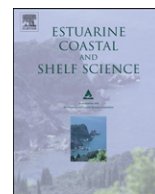


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## Enhancing social capital for sustainable coastal development: Is satoumi the answer?

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### ABSTRACT

Social capital constitutes the cultural component of modern societies. Building social capital has typically been seen as a task for 'second generation' economic reform, but unlike economic policies and institutions, social capital is not created or shaped by public policy but is inherited throughout local communities successive generations. Enhancing social capital therefore is about promoting local knowledge deeply rooted into local communities' practices on land and at sea. In Japan, the culturally specific interaction of humans with nature has led to the emergence of specific socio-ecosystems called '*satoyama*' on the land side and '*satoumi*' on the coast and sea side. Here, characteristics of related local knowledge include information about consumed products like wild edible plants or seaweeds, and learning by doing practices like traditional rice cultivation or sea ranching. This knowledge has been developed over centuries and has been handed down from generation to generation. There are actually other types of *satoyama* and *satoumi* which have been flourishing around the world though the latter (*satoumi*) probably has no equivalent in other countries' coastal areas because of the unique Japanese fishing rights system. First largely ignored as a social capital, *satoumi* has emerged as a new concept only a few years ago. In the frame of the recently adopted national ocean policy such a social capital, like it may be found in other countries, should not be ignored when addressing integrated coastal zone management processes and tools for the sake of sustainable coastal development in Japan and elsewhere in the world.

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### 1. Introduction

The management of natural resources is a paradigm in change from *sustainable yield* to *sustainable ecosystems*. This new paradigm is *ecosystem management*, and focuses on managing the ecosystem for the services it may provide, rather than for producing a single commodity or a limited number of commodities. However, our social system constraints our ability to manage the biosphere we are part of. Hence, ecosystem management is determined by human values and the capacity to translate scientific knowledge into governance and the management of social-ecological systems from an obviously 'human-in-nature' perspective.

The underlying concept of governance is, though, blurred with the current debate on the role of political institutions in governance. Yet, while political institutions have been the dominant actors for some time, societal actors have, during recent decades, increasingly involved in governance. Reviewing different models of

governance, [Pierre and Peters \(2005\)](#) concluded that the most effective forms of governance make use of both, social networks and a strong state, the former being at the core of the so-called 'social capital'.

Social capital refers to "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" ([Putnam, 1993](#)). The capacity to adapt to rapid and dramatic changes of governance largely depends on the balance between the stability provided by strong institutions on the one hand, and the capacity to experiment, innovate, and learn from changing circumstances, attributed to through well structured social networks ([Duit and Galaz, 2008](#)). The latter is considered an inherent part of a 'robust' governance of complex social-ecological systems.

While social capital is a relatively new concept, its object, social networks, has a long history. As [Putnam \(1993\)](#) brilliantly demonstrated it in the case of Italy, "civic traditions may have powerful consequences for economic development and social welfare, as well as for institutional performance", at municipal and regional level.

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From a European perspective, the autonomy of the Prefectures in Japan can be compared to the one of the Italian Regions. Japan's civic traditions are deeply rooted in history, and expressed in the concept of *satoyama* and, more recently, the concept of *satoumi*. Although the cultures differ significantly, we approach the latter concept and practise (*satoumi*) as a form of *adaptive co-management*, i.e. “a process by which institutional arrangements and ecological knowledge are tested and revised in a dynamic, on-going, self-organized process of learning-by-doing” (Folke et al., 2002).

## 2. Linking co-management and adaptive co-management

In many countries, centralised management of coastal resources has not ensured sustainability. Centralised government agencies often lack the resources to enforce central-level management decisions, or to support local arrangements. Therefore, and often in the context of decentralisation, participatory and integrated management has succeeded in a better way. While various approaches have been used by different groups, management responsibility and/or authority that is shared between local communities and government or “co-management” is the key to any system improvement. More practically, co-management usually involves decentralised decision-making, providing an opportunity for partnership arrangements in which government, communities and other stakeholders share both the responsibility and the authority for decision-making and implementing agreed management plans (Arthur, 2005).

This process is less focused on the final outcome, but more on the processes and mechanisms that have produced it, and how they relate to participation and sustainability. Co-management works at the interface between the ecosystem and the human system, aiming at changes in the state of the first through behavioural changes of the second. It is therefore a dynamic process in which management planning is an iterative cycle. Adaptive management recognizes that all management is somewhat experimental, and that the results are not fully predictable, neither environmentally nor socially. Learning therefore is a continuous process, along the turning wheel of the project cycle.

Although much focus is on the local scale, adaptive co-management is a flexible system for environment and resource management that operates across multiple levels and with a range of local and non-local organisations. Many of the ideas and practises emerge from the field of common property (*commons*) and its implications for collaborative management (Ostrom, 2005), addressing issues such as (Armitage et al., 2007):

- the evolutionary dimension of co-management, and the recognition that institution building, trust building, and social learning all require time and repeated rounds of learning-by-doing;
- the realm of complex social-ecological systems, addressing issues of scale, multiple perspectives, uncertainty and non-linearity, self-organisation and emergence;
- throughout up-scaling, the linkages of different levels of governance, from the community level to the regional and/or national levels;
- the expansion of partnerships, recognizing that in most real-life co-management situations, there is a rich social capital, i.e. a rich web of social networks involving private and public actors;
- the recognition of a diversity of government agencies with different roles and relationships as a diversity of interests within communities themselves Fig. 1

## 3. A case study: dealing with social capital in Thailand

CHARM (Coastal Habitats and Resources Management) was a five years project (2002–2007) jointly supported by the Royal

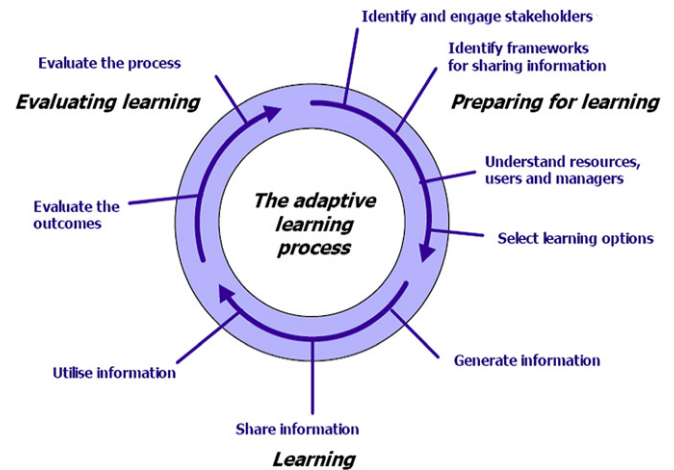


Fig. 1. The adaptive learning approach to co-management (Garaway and Arthur, 2004).

Thai Government and the European Union. Under the Financing Agreement signed in 2001 between the European Community and the Kingdom of Thailand, CHARM specific objectives were to design and establish the coastal habitats co-management framework and procedures in five Southern Thailand provinces that can serve as models to be replicated elsewhere in the country.

For the benefit of the project first beneficiaries, i.e. the coastal communities, CHARM has developed its approach around a number of co-management attributes including participation, partnership, capacity building, development of integrated approaches and methods, and learning and adaptation. It has shown that the future of coastal resources co-management for better coastal governance in Thailand is on one hand with skilled self-organized community-based organizations and on the other hand strong, committed and enlightened local governments. It is from these two driving forces that a scheme or model of coastal co-management and governance has been proposed throughout the following local government units and territories:

- The Tambon or sub-district (comparable to a municipality) through up-scaling conservation/occupational groups networking, strengthening of the local government, the Tambon Administration Organization (TAO), and institutional arrangement for communication and sharing of knowledge.
- The Province through, at first, up-scaling specific issues related to conservation/occupational group networks like MCS (Monitoring Control Surveillance) for small-scale fisheries or CBT (Community-Based Tourism) amongst the villagers.
- The seascape units including large bays like Chalong Bay (Phuket), Phang Nga Bay, Trang Seas, and Ban Don Bay (Gulf of Thailand) where boundaries may be more easily related to ecosystem boundaries. Within these seascape territories CHARM has given the tools for dealing with smaller coastal management units in the frame of vulnerability indexing and mapping approach.

Improved coastal governance towards Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) depends on government, market and civil society mechanisms. At local level, it is conditioned by both skilled self-organized communities and strong committed local governments with negotiation and planning (Natural Resources Management Committee), learning (Learning centre) and financial (saving group) facilitating platforms. The awareness and contribution of the Education sector (schools) is considered as crucial for today and tomorrow. The upscaling process operates through the provincial

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