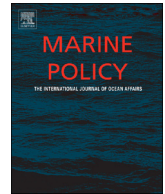




ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Marine Policy

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

Resurrecting the public record: Assessing stakeholder participation in Alaska's fisheries



Meagan Boltwood Krupa*, Molly McCarthy Cunfer, S. Jeanette Clark, Emily O'Dean

National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, University of California, 735 State Street, Suite 300, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Fisheries governance
 Fisheries management
 Natural resource management
 Stakeholder analysis
 Stakeholder participation
 Recreational fisheries
 Commercial fisheries
 Subsistence fisheries
 Personal use fisheries, public processes, public participation, archival documents

ABSTRACT

Stakeholder participation is lauded as a key component of successful fisheries management, but few studies have characterized and assessed this participation. Using integrated data digitization and coding methods, this paper tests out a new method to analyze archived management proposals submitted to Alaska's Board of Fish and explores whether this approach can be used to assess stakeholder participation and success rates in Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay, and Southeast Alaska from 2000 to 2015. This pilot study asks the question, "Are there differences in user participation and success rates across the three regions during this time period?"

1. Introduction

Every three years, the Alaska Board of Fish (Board) calls for regional fisheries management proposals, inviting the public to directly participate in fisheries governance. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADFG) website refers to the Board's public process as "among the most open regulatory processes in Alaska if not the nation" [7]. Anyone can submit a proposal and provide written or oral testimony on any of the proposals, which constitute potential regulatory changes and are accessible in an online proposal book [8,9]. Proposals are logged by Board staff and recorded in the meeting documents, which are stored online and archived at the State, Library, Archives, and Museum (SLAM) in Juneau. Each proposal contains valuable information about stakeholder demographics, affiliations, interests, and positions on allocation disputes. Alaska's inclusion of stakeholders in its decision-making process began in 1959, decades before researchers, managers, and politicians began advocating for increased stakeholder involvement in fisheries management.

There is now general agreement that the historical failure to include the major stakeholders in meaningful decision-making is one of the causes of the current crisis in world fisheries and a weakness of the fisheries management process [16,17,24]. The advantages of involving stakeholders in natural resources management decision-making include: facilitating common understanding, establishing trust, resolving/

avoiding conflicts, increasing stakeholders' responsibility and accountability, enhancing the legitimacy and acceptance of management policies and decisions, increasing the likelihood of rules and regulation compliance, stimulating innovation, encouraging social learning, integrating different types of knowledge, and contributing to more effective enforcement of rules [11,14,33].

With the rise of public involvement in natural resource management comes the need for an analysis of these processes. The definition of "success" needs to include far more than just the existence of public participation in decision making. Much attention has been given to improving stakeholder participation in the fisheries management process [19,30,31]. Studies have investigated participants' experiences in collaborative fisheries management in Canada [18] and Southeast Asia [29]. Leite and Pita [26] catalogued and characterized participatory fisheries management arrangements within the European Union. Similarly, Evans et al. [21] conducted a meta-analysis of co-management implementation in twenty-nine developing world case studies. In the related field of coastal zone management, Buanes et al. [13] studied the saliency and legitimacy [27] of stakeholder engagement in Norway. None of these studies analyze the effectiveness of this process or examine participation trends over time.

In an era of increasing stakeholder participation in natural resource management, the effectiveness of the actual stakeholder engagement mechanisms has received far less attention. Stakeholder communications tell

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: megkrupa@gmail.com (M.B. Krupa), jclark@nceas.ucsb.edu (S.J. Clark).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2018.07.010>

Received 5 March 2018; Received in revised form 17 July 2018; Accepted 17 July 2018

Available online 31 July 2018

0308-597X/ © 2018 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

an important chapter in the story of fisheries management by providing a clear pathway to characterize and assess public participation in the governance process. In Alaska, the Board's public process is celebrated as one of the key factors in the State of Alaska's fisheries management success, but no one has investigated the process and quantified its results. Very little has changed in the Board's public participation process since it was first introduced in 1959, but Alaska's landscape has been changing. Tarbox and Bendock [32] showed that the increasing urbanization of Alaska parallels the increasing urbanization of the Columbia Basin in the Pacific Northwest. Similar to the experiences of communities in the Pacific Northwest, numerous decision makers are individually struggling to manage Alaska's freshwater fisheries as the effects of urban development increase. Stream channelization, dams, pollution, and riparian habitat loss constrict and even extinguish fish runs in Alaska.

Alaska has a relatively sophisticated stakeholder participation process in place; but this doesn't mean that the system is perfect. There may be opportunities to make the process even better. Until the system is assessed, all claims of its successes or failures merely aggravate the contentious fisheries and further divide participants into winners and losers. By investigating the strengths and challenges of stakeholder engagement in the Board of Fish process, it may be possible to improve management across sectors, regions, and agencies.

Although a considerable amount of work has been done on the inclusion of public participation in natural resource management, what is missing from the discussion is a quantitative approach to analyze the effectiveness of these processes. Many of the existing stakeholder participation studies rely on semi-structured interviews (e.g., [28,15,34]), which may fail to assess the impact (i.e., success rates) of participation in governance. This paper builds upon the demonstrated need to characterize stakeholder participation by suggesting a more direct approach. Using integrated data gathering methods, this research seeks to understand approaches to fisheries management, and the regional differences affecting the implementation of and public participation in the fisheries management systems. The collection, digitization, and coding of stakeholder communications produces a wide range of analyses and tells the story of fisheries governance over time. An Alaskan case study of three regions demonstrates our methods and presents analyses.

Proposals from the three regions of Bristol Bay, Southeast, and Cook Inlet, Alaska from 2000 to 2015 were chosen for a pilot study because of 1) the regional, economic, and social importance of their fisheries, 2) the contrasts in their urbanization, and 3) relative differences in the importance of subsistence, personal use, recreational, and commercial fishing (Fig. 1). The Cook Inlet region is highly urbanized and encompasses over 50% of the state's population. Cook Inlet fisheries are notorious for their fierce competition within a relatively short season. Southeast Alaska is scarcely populated, with just 72,000 people scattered over a landscape nearly the size of Maine. Southeast's year-round fisheries are more diverse and less contentious than Cook Inlet. Bristol Bay is the least complex fishery of the three regions, composed almost entirely of a thriving salmon fishery dominated by nonresident commercial fishermen, nonresident sport fishermen, and resident subsistence fishermen. Bristol Bay is also the least populated of the regions.

The research began with two questions relating to proposals across the three regions over fifteen years: 1) Is there a significant difference in the number and type of stakeholders? and 2) Is there a difference in proposal success rates? Early into the coding and analysis process it became apparent that the dataset provided answers to many more questions, some of which provided invaluable information for not only fishery managers but also the stakeholders. Some additional research questions that demonstrate the utility of this approach will therefore be provided in the discussion.

This dataset reflects the complexity and largeness of Alaska's most popular and contentious fisheries. To provide context for this analysis, Alaska's current fisheries governance system and the case study's three regions are briefly described before outlining the methods and results.

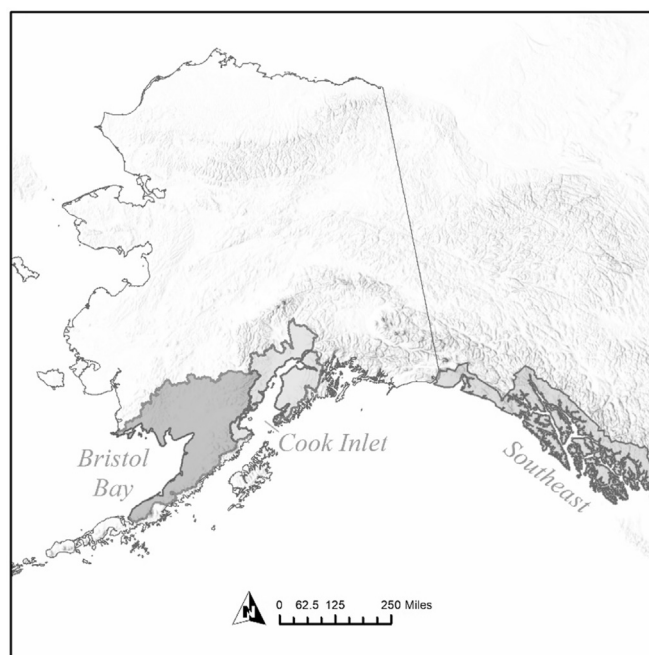


Fig. 1. Regional Map of Alaska. Source: Christine Brummer, UAA.

2. Alaskan fisheries governance

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council proposes regulatory measures to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce who then delegates regulatory responsibility to the National Marine Fisheries Service for waters from 3 miles to 200 miles offshore. The Board of Fish, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) regulate fisheries in state-waters, from inland waters to 3 miles offshore. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has a role in the management of freshwater fisheries on federal lands and manages some freshwater subsistence fisheries throughout Alaska. ADFG fishery managers make management decisions regarding conservation. The Board primarily handles management decisions regarding the allocation of fisheries, but is also tasked with communicating with the public and determining conservation measures. This split is generally celebrated as a successful tool to remove the issue of allocation from managers and politicians in the public arena. The seven Board members, which represent a broad array of fishing groups and other interests, are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the legislature. Members are appointed based on their "interest in public affairs, good judgment, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the board, and with a view to providing diversity of interest and points of view in the membership" [8].

To support regional participation in the Board process, the State of Alaska established local fish and game Advisory Committees (AC) when the Board process was created in 1959 (Fig. 2). The committees have no regulatory authority but provide valuable local expertise to the Board. Each of the 84 ACs is comprised of 9–15 members and holds one to six annual meetings. The AC meetings are supported by the State through the attendance of area biologists and travel coordination. The State funds one AC representative to attend their regional Board meeting. In total, over 900 members volunteer their expertise in the AC system.

The Board considers proposals to changes in the regional allocation of fisheries every three years or "out of cycle" if an immediate problem arises. Out of cycle proposals frequently occur within contentious regions, such as Cook Inlet, and can disrupt meetings outside of their region. The three-year cycle proposal process begins with a call for proposals through a standard proposal form (Appendix A). In addition to describing the proposed action, each form requires the stakeholder to list the impacts to other user groups, which is a recognition that most of Alaska's fisheries are already fully allocated. Stakeholders can choose to

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7487550>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7487550>

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