broadly, to strengthen the capacities and institutions necessary for effective MEBM. In the light of these considerations, we recommend the following as foundational elements to delivering on the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts:

Strengthen the capacities of individuals, organisations, and societies

Rather than simply building individual skills, successful CD efforts look at the broader context of individual, organisational, and societal capacities, including how individuals interact with one another and how the capacities, rules, and structures of institutions and societies affect, promote, and develop MEBM. Over the years, the international marine management community has only been able to support a small fraction of the communities, and local and national institutions that need marine management support. As we move towards MEBM, we must greatly expand the scale of marine management activity. However, to do so, we must establish innovative capacity development and programme approaches that more fully involve national and local institutions and local communities both in on-the-ground management efforts and in efforts to systematically expand management to new areas. The marine management

community has not yet adequately supported efforts to more fully empower national and local institutions to be the primary agents of change for MEBM management in their countries. Fortunately, several such efforts have been started around the world, but these need much greater investment.

Engage capacity development recipients through transformative learning

Conventional CD practices favour non-collaborative, top-down, expert-centred models of learning. Instead, we should embrace transformational and experiential learning approaches that are more reflective of the different types of learning that occur in different places, societies, and cultures such as cooperative learning, learning networks, peer-to-peer learning, co-creation, and participatory learning.⁷ When capacity development occurs within and among people of a variety of perspectives – local, indigenous, scientific, governance, South-South, North-South, East-West – learning is longer lasting, more holistic and systemic, rather than purely technical. Transformational learning experiences contribute to the formation of communities of practice and build trust between stakeholders, practitioners, and institutions. They also can foster a sense of community among stakeholders, where those stakeholders feel a sense of belonging, that they matter to one another and the group, and have faith that needs and commitments will be met together.⁸

⁷ E.g., Seneque, M., Bond, C. (2012). Working with the complexities of transformational change in a society in transition: A South African perspective. – *European Business Review*, Vol. 24(5), pp. 425–443. Scharmer, O. and Kaufer, K. (2013). *Leading From the Emerging Future: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.

⁸ McMillan, D. W., Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. – *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), pp. 6–23.

Advance marine ecosystem-based management

The implementation of MEBM principles will be crucial to achieving specific SDG targets relevant to the oceans as well as the holistic goals of the 2030 Agenda. By MEBM, we refer to the range of approaches that focus on governing ecosystems holistically, including people; that balance ecosystem and sustainable development objectives; that govern across scales and time, as well as among sectors; and that integrate place-based context.⁹ Numerous obstacles hamper the implementation of MEBM: mismatched and overlapping governance institutions;¹⁰ the challenge of developing frameworks to facilitate governance across jurisdictional boundaries, scales (local

to multinational), sectors, and diverse place-based contexts; the integration of multiple forms of knowledge;¹¹ resource limitations (financial, infrastructure, human resources); and the need to balance competing objectives (e.g., environmental, economic). Capacities for the implementation of MEBM need to be structurally embedded and adaptive to local contexts and must be continuously adjusted to reflect changes in ecosystems.

Capacity development must focus on supporting governments, practitioner organisations, and societies to complete their own, locally-contextualised transitions towards MEBM approaches on the ground and in the water. Only then will we be able to achieve the 2030 Agenda for oceans.

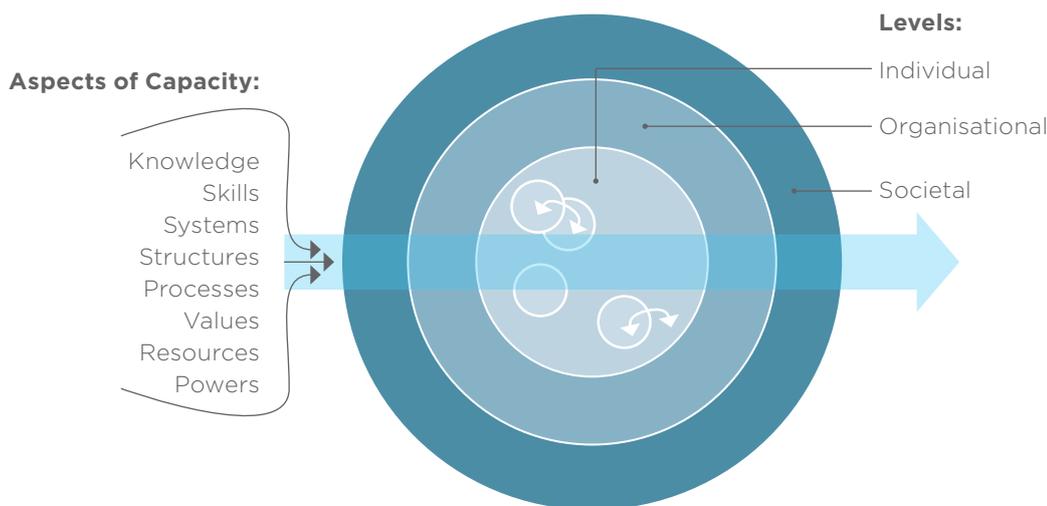


Figure 1: Capacities development as an holistic approach to strengthening the capacity of individuals, organisations, and society.

Source: IASS

⁹ McLeod & Leslie (2009); Long, Charles, Stephenson (2015).

¹⁰ Crowder, L. B., Osherenko, G., Young, O. R., Airamé, S., Norse, E. A., Baron, N., Day, J. C., Douvère, F., Ehler, C. N., Halpern, B. S., Langdon, S. J., McLeod, K. L., Ogden, J. C., Peach, R. E., Rosenberg, A. A. and Wilson, J. A. (2006). Resolving Mismatches in Ocean Governance. – *Science*, 313, pp. 617–618. Ruckelshaus, M., Klinger, T., Knowlton, N., DeMaster, D. P. (2008). Marine ecosystem-based management in practice: Scientific and governance challenges. – *Bioscience*, 58(1), pp. 53–63.

¹¹ McLeod & Leslie (2009)

2. Promote a new paradigm of capacity development

Capacity development based on good practice is essential to achieve the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts. To do so, we must adopt a new vision for capacity development with a focus on donor coordination, effective development cooperation, long-term investment, localisation, and regional ocean governance and its application at national and local scales.

Advancing the discourse and practice of capacity development (CD) – away from ad hoc efforts and towards those more grounded in good practice – is both fundamental and essential to supporting ongoing transformations in ocean governance and to ensuring that capacities are lasting and sustainable. The 2030 Agenda is not new in calling for CD to support a transformative agenda. Nor is it unusual in providing relatively little guidance about what types and forms of capacity development are needed. But a growing constituency of stakeholders is asking for more substantive conversations and guidance in its investment and its practice: What do we mean by capacity development for oceans governance? How do we implement it? Where, for whom, and towards what? And how can we measure our impact? What techniques work in which places and contexts – and why?

The following recommendations, when applied with place-based context in mind, should be included in CD efforts if we are to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda for oceans and coasts. These recommendations stem from knowledge exchanges among global CD experts who are striving to develop good practices in ocean and coastal management CD. Along with recommendations presented in the preceding and following sections, they represent core elements of a re-envisioned capacity development paradigm for ocean governance.

Invest through the life of the 2030 Agenda and beyond

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for the oceans will require the adoption of a new paradigm of capacity development underpinned by investments spanning the life of the 2030 Agenda and beyond. Lasting change takes time, from inception phases through advancing, transforming, and achieving sustained impacts. Those with decades of experience in CD often lament the short time horizons, as well as the lack of predictability and consistency of donor and funding institutions. One of the most important shifts we recommend is for donor and development partners to invest consistently and predictably in CD initiatives across timeframes of 10–15 years and through the life of the 2030 Agenda.

Shift away from one-size-fits-all frameworks

Despite the allure exercised by the vision of a single, global investment framework or capacity development guidance document, experience suggests that one-size-fits-all approaches will not work. Engaging at the regional (multinational) scale provides a more place-based approach with substantial advantages over those located at the global scale. Participants in our knowledge exchanges provided compelling cases – from the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Pacific Islands Region, South America, Southeast Asia, Southern Africa, the Western Indian Ocean and elsewhere – that the multinational regional scale is the largest at which global (legal, institutional, CD) frameworks are still relevant to local places and contexts. Regional scale approaches ensure that individual and institutional participants in CD measures share a common cultural understanding, which is crucial to fostering acceptance at the individual and societal level.

Support regional ocean governance (ROG)

One of the greatest challenges most governance organisations face is scaling ocean and coastal management across jurisdictional boundaries and to the appropriate scales – from local to sub-national to national to regional. Coordinating donor investments in regional ocean governance initiatives offers a strategic opportunity to assist the coordination or harmonisation of ocean policy and practice across jurisdictional boundaries and at broader scales of ocean ecosystems. Moreover, supporting regional ocean governance (ROG) can help develop capacity across multiple jurisdictions while ensuring that initiatives are attuned to place-based contexts. Growing constituencies involved in and implementing ROG – whether in the Pacific Islands Region, Micronesia, the Coral Triangle, Western Indian Ocean, Mesoamerican Reef, Mediterranean Protected Area Network or elsewhere – report that ROG provides an efficient, strategic, and relatively holistic means for UN Member States to deliver on the ocean-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Identify indigenous or local ROG momentum

Most countries are engaged in a plethora of ROG efforts, including UN infrastructure (regional fishery bodies) and leader-driven initiatives (e.g., the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security, Micronesia Challenge, Caribbean Challenge Initiative, Western Indian Ocean Coastal

Challenge, and the Framework for a Pacific Ocean-scape). We therefore recommend identifying and investing in the “indigenous or local architecture” of each region; that is, letting each region’s most active and sustained ROG platform emerge as a focus for investment. The identification of appropriate ROGs should be undertaken in dialogue with regional stakeholders. In some cases, such as the Northeast Atlantic, those ROG initiatives with the most indigenous or local momentum might be the cooperation among the UN regional seas and regional fishery bodies. In other places, the indigenous or local architecture might be the leader-driven Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF), or the Pacific Islands Forum’s efforts on coordinating regional support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner on SDG 14 and other ocean-related SDGs; or the Mediterranean Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity.

Regional ocean governance with significant indigenous/local momentum may provide a highly efficient, cost effective way to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for oceans, as countries are already implementing many of the Agenda’s ocean-related targets through their regional agreements. Likewise, donor/development investments and CD efforts focused on these ROG initiatives and their national and local implementation provide a correspondingly effective way to support 2030 Agenda implementation for oceans and coasts.

3. Apply capacity development and ocean governance across boundaries and contexts

Capacity development (CD) can help overcome some of the greatest challenges to MEBM when measures are localised, ecosystem-aligned, values-based, and locally-sustained.

Managing oceans for sustainability today involves implementing marine ecosystem-based management on the ground and in the water from the local to sub-national, national, regional, and global scales. That MEBM requires management across such diverse boundaries and contexts (sectors, scales, cultures, governance, knowledge systems and more) presents some of the greatest challenges to its implementation (see Introduction).

In many global contexts, CD practitioners are seeing that several core elements of CD can help achieve MEBM on the ground and in the water. Four elements are vital to making capacity development for MEBM work across boundaries and contexts: the full and early-stage localisation of approaches, the alignment of ecosystems and governance systems, the recognition of values and relationships, and a focus on leaving lasting, sustained capacity.

As the implementation of MEBM principles will be crucial to achieving both specific SDG targets relevant to the oceans and the holistic goals of the 2030 Agenda, we recommend designing CD to include at least these components as they relate to a specific place and context. This section provides good practice recommendations for CD practice and stems

from knowledge exchanges among CD experts from Asia, the Pacific Islands Region, the Americas, the wider Caribbean, Southern and Eastern Africa, the Mediterranean, and Northern Europe. Along with recommendations presented in the preceding sections, these core elements comprise a re-envisioned approach to CD that can help to achieve this transformation at individual, organisational, and societal levels.

Make localisation a cornerstone of capacity development

Approaching all efforts with the local perspective, people, and context at the forefront is more likely to lead to greater and longer-lasting results. Capacity development (CD) is most likely to be effective if the appropriate local, national, and regional actors are engaged in the design, planning, capacity development, and sustainability approaches.¹² Similarly, guidance on implementing the 2030 Agenda¹³ and best practices in MEBM¹⁴ identify the importance of the local context.

We recommend localising CD approaches from the outset. Once CD efforts are underway, several key approaches to localising CD can help to ensure its long-term success. We recommend adopting a local, experiential learning approach to CD, where the emphasis is on experience, peer-to-peer learning, developing local mentors, and strengthening local institutions. Co-creating and co-generating marine management tools and approaches among various actors and from

¹² UNDP (2009)

¹³ UNDP (2014)

¹⁴ Many, e.g., McLeod & Leslie (2009)

relevant knowledge systems (e.g., indigenous, local, governance, science) can be exceptionally effective. By localising approaches we also emphasise that CD that is as much international as it is South/South or South/North. Good CD strives to bridge globally existing differences in ocean governance capacities.

In Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, for example, Micronesian leaders, traditional practitioners, marine management practitioners, international climate scientists, and others gathered to develop a community-based toolkit for local early adaptation to climate change, including an illustrated flip chart.¹⁵ The toolkit's uptake across the Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions, and that of locally adapted formats in the Pacific Islands, the Coral Triangle,¹⁶ and in the Caribbean was swift, expansive, and evidenced the power of co-creating among experts from multiple perspectives and knowledge systems.

Ensure initiatives are developed around opportunity assessments

Localised CD approaches are far more likely to ensure that CD efforts result in lasting, locally-sustained capacity. We highlight opportunity assessments as a particularly important aspect of making localisation a cornerstone of CD efforts. Opportunity assessments provide vital benefits by incorporating local actors, perspectives, knowledge systems, needs and

priorities from the outset and throughout CD efforts. Assessments should engage local (national, regional) partners as well as CD experts, donor and development partners, and others as relevant in dialogue about their goals, needs, priorities, and vision for the effort. With this key information, CD donors and practitioners can ensure that local needs, priorities, and contexts are integrated into initial framing and design, and in planning throughout the CD effort. An assessment ought also to take into account the place-based context, its diversity, as well as the capacity needs and gaps at the individual, organisational, and societal levels. Such approaches help ensure capacity is localised and sustained in the long-term.

In the case of the Birds Head Seascape in Indonesia, CD experts suggest that engaging local people and their priorities from the outset (e.g., through a capacity assessment and local priority setting exercise) and continuing this engagement throughout the life of the partnership (e.g., cooperative planning among CD practitioners and recipients) were core factors in its success. In addition, CD practitioners credit attention to local mentors and examining the capacity gaps in institutions and enabling environment. As a result of this approach, local priorities such as food security and sovereignty were included alongside conservation priorities of the funders, and local governance contexts shed light on how to pair institutional strengthening with management training.

¹⁵ Gombos, M., Atkinson, S. R., Wongbusarakum, S. (2010). *Adapting to a Changing Climate* (Booklet). Available online at: <http://www.cakex.org/virtual-library/adapting-changing-climate-booklet>

¹⁶ US Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program (2013). *Climate Change Adaptation for Coral Triangle Communities: Guide for Vulnerability Assessment and Local Early Action Planning (LEAP Guide)*. Available at: http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.org/sites/default/files/resources/LEAP_Final_complete.pdf

Align capacity development to ecosystem governance scales

Achieving the 2030 Agenda and ensuring MEEM is implemented on the ground and in the water depends upon effective management measures that incorporate local, place-based contexts and that are matched to relevant scales and timeframes of ecosystem dynamics, including local to global. Among the greatest obstacles to this are the longstanding mismatches and fragmented governance frameworks that prevent linkages across local to regional scales. Marine practitioners and governance organisations also find linking place-based context to broader scales a challenging prospect.

Knowledge exchanges conducted as part of CD can help resolve these mismatches by supporting organisations in the transition to transboundary governance approaches and aiding harmonisation efforts across diverse contexts. By focusing on regional ocean governance and indigenous regional architecture, CD partners can support the regional needs of multiple jurisdictions, and then can work with individual countries and local priority geographies in each country.

Across the Coral Triangle region, considered the global epicentre of marine biological diversity, management measures and capacity development also take into account the incredible cultural, linguistic, and

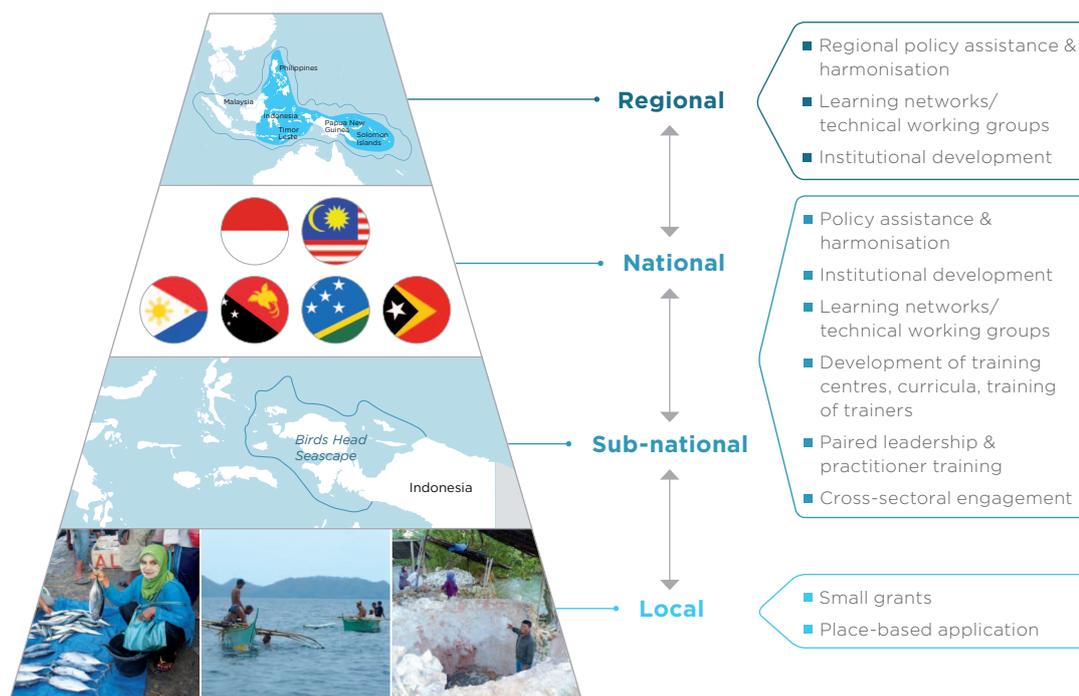


Figure 2: Scaling capacity development locally, sub-nationally, nationally, and regionally can help ocean governance work across barriers and contexts. Examples here are from support to the six-country Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF).

Source/Photos: J. M. Shackeroff

governance diversity of this vast archipelagic region. Capacity development partnerships supporting the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) have been shown to be effective in scaling regional efforts to more localised places through techniques such as pairing learning networks at the regional, national, and sub-national scales. Support provided to the CTI-CFF contributed to harmonisation efforts in policy and in practice, from local to regional scales, on climate change adaptation, ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management, and in MPA management. The Coral Triangle's Region-wide Early Adaptation Plan for climate change adaptation, for instance, was developed with the support of paired technical working groups at the regional, national and local level. As a result, practitioners were able to ensure that the Local Early Adaptation Plan toolkits took into account place-based contexts, with approaches that could be localised as effectively in Pacific Island contexts as in the urban Southeast Asian cities – and everywhere in between.

Don't underestimate the importance of values and relationships

Most experienced CD practitioners recognise the importance of values and relationships. Trust – within and among practitioners, ocean governance organisations, local communities and leaders, and with those engaged in (funding, delivering) CD – is fundamental

to the success and sustainability of any effort. Some recommend engaging neutral parties to coordinate learning networks. Continuity and duration of personnel, partners, practitioners, and donor/development initiatives can contribute to trust-building and interpersonal relationships. In the 1990s, managers of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in the Mediterranean requested the creation of a network to help relieve the isolation and bolster knowledge and MPA management approaches. This network, which was formalised as the Mediterranean Protected Area Network (MedPAN) in 2008, now comprises eight founding members, 55 members, and 37 partners from 18 Mediterranean countries. Among a host of activities, including annual CD projects, peer-to-peer learning, and coordination, MedPAN practitioners practice yoga and dancing together, all of which reportedly help to build rapport, relieve feelings of isolation, and reduce conflicts.¹⁷

Build lasting and sustained capacity

Ensuring that CD investments and efforts are lasting and locally-sustained is an important success factor – yet little guidance exists on how this is best achieved. Among the lessons drawn from the Potsdam Ocean Governance Workshop was that outcomes were generally more lasting where CD efforts addressed individuals, organisations, and societies as a whole. Efforts should also focus on institutionalising capaci-

¹⁷ Di Carlo, G., Lopez, A., Staub, F. (2012) Capacity Building Strategy to Enhance MPA Management in the Mediterranean Sea. Commissioned by WWF, MedPO, MedPAN, UNEP/MAP/RAC/SPA. Available at: <http://www.medpan.org/en/capacity-building-strategy>

¹⁸ The Micronesia Challenge is a commitment by the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to preserve the natural resources that are crucial to the survival of Pacific traditions, cultures and livelihoods. The overall goal of the Challenge is to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020. See: <http://themicronesiachallenge.blogspot.de/p/about.html>



ties from the outset, shifting funding priorities away from training practitioners and towards building the skills of local (national, regional) institutions. Sustained regional, international, and CD partnerships supporting the Micronesia Challenge (MC),¹⁸ for example, have enabled remarkable, lasting transformations in marine and coastal management across the eight MC jurisdictions. Strategies to meet the MC have evolved to include: conservation planning; establishing and implementing management in some 150 MPAs; designing and launching biophysical, socioeconomic, and governance monitoring; developing myriad fisheries policies; and skills-building and coordination for local marine enforcement officer task forces. The MC sets an outstanding example of successful regional governance and solid capacity development partnership to support it – made pos-

sible, in part, through attention to consistent leadership support, donor and development investment and coordination, and capacity development over some 10–15 years.

Learning networks and local mentors were repeatedly highlighted as key to leaving lasting, sustained capacity in the MC and elsewhere. Recently, region-to-region exchanges around climate change adaptation and local marine enforcement between the MC and a network of Caribbean MPA managers have supported the rapid uptake of marine management approaches. In fact, everywhere from Africa to the wider Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Pacific Islands, and Southeast Asia, the learning networks and local mentors long outlasted the capacity development efforts themselves.

4. Scanning the horizon: Where to go from here?

This policy brief presents results from an initial series of learning and knowledge exchanges among an international group with particular expertise in CD for marine and coastal governance. Our recommendations draw from decades of capacity development work on islands and continents, in villages and local communities, and at the sub-national, national, regional, and global scales. Among the group who participated in these exchanges, our decades of experience come variously from the Pacific Islands Region, Southeast Asia, the Wider Caribbean, Latin America, North America, Southern Africa, Eastern Africa, the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, and elsewhere.

Our recommendations represent just an initial foundation of what can be learned from marine practitioners, the donor and development community, CD experts, and others worldwide. Our longer-term goal is to engage as many experts as possible, from as broad an array of CD contexts as possible, so as to develop Good Practice Guidelines to help inform and bring greater consistency to the global practice of CD for oceans. Although guidelines exist for general CD¹⁹ and environmental governance-related efforts,²⁰ none exist for strengthening management capacity for our fluid, globally interconnected ocean systems.

Addressing ongoing challenges, such as the scaling of good governance approaches across the millions of local coastal communities worldwide, will also be important.

We therefore encourage donor and development partners to hold more knowledge exchanges to bolster the “living library” of lessons learned, from which we hope to identify and provide open access to good practices that apply in various places and contexts. One key forum to advance this discourse and good practices surrounding CD for oceans governance is the first UN High Level Conference on Oceans and Seas, hosted by the governments of Sweden and Fiji, in mid-2017. As this is the first opportunity to address oceans holistically across the 2030 Agenda, it may be an important venue to broaden and deepen knowledge exchanges on capacity development. Together with other relevant fora, this event offers critical opportunities for policymaker, donor and development organisations, and UN Member States, together with capacity development experts, to examine, refine, and perpetuate this re-envisioned paradigm for capacity development and its role in delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Oceans and Coasts. ■

¹⁹ E.g., GIZ GmbH (ed.) (2015). *Cooperation Management for Practitioners: Managing Social Change with Capacity WORKS*. Springer, Wiesbaden.

²⁰ E.g., UNDP (2009)

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