

Increasing citizen involvement in sustainability-centred environmental assessment follow-up

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Presentation outline

- Major concepts
- Research questions
- Case studies: three stories
- Problems
- Conclusions

Traditional concerns with EA

- Planning and conducting monitoring
- Encouraging public participation
- Integrating social and environmental considerations
- Accounting for cumulative effects

Canadian EA Act amendments meant to address these issues

Why citizen involvement?

Conventional arguments:

- Increases public awareness of local issues
- Builds capacity for greater political participation
- Produces decisions that are better, more acceptable to the public
- Contributes more information for lower cost

Sustainability-centred EA

Integrates:

- Social and biophysical factors
- Long- and short-term perspectives
- Local and conventional knowledge

Considerations:

- Equity, participation, cultural integrity, livelihoods

Research questions:

- What lessons can be learned from cases where citizens have been directly involved in environmental monitoring or management for sustainability goals?
- How can these lessons be applied in order to strengthen environmental assessment follow-up?

Case studies

- Citizen monitoring: Comox Valley, BC
- Community-based monitoring: Lutsel K'e, NWT
- Community lobster fisheries management: Eastport Peninsula, NF

Represent experiences in citizen monitoring,
traditional ecological knowledge,
sustainable livelihoods

Story 1: Comox Valley



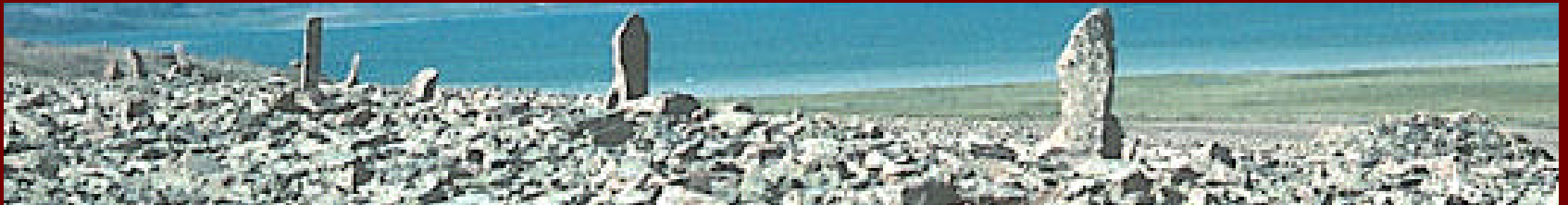
Story 1: Comox Valley

- Vancouver Island, British Columbia
- Valued features: shellfish, salmon habitat, watershed health
- Threats: water pollution, increased urban development

Citizen efforts contributed to:

- Watershed Management Plan
- Sewer infrastructure corrections
- Early stages of GIS mapping

Story 2: Lutsel K'e



Photos: West Kitikmeot Slave Study

Story 2: Lutsel K'e

- Slave Geological Province, NWT
- Valued features: quality of life, traditional culture
- Threats: mineral development, subordination of local culture

Community monitoring contributed to:

- Recommendations for industrial practices
- Cultural integrity through use of traditional ecological knowledge
- Local interpretation and application of results

Story 3: Eastport Peninsula



Story 3: Eastport Peninsula

- Eastern Newfoundland
- Valued feature: lobsters
- Threat: over-harvesting

Community efforts contributed to:

- Conservation plan for lobster management
- Marine protected areas, restricted access
- Adapted harvesting practices, peer enforcement

Case study findings

Forms of citizen involvement:

- Determining agenda (purpose, scope, priorities)
- Gathering, interpreting, presenting data
- Developing policy, planning, regulatory recommendations
- Implementing management plans
- Peer enforcement

Scope of case study activities

- Temporal
 - Long-term, anticipatory and ongoing
- Geographic
 - Watershed, landscape or traditional territory
- Topical
 - Social and biophysical considerations

Common problems

- Establishing credibility
- Applying local knowledge
- Building trust between partners
- Funding

Implications for EA

EA follow-up can be strengthened through:

- Greater citizen involvement
 - Agenda-setting, information gathering roles
 - Consideration of local knowledge
- Broader scope
 - Temporal, geographic, topical
 - Shift from single projects to multiple projects

Other benefits

Greater citizen involvement in EA can:

- Promote local sense of ownership, stewardship
- Protect features of social/cultural value
- Foster working relationships
- Educate and empower