

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Environmental Development

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/envdev

Local to regional polycentric governance approaches within the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems



David Vousden

Rhodes University, South Africa World Maritime University, Malmö Sweden

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 12 June 2015

Received in revised form

28 July 2015

Accepted 29 July 2015

ABSTRACT

Interactive and stepwise governance processes are commonly replacing the more traditional approaches to managing coastal and marine environments. The ecosystem-based management approach itself recognises the many levels and sectors that need to interact and negotiate in order to provide effective management of all interests within the ecosystem(s), including socioeconomic interests and the need for sustainable use of goods and services. Polycentric Governance offers examples and case studies of more effective interactive participation at both the horizontal (between equal entities and/or institutions) and vertical (top–down, bottom–up) levels. This sort of governance approach is essential at both the national and regional levels to ensure full engagement between as many appropriate and involved stakeholders as possible if ecosystem-based management is to be effective and sustainable. This is particularly important to the governance of Large Marine Ecosystems that are transboundary between a number of countries and are also influenced and impacted across sovereign and high seas boundaries. The Agulhas Current and Somali Coastal Current Large Marine Ecosystems of the western Indian Ocean provide an example of how such polycentric governance mechanisms have evolved naturally through a process of interactive management of specific project activities leading to an overall Strategic Action Programme for effective governance.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Polycentric Governance (sometimes referred to as multi-level governance) defines a form of Governance undertaken through and driven by a variety of bodies (i.e. polycentric – having many centres or sources) which, although formally independent entities, are interactive or “in contact” with each other and take each other’s presence, mandate and objectives into account. Such a form of governance interaction can vary from loose sharing of activities and communications through simple cooperative agreements to formal contractual or legal arrangements. This can happen through both horizontal and vertical interactions (wikipedia.org – [Vertical and horizontal dimension of multi-level governance, 2015](#)).

1.1. Horizontal

Governance structures capture the interactions across the management and advisory bodies and institutions at the global, regional or national levels. Horizontal governance aims to create interaction between peer groups with the same level of mandates and responsibilities.

At the national level, an obvious example of such horizontal governance within a national governmental framework would be the members of a parliament or a similar legislature (such as a senate) representing their constituencies. It would

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.envdev.2015.07.008>

2211–4645/© 2015 Elsevier Ltd All rights reserved.

also include inter-sectoral or inter-ministerial committees such as high-level security committees or, in the context of marine ecosystems, coastal management committees. These may reach out beyond just government bodies to include non-governmental organisations, the private sector, or even community representation as stakeholders in the governance process.

At a regional level, the European Union and similar cooperative politico-economic regional agreements provide a clear example of horizontal governance which further encourages multi-level or polycentric governance styles within its member countries (Marks, 1993). Other regional management bodies such as NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) fulfil a similar but more specialised cooperative governance function focusing on collective defence (Simoni, 2013). When considering the marine environment and the maritime domain, the interaction between various regional management and advisory bodies, conventions or regional treaties can also constitute this type of horizontal governance interaction. Such regional level networking could include the regional seas conventions which provide cooperative management and conservation of living marine resources and biodiversity (such as the Nairobi Convention¹ or the Abidjan Convention², both in Africa) interacting with fisheries advisory or management bodies such as those established by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation. Further interaction may take place with economic communities that encourage sustainable development and socio-economic well-being within a geopolitical cluster of countries as well as maritime commercial clusters which are cooperative groupings of maritime industry and commerce within a given area. Any cooperative form of co-ordination between these various interest groups or sectors can constitute a form of governance which can vary from formal treaties or Memoranda of Understanding (at the bilateral or multilateral level) to informal and loose interaction and co-ordination by non-binding agreements.

At the global level, probably the most obvious example would be the United Nations itself and its General Assembly as well as the horizontal governance structure and interactions within its various Programmes and Departments (Wikipedia.org. United Nations, 2015).

Of course, outside of national governments and associated regional and global cooperative political groupings, horizontal governance can also operate within an organised structure such as an industry with its board level membership which may have representatives from different departments (sales, human resources, marketing, etc.) and from different regional and global branches and subsidiaries. This arrangement can also be found within other non-governmental organisations such as charities and environmental organisations.

1.2. Vertical

Governance structures define the top down–bottom up interactions. Because of this nature they tend to represent more of a line-management structure with decision-making processes feeding down to the various levels that must deliver those decisions as actions, and with a feedback process from the grass-root activities back up to the senior management and policy level. The optimum example of vertical governance will link and interact from the global level right down to the localised level. Once again, the United Nations system provides a good example with the General Assembly sitting as the top-level global governance body. Beneath this are the various programmes and organisations that represent thematic governance while, at the political level, the UN has its country offices. In many cases the various thematic responsibilities within those country offices interact directly with government agencies as well as private sector, e.g. the United Nations Development Programme (www.undp.org, 2015) and the actual programme activities often interact at the grass-roots, community level (e.g. the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme (www.thegef.org/gef/sgp, 2015) which supports many community-level activities). In essence, the United Nations system is a good example then of a three-dimensional polycentric governance structure which operates at both horizontal and vertical levels.

In realising the important role of communities in the vertical governance process, it is worth noting that their inclusion in this process is frequently one of the most difficult challenges in evolving and agreeing (and, indeed, implementing) such a polycentric governance strategy. Many existing, formal governance structures can, at best, be reluctant to try and incorporate community inputs and interaction into the management structure and, at worst, may actively and aggressively avoid it. Even within a sympathetic governmental environment, one of the very real constraints must be the sheer scale of dealing with multiple communities and with adopting a structure that can allow for interactive engagement and direct input from communities, through local government and municipalities, into the national governance system.

Previous, historical forms of Governance are, of course, manifold and vary at the national level from more socialist approaches which purport to deliver management and governance based on a cooperative equality of ownership both of goods and of governance, through to pure dictatorship which sees the will of one person imposed on a vertical axis. None of the traditional management and governance systems fully engage at both the “horizontal” and/or “vertical” levels to deliver a truly interactive, multi-stakeholder governance approach. Polycentric governance provides a framework for such interactive management which can be particularly valuable when dealing with renewable resources such as those which are core to the management process within Large Marine Ecosystems.

¹ The Convention of the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region or Nairobi Convention of 1985 is a regional framework agreement for marine environmental management.

² Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/4391393>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/4391393>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)