CONGRÈS NATIONAL 2009 DU RRGO
OMRN 2009 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

POST-CONFERENCE SYNTHESIS
SUMMARY REPORT

21-24 OCTOBER/OCTOBRE 2009

MULTIDISCIPLINAIRE ÉDIFICE DESMARAIS BUILDING
ECOLE DE GESTON TELFER SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA | UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
OTTAWA, ON, CANADA

Ocean Management Research Network

CANADA'S OCEANS

Research, Management and the Human Dimension

LES OCEANS AU CANADA

Recherche, gestion et la dimension humaine

I. SESSIONS SUMMARY

The 5th OMRN National Conference was held in Ottawa from October 21-24, 2009 and hosted by the Telfer School of Management of the University of Ottawa. The OMRN National Conferences focus on the human dimension of management of Canada's coasts and oceans and the integration of research and policy, social science and natural science into natural resource management. The Conference attracted over 300 delegates representing a diverse gathering of researchers, managers, government policymakers, students, NGOs, industry and others with an interest in our oceans. The full 2009 OMRN National Conference Synthesis document, presents session proceedings, and is available online at: http://www.omrn-rrgo.ca/smc/home.php. The current document, the Post-Conference Synthesis Summary Report, serves as an abbreviated version of the full synthesis by (i) highlighting sessions discussions, (ii) identifying policy implications, and (iii) documenting the discussion on the future role of the OMRN.

Conference dialogue sessions, workshops, and presentations emphasized the following 2009 conference themes: (a) Oceans Governance; (b) Oceans Accountability; and (c) Canada's Arctic.

(a) **Oceans Governance**. The importance of involving civil society, communities of place, communities of interest, and non-governmental organizations in decision-making intersected through the majority of sessions. Participants emphasized that coastal communities are the most experienced in addressing resource and governance problems and because they have always had to adapt to change and they are most directly affected by marine and coastal degradation. The challenge for policy is to create institutions that foster this learned resiliency. Sessions also addressed questions of scale: how to connect individual, community, regional and national efforts, including the associated jurisdictional complexities. Governance challenges also include how to deliver on Canada's international commitments, such as developing a network of marine protected areas, how to evaluate and mitigate land-based impacts on coastal areas, how to address the threats and challenges for the health of people living in coastal communities, and questions of ownership of oceans and coastal resources.

(b) **Oceans Accountability**. Sessions centered on the issues of information and data. Delegates were interested in whether we need more information, or whether existing information should be more accessible, both in terms of format and data sharing. Innovative approaches illustrated in several sessions were new ways of making geospatial data, including local knowledge, more broadly accessible for planning and management of coasts and oceans.

(c) **Canada's Arctic**. Sessions focused on how northern communities are adapting to climate change, on governance structures and processes for natural resource management, in particular co-management, and the relationship between aboriginal traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge. Other sessions also focused on challenges of finding common languages to address problems, whether across academic disciplines or between organizations with different mandates.

Finally, special sessions addressed the evolving role of the OMRN in Canada's oceans policy and research scene. Delegates and the OMRN leadership reflected on the value of networking, the OMRN's main goal, as it encourages opportunities for mentorship, research connections, policy feedback and impacts, and elevating the general public's awareness of Canada's coasts and oceans. The conference concluded that there is a need for the OMRN to continue in it roles as a strong and united voice for Canada's oceans.

II. OMRN 2009 CONFERENCE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The 2009 OMRN National Conference generated lively analysis about oceans and coastal policies for Canada. Conference sessions were designed to stimulate and promote critical analysis and innovative thinking especially regarding the human dimension of oceans and coastal policy. The extensive, rich, and consistent policy implications identified at the 2009 OMRN National Conference are summarized in the table below and in the discussion to follow.

Topic	Issue Focus	Instruments Affected	Actions Required/ Research Thrusts
Political will	Lack of political commitment re oceans and coasts	MPA Network by 2012 unlikely; LOMAs undeclared	Fund stated policy; Implementation, follow up on govt commitments
Governance	Federal Command and control; policy deficit at local level	Federal 'one-size-fits-all' legislation inappropriate to local jurisdiction	Devolution of authority from federal to local governance; organizational assistance
Delegation of shared authority	Increased responsibility and authority to people	Jurisdiction of federal authority; devolution to communities	Local legislation and organization; decision support to communities
Policy partners and practical implementation	Divergence between stated versus operational policy	Lack of promised policy implementation and stakeholders engagement	Interdisciplinary research; engagement and interest in marine protection
Policy understanding, communication	Public uninformed about policy and expected outcomes	Communication links, government-public relations	Mobilizing the public to act, social networking, assuming responsibility
Spatial Management planning	Spatial planning, ocean zoning, and management	Local area mapping and database capabilities; spatial jurisdiction	Spatial frameworks, GIS mapping, legal frameworks
Information and data sharing	Accessible database, needed for TEK/ATK/ LEK inclusion	Coordination of existing database, links to applied problem solving	Problem-focused database availability, interdisciplinary data
Land-Sea interface	Overlapping jurisdictions	Coastal zone integrated management	Land impacts on oceans and vice versa
Community vulnerability	Dependence on coasts, climate change	Practical support for stated mandate, TEK	Vulnerability indicators, strategies for adaptation
Policy evaluation, monitoring, learning	Ongoing auditing and evaluation of oceans and coastal policy	Policy instruments' evaluation and performance	Assignment of evaluation and auditing roles, role of government, multi-criteria decision analysis

1. **Political Will**

There is a demonstrated lack of political will in Canada with respect to the priority of oceans and coasts on the political agenda. Despite the expressed initiatives and positive language of bureaucrats with respect to oceans and coastal policy, the high level political commitment to carry through with declared policy was inevitably displaced by other concerns. Planning processes in Canada are too long and need to be more efficient in order to capture momentum, e.g., the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in the summer of 2010.

2. **Governance**

Existing governance systems for Canada's oceans and coasts are inadequate. Current governance highlights issues between competing interests among stakeholders rather than the core mandates of conservation and sustainable use. Stakeholder involvement, while recognized as a key element of integrated management, has not progressed beyond a consultative contribution by outsiders within the command and control, paternalistic government system. Oceans and coastal governance, by its very complexity cannot be effectively managed under centralized government regulatory control. Enabling legislation, specifically the *Ocean's Act*, is not sufficient to designate more local control in Fisheries and Oceans Canada more directly identified by its regulatory role under the *Fisheries Act of Canada*.

3. **Delegation of Power to Communities and Engagement of Stakeholders**

Government cannot fulfil its oceans and coastal mandate without delegating power to and supporting the knowledge of coastal communities and the involvement of community stakeholders. The delegation of responsible decision making is needed to focus on community participation essential to integrated management. Devolution of power and program targets and outcomes, collectively established, contribute to the success of integrated management. Management must be flexible to change and adapt as needed to social and ecological system changes. Effective integrated management is nested from the community upward to reflect multiple governance scales and jurisdictional interaction between all levels of government.

4. **Policy Partnerships and Practical Applications**

There is a need to cultivate closer working relationships and responsiveness between independent 'policy analysts', and central political decision makers who could benefit from wider critical feedback on applied oceans and coastal policies. While there has been much rhetoric, there has been little implementation of declared policies or programs and, consequently, little real substantive progress. Networks, such as the OMRN, as well as non-governmental, industrial, and community groups, need to operate as tools for spreading oceans and coastal awareness at all levels by using network memberships and links to government leaders. Governments, meanwhile, need to be stimulated and provoked by these same groups to maintain a higher level of political priority and urgency. and to analyse critically the implementation of policies.

5. **Policy Understanding and Communication**

The disconnect between understanding and implementation of integrated ocean and coastal management is frustrating re what is actually happening in local communities. Navigating different government agencies to determine who is responsible for programs, in addition to engaging with the diverse groups of interested parties is trying. Integrated management planning must be based on cooperation, communication, coordination, and the impacts on the human elements of oceans and coasts. Governments must do a better job to communicate integrated management in order to mobilize the oceans and coastal communities.

6. Development of Spatial Management Plans

Establishment of formal and practical management plans for oceans and coasts is required. Management plans include defining the relevant marine and coastal "space" to which the plan applies. It also requires defining a set of common indicators to represent management goals and measurable targets for strategic and operational planning and ongoing policy monitoring and auditing. Decision making would be linked to the regular evaluation of spatial management strategies in that deviations from specified targets would trigger management action. Communities and stakeholders need to be directly linked to the design and delivery of management plans with an active, responsible and authoritative voice toward incorporating the local context and toward reflecting local management in choosing to mitigate, eliminate, or accept risks.

7. Data sharing and Information Sources

The Conference keynote speaker importantly reported the need for more partnering and sharing of data on our coasts and oceans. Shared data provides a more in-depth observation of marine life and of the ocean. What is needed is a stronger, more cohesive, and comprehensive data resource. Planners and decision makes need to recognize the wealth and potential of TEK, ATK, local knowledge, and voluntarily collect data (VGI) as sources of information. From practical and detailed tools such as maps, GIS mapping, and atlases, to the layering of knowledge and data for identifying information gaps, there are many resources allowing for an increased understanding of both marine resources and their environments that need to be disseminated for management and policy purposes. Central to all arguments is that effective information is derived from combining various data. The proliferation of geospatial and information technologies, together with policy rethinking by government with respect to making data more freely available, needs to be expanded and made available for use in policy making in the changing environment.

8. Land-sea Interface

Issues affecting our coasts, coastal communities, and the marine space need to receive more attention. Land-based sources of pollution are contaminating even the deepest ocean trenches with heavy metals and pesticide residues, and airborne emissions are changing the chemistry of the oceans. The implications of land subsidence, sea level rise, and storm surges are calling into question the capabilities of the coastal zone to adapt to the linked changing oceans. What is required is a renewed focus on the land-sea interface. LOMAs need to be brought "on shore", and coastal vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies need to be made an integral part of integrated management planning. The land-sea focus calls for a new spatial management unit with local jurisdiction and responsibility and directed at coastal communities, and affected practitioners, users, and stakeholders, and open to new tools and technologies.

9. Community Policy and Vulnerability

The Canadian government promotes and participates in Integrated Management (IM) for ocean and coastal zones, by legislating the concept into the *Oceans Act*, the Oceans Strategy, and by signing and ratifying the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (1992). The evidence suggests, however, that DFO, as responsible ministry, has not been successful in supporting the mandate. Community-based initiatives not supported, and government proposals attempting to be inclusive of communities are often unsuccessful. Communities are therefore vulnerable. There is a need for co-construction and co-production of adaptive governance for coastal communities as a mechanism to face climate-related vulnerabilities and other issues. A focus on communities broadens our understanding of the

links between scientific and local knowledge, and community capacity and development of joint decision-making tools important for management.

10. Policy Evaluation, Monitoring and Continuous Learning

A process of 'policy reflection' is important to identify and critically assess, monitor, and audit oceans and coastal policy. Reflection provides insight into the past, present, and future, and inherently includes an evaluation of current practices. Reflection also allows for collective continuous learning important for present and future plans leading to sustainable management. Collective learning approaches and the ongoing auditing of processes and approaches are significant for effective ongoing integrated management performance.

Research Recommendations

The 2009 OMRN National Conference provided direction for the development of research into the human dimension of oceans and coastal management policy by proposing the research recommendations below:

1) **Oceans Energy** – alternative offshore wind and tidal power are important alternatives to carbon-based energy sources. Research includes impacts on marine species in energy development areas, economic spin-offs, and the socioeconomic impacts on local communities.

2) **Aquaculture Research** – integrated multi-trophic aquaculture research is of interest internationally. Recent funding of the CIMTAN (Canadian Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture Network) NSERC Network is developing expertise to make Canada a world leader in integrated aquaculture operations.

3) **Fisheries Research** – analysis of fisheries governance, management systems, and socio-economic impacts of policy are the subjects of recent funding of the CCFRN (Canadian Capture Fisheries Research Network) is applying OMRN expertise in projects related to the human dimension.

4) **Canada-US Transboundary Resources Research** – research on models where Canada and the US share the control and security of a region (e.g., Great Lakes and Gulf of Maine). Research is designed to resolve issue of joint ownership and shared control of transboundary resources.

5) **Marine Spatial Planning** – initiatives in place in the EU and the US re frameworks for marine spatial planning within the contexts of integrated management of our oceans and coasts are required in the Canadian context. This research is instrumental in discussing implementation issues for shared jurisdictions (by various levels of government), spatial scale, and oceans zoning options.

6) **Canada Oceans Networks** – research on the engagement of Canadian oceans networks including CHONe, CAISN, FISHBOL, OTN, CZCA, CCSea and the OMRN. This initiative is designed to consolidate research and development links on common issues. Opportunities also exist to link a national Canada Oceans Network to global and international initiatives (e.g., CoastalNet in the EU).

7) **Responsible Fisheries Research and Ecocertification** – ethics and management in global fisheries, e.g., to combat IUU fishing. Research required to address: (i) international fisheries marketing, certification and the role of governments; (ii) focused analysis of IUU fishing; (iii) RFMOs performance; and (iv) consumer awareness programs.

III. OMRN FUTURES

The OMRN Futures panel discussion was the closing session of the 2009 OMRN National Conference. The session presented relevant discussion devices from pre-conference studies on OMRN Futures including: (1) OMRN Communications Strategy; (2) OMRN Membership Survey; (3) OMRN White Paper; and (4) Oceans Summit and Policy Perspectives deliverable.

1. The OMRN Communications Strategy. University of Ottawa MBA students presented a consulting report on the development of a Communications Strategy for the future of the OMRN. The full strategy report is available at: http://www.omrn-rrgo.ca/smc/home.php. The communication strategy report recommended that the OMRN should apply a variety of communication tools, including:

- Communicate more directly with members; enhanced use of the OMRN website; a regular OMRN monthly report; information to news media through OMRN experts; preparation of promotional articles in magazine and reviews related to oceans management.
- Appoint an OMRN Communication Officer to conduct and implement the communication strategy and coordinate communication tools.
- Design a feedback mechanism to evaluate the short and long term communication strategy; monitor and record inquiries and publications, and analysis and response of the OMRN website statistics.

The OMRN, and its shared mandate with DFO Oceans on raising awareness of coastal and oceans policy, could benefit from a more focused commitment to regular communication with its target audiences.

2. The OMRN Membership Survey. The OMRN Membership Survey was released to members via email communication on September 2, 2010. To view the OMRN Futures Survey please visit: http://www.omrn-rrgo.ca/smc/home.php. Details of respondent confidential survey results are available on request from the OMRN Secretariat. The survey reported to members that "*Partnership funding for our Network Secretariat, the eleven working groups, student research, and the OMRN Conference will end in December 2009.*" It was also reported that: "*The purpose of this survey is to gather feedback from OMRN members on what they view as the future of the OMRN.*" Survey results (2% of on-line membership) are not considered representative of the general OMRN membership. Many respondents took the time to write comments on the importance of the OMRN and, while noting its diminished role in light of the funding restraints, expressed the view that it was desirous for the OMRN to continue. One reason cited several times was the important role the OMRN plays in supporting students.

3. The OMRN White Paper. The OMRN White Paper was a starting point for the ongoing discussion of OMRN renewal options and opportunities for the continuation of the OMRN as a sustainable, legacy organization into the foreseeable future. To view the OMRN White Paper please visit: http://www.omrn-rrgo.ca/smc/home.php.

The impetus behind the White Paper stemmed from the decision to end funding for the OMRN after the 2009 National Conference under the Joint DFO-SSHRC Initiative funding program that the OMRN has been operating under intermittently since 2001, and more specifically since the latest agreement begun in late 2006. The White Paper was presented below in sections pertaining to: (i) the future governance structure of the OMRN; (ii) alternative membership models; (iii) alternative funding models; (iv) the

OMRN mandate for networking and/or research; and (v) OMRN products. Discussion on these topics was followed by a set of recommendations.

I. Maintain the OMRN as an ongoing legacy network.

II. Seek funding to maintaining and operating the Network Secretariat through alternative and combined arrangements involving governments, research funding agencies and OMRN members.

III. Seek to increase the OMRN membership base while providing enhanced services and networking opportunities to all OMRN members.

IV. Establish the future OMRN with mandates for (i) networking activities nationally, and (ii) defined research output and deliverables unique to the OMRN.

V. Seek renewal of the OMRN by reducing the number of theme-based groups and by turning over the current OMRN leadership by infusing new members and enthusiasm into the organization.

It was proposed at the OMRN Future session that the OMRN organize an "Oceans Summit" of all Canadian oceans networks to study our place in Canada. This meeting was held in Ottawa March 17-19, 2010 and include representation from Coastal Zone Canada Association (CZCA), One Ocean, the Oceans Science and Technology Partnership (OSTP), the Atlantic Coastal Zone Information Steering Committee (ACZISC), the Canadian Healthy Oceans Network (CHONe), International Oceans Institute – Canada (IOI-Canada), and the Canadian Coastal Science and Engineering Association (CCSea).

4. OMRN Futures – Suite: Oceans Summit, March 17-19, 2010

The Oceans Summit discussed mutual issues of activities, membership, funding, and overlapping mandates. [The minutes of the Oceans Summit were made available to all participants in May 2010 and are available on request form the OMRN Network Secretariat.] The Summit led to the development of a synthesis toward establishing a unified Ocean Networks group. This idea was acknowledged in the itemized points below that were brought forward by the participants:

- Together we are broader thinkers than our individual Networks
- A Network of Networks/Super Network/unified Ocean Networks group would increase capacity building and drawing on considerable national and regional leadership
- There is acknowledged strength in interdisciplinary research and the integration of the natural/life sciences and the Social Sciences across all individual Networks that could be identified as a common rallying point for the unified group
- A unified group would commit to bridging the government-communities-industry gaps

It was resolved to form a stronger notion of the Ocean Networks Policy Perspectives deliverable in the form of a series of short "Policy Perspectives" that could be endorsed, distributed and communicated by all Network partners. It was noted that the OMRN provided a series of Workshops on a wide range of topics during the 2003 OMRN National Conference. [See also: http://www.omrn-rrgo.ca/index.php?action=conferences_2003.index under "Discussion Series: Research on Human Uses of Canada's Oceans and Coasts".] The draft "Policy Perspectives" document is described below.

5. Oceans and Coasts Network - Canada (OCN - Canada) – "Policy Perspectives"

"Oceans and Coasts - Policy Perspectives" address fundamental policy issues as position papers, Policy Perspectives, or policy editorials of 5 to 10 pages in length, to be disseminated regularly (e.g., six times per year). While they may be polemical in format, all arguments must be grounded in and consistent with current empirical evidence, unless they wish to directly challenge the validity of that evidence. These documents will be written by an individual or team, recognized as expert(s) to comment on ocean and coastal relevant issues. As much as possible, these documents will be written by members of one or more of the supporting networks, though they are not required to support any position taken by any of the supporting networks. The procedures for identifying and selecting such persons are outlined below. However, fundamental to the process is a 'management committee' of representatives from the partner networks.

Policy Perspective Document Structure. The "Policy Perspective" document shall include:

- *The Problem Statement* (1 page) – presentation of the relevant issue in ocean and coastal policy
- *The Opinion* (4 pages) – logically supported statement of innovative and critical thinking on policy alternatives with respect to (1)
- *The Resources* (1 page) – references, web page sources, working papers, other information as supporting documentation for the Opinion
- *The Recommendations and Follow-up* (1 page) – a concise statement of the related, feasible research initiatives, including potential meetings among governments, communities, industries, and information and training workshops designed to support an research the extension and application of the expressed Opinion.

Policy Deliverable Process. The Policy Deliverable process proceeds from the specific topics and authors have been identified. The steps below are described for the preparation of the Policy Perspective deliverable document as part of the regular and continuing series:

- Initial assignment and preparation - 1 month sufficient for authors, once assigned a topic, to produce the draft deliverable for review.
- Review and Editing – Selected reviewers are requested to provide feedback to the author(s) on the initial draft document submitted for review within 2 weeks. The selected reviewers reserve the right to return the Opinion to the authors for clarification and re-writing as deemed required.
- Endorsement – Individual Networks are asked to edit and acknowledge the work of the author(s); an endorsement means that The Policy Deliverable will be posted to the endorsing Ocean Network's website and the endorsing Ocean Network's icon will appear on the document over the course of approximately 2 weeks.
- Delivery and Dissemination – each endorsing Coasts and Ocean Network is asked to post the endorsed document to their respective websites as well as to prepare limited print copies, as resources permit (using in a unified style to be established) for dissemination to ranking clients in government, industry, communities, and institutions designated as the targeted audience for The Policy Deliverable series. It is anticipated that funding for printing, translation, and distribution (mail outs) can be readily obtained through the generous contribution of institutional support for research. Note: The Policy Deliverable piece is authored by the contributing individuals or groups of individuals who retain "ownership" of their Opinions. Coasts and Ocean Network endorsement

does not imply that the entire Ocean Network membership support the Opinion expressed, and in fact, it is anticipated – and healthy – that alternative Opinions are expressed and endorsed as evidence of the richness and variety within the membership collective. Rather, endorsing logical alternative views is evidence of the "honest broker" position staked out by the collective as characteristic of all Coasts and Ocean Networks.

It is anticipated that the OMRN Network Secretariat will take the lead on the initial production and processing of the Policy Perspectives program over the course of the Summer and Fall of 2010. The Policy Perspectives program is seen to represent an initial attempt to realize the potential of the OMRN and its wider membership. As such, the organization of the Policy Perspectives program is an initial step toward seeking and procuring recognition and funding from alternative sources in the short-term (on the basis of a regular output and deliverable), and as a means of attracting new leadership, membership and involvement for the future evolution of the OMRN.

The table below presents the initial series of policy topics for which Policy Perspectives draft documents are being solicited. These topics do not preclude the contribution of other submissions.

Topic	Title	Description	Source Information
1	*Political Will*	Evidence of low priority of oceans and coasts on the political agenda; the high level political commitment to carry out declared policy often inevitably displaced by other concerns; planning processes too long, need to be more efficient in order to capture momentum, e.g. BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, summer of 2010.	2009 OMRN Conference; BP Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill
2	*Coastal and Oceans Governance*	Canada's governance systems for oceans and coasts are inadequate; stakeholder involvement, a key element of integrated management, has not progressed beyond a consultative contribution; oceans and coastal governance cannot be effectively managed under centralized government regulatory control.	FAO, OECD, 2003 through 2009 OMRN Conferences
3	*The Land-Sea Interface*	Renewed focus on the land-sea interface required; LOMAs need to be brought "on shore", and coastal vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies need to be made an integral part of integrated management planning; call for new spatial management units with local jurisdiction and responsibility and directed at coastal communities, and all stakeholders.	LOMAs, Coastal COE, 2009 OMRN Conference; 2010 CZCA Conference
4	*Marine Spatial Planning and Oceans Zoning*	Management plans defining relevant marine and coastal "space" required; communities and stakeholders need to be directly linked to the design and delivery of spatial management plans with an active, responsible and authoritative voice toward incorporating the local context and reflecting local management.	Special Issue publication pending; DFO Workshops; 2009 OMRN Conference
5	*Role of Governments in Coastal & Marine Mgmt*	Global evidence abounds -governments have been unable to ensure the commons are sustainable; Ostrom's Nobel Prize in 2009 has shown us that command and control is not necessarily effective, that diverse local initiatives are better.	OECD, New Zealand NIWA and SeaFIC, IOI-Canada, Ostrom's Nobel Prize