

Managers need to know how successful or ‘effective’ their MPA is, and stakeholders and donors want information on whether the objectives are being met. An assessment of management success or effectiveness can help to provide this information, and to identify where improvements are needed. This sheet describes the principles involved and introduces some of the methods available.

Assessing or evaluating management effectiveness means measuring the degree to which a protected area is achieving its objectives, and how successfully it is designed, planned and managed. An assessment can also help to identify threats and needs, improve planning, and raise awareness about the MPA’s objectives and performance. It establishes accountability to government agencies, donors and the public, and helps meet national and international reporting requirements. It also identifies issues that are within the control of the manager and those that go beyond it, provides lessons learnt and allows for comparison between MPAs, and helps when setting priorities and developing funding proposals.

Where assessments have been undertaken, managers have gained valuable insights into what works well, as well as any shortcomings. The Convention on Biological Diversity has recommended that countries should assess management effectiveness of at least 30% of their protected areas by the year 2010.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

IUCN/WCPA has developed a ‘framework methodology’ comprising six components (see diagram) relating to the three key elements of the protected area management cycle. The key elements are:

Design: What is the *context* in which the MPA exists, and what is its vision? How appropriate is the *planning*?

Management systems and processes: What *inputs* are needed? What is the management *process*?

Delivery of objectives: What are the *outputs/products*? What are the *outcomes/impacts*?

Principles of assessment as identified by IUCN/WCPA are:

- The aim is to improve management and generate positive change, not compete with other MPAs;
- The guidelines should be adapted to the site – there is no single ‘right’ method;
- Assessments should ideally be participatory and involve all stakeholders, and include biophysical, socio-economic, cultural, and management issues;

- The type of assessment should be chosen according to available resources and capacity;
- Results and recommendations from the assessment must be followed up.

Assessments should preferably be repeated every 2-3 years (e.g. when reviewing the management plan) and mainstreamed into the MPA’s monitoring and reporting system (see sheet C3), thus developing an adaptive management approach.

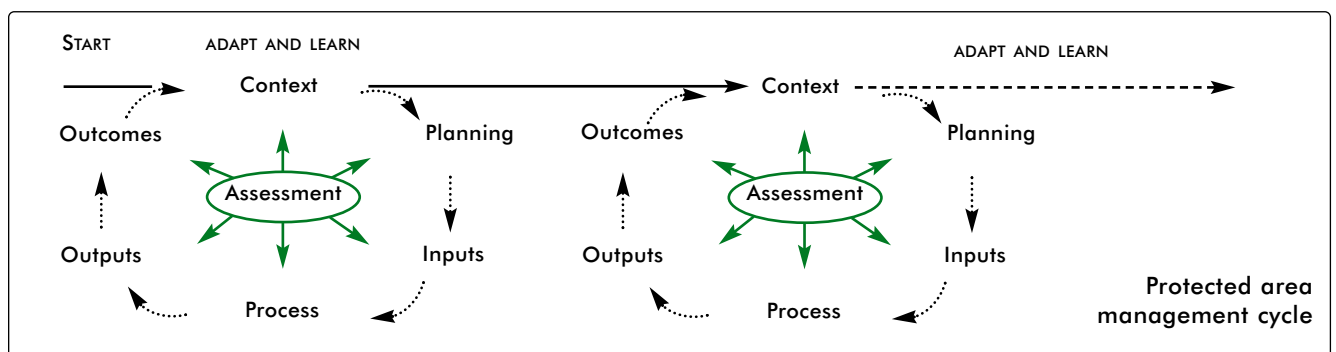
ASSESSMENT METHODS

There are several methods and common steps include:

- Developing a plan for the assessment;
- Analysing the biophysical and socio-economic characteristics of the site (if not already available) to define clearly the values (i.e. why it was established) and management objectives (see sheet A2);
- Identifying indicators for measuring effectiveness (indicators for existing monitoring activities can be reviewed for their suitability – see sheet G1);
- Analysing status and trends in biodiversity, socio-economic issues, threats and governance, using qualitative and numerical rating systems if appropriate;
- Reviewing and revising preliminary assessment results with stakeholders, through workshops or discussions;
- Preparing a report with recommendations to improve management; this should be simple and clear so that both the management authority and key stakeholders will read it; a summary is useful for the general public.

The first assessment of an MPA tends to be incomplete whatever method is used, but is invaluable for discovering where monitoring, other data gathering exercises, and information management systems need improvement. The following methods are based on the IUCN framework methodology:

Outcome/output assessment - IUCN/WCPA-Marine, WWF and NOAA have developed a method focusing on outputs and outcomes (or impact) of MPAs (Pomeroy *et*



al., 2004). This has been piloted at 17 sites worldwide, including Mafia Island Marine Park. For this method, the MPA ideally needs clear objectives, a management plan, baseline data from when it was established, and to have been in operation for at least two years. Indicators are selected with the help of predetermined generic indicators. This method helps to provide new information and emphasises the importance of quantitative monitoring programmes, but is time-consuming.

Comprehensive assessment - This method was developed through a UNESCO/IUCN project *Enhancing our Heritage* aimed at testing the IUCN framework in World Heritage Sites, including Aldabra (see case study) and St Lucia (South Africa). It uses work-sheets that can be adapted to individual protected areas, to assess each component of the management cycle. These have been adapted by IUCN-EARO for shorter assessments of MPAs in the WIO, and piloted in eight sites. A small 'implementation team', comprising MPA personnel, key stakeholders, and sometimes consultants, leads the assessment. The completed worksheets are reviewed by staff and stakeholders in consultative workshops, and a report and recommendations are produced. This method is relatively cost-effective and quick but requires subjective self-assessment which can be difficult.

Scorecard - Developed by the World Bank for use in GEF projects related to MPAs, this provides a simpler method, focusing on the Process component of the management cycle. If repeated at intervals, it will help to track progress. The scorecard is completed by MPA staff, and makes use of immediately available information and staff knowledge, and should take a maximum of half a day to complete.

KEY POINTS FOR THE MPA

- Carry out an assessment of management effectiveness; if financial and human capacity is limited, one of the simple methods can be tried.
- Seek funding for more in-depth assessments (many donors are interested in this topic).
- Use the results when reviewing management and other plans and to encourage adaptive management.

Sources of further information

(see also sheet G1)

Hockey, P.A.R. & Branch, G.M. 1997. Criteria, objectives and methodology for evaluating marine protected areas in South Africa. *S. Afr. J. Sci.* **18** : 369-383.

Hocking, M., Stolton, S. & Dudley, N. 2000. *Evaluating Effectiveness: A Framework for Assessing the Management of Protected Areas*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. 121pp.

Mangubhai, S. & Wells, S. 2004. *Assessing Management Effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas: a workbook for the Western Indian Ocean*. IUCN EA Regional Programme, Nairobi, Kenya. 74pp.

Margoluis, R. & Salafsky, N. 1998. *Measures of success: designing, managing and monitoring conservation and development projects*. Island Press, Washington D.C.

Pomeroy, R.S., Parks, J.E. & Watson, L.M. 2004. *How is your MPA doing? A Guidebook. Biophysical, Socioeconomic and Governance*

Indicators for the Evaluation of Management Effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas. <http://effectiveMPA.noaa.gov>

Staub, F. & Hatzioles, M.E. 2003. *Score Card to Assess Progress in Achieving Management Effectiveness Goals for Marine Protected Areas*. The World Bank. www.MPAscorecard.net

TNC 2000. *The Five-S Framework for Site Conservation: a practitioners handbook for site conservation planning and measuring conservation success*. TNC, Arlington, Virginia. http://nature.org/summit/files/five_s_eng.pdf

IUCN/WCPA Management Effectiveness Task Force www.wcpa.iucn.org

Conservation Measures Partnership – a consortium including WWF and IUCN that is developing standards for conservation practices. www.conservationmeasures.org/CMP/

UNESCO/IUCN *Enhancing our Heritage* project - assessing World Heritage Sites www.enhancingheritage.net

CASE STUDY

Assessing management effectiveness, Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles

Aldabra World Heritage Area and Special Reserve, managed by the Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF), is one of the pilot sites in the UNESCO *Enhancing Our Heritage* project. Using the project methodology, an implementation plan was prepared. Given the limited personnel, the work was led by a team of SIF staff with local consultants, who were independent, but had prior knowledge of Aldabra which proved useful. Team members took responsibility for compiling the worksheets for different components, which accelerated the process. Biases may have arisen as a result of limited interest from some stakeholders; others found the process intimidating, particularly when issues relating to their role were raised, which highlighted the importance of stressing the positive aspects of an assessment.

The assessment was considered very useful by all SIF staff, the local Management Committee and the Board of Trustees as it clarified issues and prioritized future actions, and it gave staff the opportunity to review their own work. The involvement of upper management helped to ensure that recommendations can be followed up, including:

- Lack of awareness of the values of the World Heritage Site, and of the management plan and operations manual which were not being used effectively.
- Inadequate monitoring programmes for terrestrial vegetation, marine ecosystems and the impacts of introduced animals (e.g. rats), although others were good or adequate (e.g. giant tortoises, birds).
- The need to create opportunities to involve other stakeholders, particularly NGOs and civil society;
- The need to improve annual work plans, the system for reviewing and monitoring the management plan and the financial management system.

Seychelles Island Foundation 2002. *Initial Assessment: report of initial management effectiveness evaluation*. Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles, *Enhancing our Heritage* project, IUCN/WCPA. 117pp.