Principles and best practices in PAME assessments

• Based on experiences of many people in this room with various PAME systems and over many years
• Principles and best practices generally apply to all PAME systems although the context will vary
• Understanding drivers and purpose of evaluation is important
Principle 1: The evaluation should be part of an effective management cycle: linked to defined values, objectives and policies.

Examples:

✔ In South Korea, after they completed their first comprehensive management effectiveness evaluation of all national parks, they then reviewed each of their management plans for the parks to see what adjustment was required based on the assessment results

✔ In New South Wales in Australia, the Director-General of the National Parks Service required senior staff and park directors to use the results of management effectiveness evaluation in developing their annual work programs
Each State of the Parks assessment asks

- What condition are our values in?
- How severe are the threats?
- What is our management approach?
- And is it working?

For every single park
We’ve reflected on these questions every 3 to 5 years since 2005

SoP 2018 is our 5th consistent assessment
Principle 2: The assessment should be practical and not too expensive to implement, giving a good balance between measuring, reporting and managing.

Examples

✓ Parks Victoria State of the Parks assessment system has two levels of indicators – consistent qualitative indicators to capture consistent assessments based on best available knowledge and a second level of quantitative indicators to make use of monitoring data where it is available.

✓ One of the principal reasons why the METT is the most widely applied management effectiveness methodology is because it is relatively simple and straightforward.
  ✓ But this can be both a strength and a weakness so rigour in completion of assessment and use of available evidence is important – the Advanced METT adaptations address this issue and strengthen assessment of outcomes.
Principle 3: The methodology is useful and relevant in improving protected area management: yielding explanations and showing patterns and improving communication, relationships and awareness

Examples

✔ In Aldabra Atoll in the Seychelles, the Enhancing our Heritage management effectiveness assessment revealed the problems that were caused by inefficient financial management and business planning in the agency’s head office. These results prompted a large international company to invest in business planning guidelines for protected areas while a small investment in financial software and networking improved financial management with flow on benefits for staff at Aldabra Atoll (1000 km away)

✔ At Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda, the involvement of local communities in the assessment improved communication and understanding between park managers and local communities and helped in resolution of disputes that had existing for many years
Principle 4: The methodology is logical and systematic: working in a logical and accepted Framework with balanced approach.

Examples
✓ The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority adapted the IUCN Framework as the means to assess effectiveness of management within the GBR Outlook Report because it was a globally accepted approach to assessment.
✓ The IUCN Framework approach linked logically to the other elements of the Outlook Report
VALUES OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

- What are the current state and trends of the Great Barrier Reef’s environmental, economic and social values?
  - Assessment of biodiversity
  - Assessment of ecosystem health
  - Assessment of commercial and non-commercial use

PRESSURES AND CURRENT RESPONSES

- What is affecting the Great Barrier Reef’s environmental, economic and social values?
  - Assessment of factors influencing the Reef’s values
- How have management activities made a difference?
  - Assessment of existing protection and management
- How well can the Great Barrier Reef recover from disturbance?
  - Assessment of ecosystem resilience
- What are the remaining risks to the Great Barrier Reef?
  - Assessment of risks to the Reef

OUTLOOK

- What does this mean for the Great Barrier Reef’s future?
  - Assessment of the long-term outlook for the ecosystem

Fig. 2. Logic used for the eight assessments in the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report.
Principle 5: The methodology is based on good indicators, which are holistic, balanced, and useful. The indicators and the scoring systems are designed to enable robust analysis.

Examples
✓ In developing the New South Wales State of the Parks system, indicators were first designed in consultation with staff and then modified based on research that examined the reliability of indicators, the clarity of language used and the framing of the questions so that, as much as possible, consistent data is collected.
Principle 7: The evaluation process is cooperative: with good communication, teamwork and participation of protected area managers and stakeholders throughout all stages of the project wherever possible.

Examples

✓ Evaluation of management effectiveness of the Galapagos Marine Reserve was conducted collaboratively between the Park Managers, scientists, NGOs. Workshops were held with stakeholders and community representatives.

✓ In West Africa, IUCN developed a program of regional cooperation to conduct assessments across many countries, drawing on expertise developed through “Train the trainer” workshops.
Principle 8: Communication of results is positive and timely and undertaken in a way that is useful to the participants. Short-term benefits of evaluation should be demonstrated clearly wherever possible.

Examples

✓ In New South Wales, the triennial assessment was followed by a series of workshops with regional staff to present the results to them and explore the meaning of the results in a local context

✓ In between assessments, staff in the Management Effectiveness group are available to do special analyses of the results to help with regional planning or other uses of the State of Park data

✓ The State of the Parks data is used wherever possible to meet information demands from inside or outside of the agency so that site managers are not constantly asked to meet these requests
Every Assessment had multiple phases.
Evolution of Management Effectiveness assessment tools
Change in who is leading PAME assessments over time
What has been done – or at least what we know about this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>No of assessments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Standards Monitoring (Great Britain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Inventory (Switzerland)</td>
<td>5748</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW SOP</td>
<td>3369</td>
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<td>METT</td>
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<td>RAPPAM</td>
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<td>Korea SOP</td>
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<td>Qld Rapid Assessment</td>
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<td>Natura 2000 National Monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAMGe (Brazil PAME)</td>
<td>313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian MEE system</td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHA Outlook Report</td>
<td>171</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOBI Survey (Biosphere Reserves)</td>
<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catalonia MEE</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIP Site Consolidation</td>
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<td>Belize MEE</td>
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<td>Other systems</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>27657</td>
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Data from GD-PAME 23/6/2019
PA agencies have developed sophisticated PAME online systems
Results illustrate management effectiveness
Lessons from PAME – overall approach

✓ PAME Framework has played a critical role in promoting consistency of approach
✓ Purpose and capacity for assessment vary around the world – one size does not fit all!
✓ Use of common framework makes it easier to roll-up results across varying methodologies
✓ Allowing adaptation can increase longevity of assessment systems by ensuring relevance
✓ Linking assessment to organisational systems and processes can increase application of results
Lessons from PAME – The assessment tool

✓ Develop digital system for completing assessments – avoid Word/pdf forms
✓ Require justification/evidence to support assessments
✓ Record the sources of evidence
✓ Provide guidance on the interpretation/understanding of indicators
✓ Allow for guidance notes to be adapted to context (can permit wording of indicators to be kept consistent)
✓ Provide for additional indicators to be added while keeping “core” assessment consistent
Lessons from PAME – The assessment process

✓ Consult and get consensus – rightsholders and stakeholders, NGOs, researchers are key participants, provide sufficient budget to get right participants involved in the assessment

✓ The discussions during assessment and capturing justification and commentary is more important than any “score”

✓ Provide capacity building where needed for external participants

✓ Verify results – this is made easier by ensuring supporting evidence is collected at time of assessment. This may include field and stakeholder verification

✓ Repeat assessment over time – build into regular review processes where appropriate
Improving assessment of governance and social factors as well as PA outcomes

- Assessment of PA outcomes has strengthened
- Coverage of governance and social aspects of PA management are amongst weakest aspects of many PAME systems
- Increasing evidence of the need to better account for the influence of these aspects of governance and social issues on PA outcomes
- A number of governance assessment tools have been applied and more are in development (e.g. IIED workshop in London earlier this month)
- IUCN Green List has governance as one of for major components
- Assessing and accounting for some social and governance aspects (e.g. corruption) is challenging – especially where assessments are managed by government agencies
Future directions

- Green List standard is not another PAME methodology but a standard that can integrate with information from many PAME tools
- Can provide guidance to PA managers who can use the standard whether or not they participate in the Green List process
- Green List criteria could provide a mechanism to consolidate, analyse and understand protected area management effectiveness at a global level
- We should be setting quantitative targets for Protected Area Quality and this will need PAME data to inform this