

(DRAFT)

**Summary Notes on Small Group Discussion on MPAs
16.10 – 17.35, Tuesday, 14 October 2008
(Horvang)**

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Participants: as attached**

1. Introduction

- MPAs are seen as tools for biodiversity conservation and for fisheries management. A lot of commitment is imposed on many countries following WSSD and CBD and they are moving forward establishing areas under protection.
- Currently 0.6% of the oceans are under protection. Most of the protected areas are located in inshore areas where there are overlapping between those areas and fishing areas of SSF, which causes significant impact on SSF.
- At one end of the spectrum, MPAs are initiated or led by Small-scale Fishers (e.g. Brazil, France, Philippines and Spain) where fishers have been involved in drawing up plans. The participatory procedures are is very time consuming, but such MPAs are seen as tools by the communities to secure rights against destructive large-scale fisheries and aquaculture.
- At the other end of spectrum, there is the very top-down process happening on large scale, lot of money is going into it. No consultation is made with the local communities, which causes mistrust in governments and large international NGOs. Those areas are often shifted to tourism and not beneficial for local fishers' communities.
- There are a lot of questions. How do we determine whether or not the MPAs are best tools? Are they leading to the negative or positive consequence? Do they lead to biological benefits claimed? What is the participation process? How do we ensure that those who pay costs get benefits? How do we establish an appropriate legal framework and institutional coordination? How we address cases of violation of human rights?

2. Discussion

- Several examples of MPAs in Brazil, China, Guadeloupe, India, Senegal, Thailand and USA were reported, which revealed the difference among the participants' perception of the MPAs. Some considered that MPAs mean almost same as closed areas, but others did not. For example, in Brazil there is a type of MPAs called an "extractive reserves", which is not a completely closed area but with access allowed to the local community. On the other hand, in Thailand MPAs completely mean closed area.
- Nonetheless, it was generally agreed that MPAs could be one of tools for biodiversity conservation as well as fisheries management. However, it was pointed out that there has

been only little evidence found if MPAs are effective for fisheries management. MPAs could be suitable in some parts of the world but not for others. “One size may not fit all”.

- It was also widely accepted that the top-down attempt to create MPAs does not work and bottom-up approach with full involvement of local communities is necessary for effective establishment and implementation of MPAs. In this context, it was recalled that the Civil Society Preparatory Conference Workshop called for binding involvement of local and indigenous communities and small-scale fishers in declaration, establishment and management of MPAs.
- A significant conflict was identified between a long-term goal of biodiversity conservation and short-term costs on fishers. MPAs often attract tourism, but fishers do not have capital for being engaged in tourism which tends to be done by rich people. Another conflict identified was a migration issue that, where MPAs lead to higher abundance of fish, fishers from over-exploited areas migrate to these areas and lead to the conflict with exiting fishers.
- Institutional problems with regard to responsible authorities for MPAs were also reported. In some countries, there is no ministry having primary responsibility for MPAs due to the lack of legislation, while in other countries ministries, which are not directly responsible for fisheries, are responsible for MPAs.

3. Conclusion

- The diversity of terminology reflects diversity of objectives. While the nature of MPAs could be varied according to each situation, it is important to set clearly their objectives. Once we have clear objectives for fisheries, then we can design an appropriate management system to achieve the objectives. MPAs should be used as part of tools to achieve the objectives. The important thing is whether it achieves the objectives or not rather than how we should call it.
- It is necessary to demonstrate whether MPAs benefit local communities and therefore need to work with the communities to demonstrate benefits that they will get. A cost-benefit analysis, socio-economic data collection on how many people have been affected and surveys on gender impacts are recommended.
- During the Preparatory WS, MPAs were originally rejected, but eventually accepted in condition of the binding involvement of local fishers' communities into the process. While we should need to clarify further how the local communities can make sure of such binding involvement, it was firmly agreed that the prior-consent by the local communities is essential prerequisite for MPAs.