Linking Science to Decision-Making

Special Session

Managers Are Listening
Linking Science to Decision-Making
Managers Are Listening

• Double Oral Session + Panel Discussion
• 3-6 dozen in audience, including managers
• Panelists:
  – Gretchen Ehlinger  System-Wide Science Efforts - SSR
  – Stephanie Johnson  NRC Perspectives
  – John Ogden  Role and Effectiveness of Science
  – Greg May  System Wide Science for Planning
  – Paul Souza  Science and WCA-3A management
  – Barry Heimlich  Countering SLR: A case study
Effective Use of Science in South Florida

Effective Science
- Content
- Quality

Effective Use of Science
Institutional process where science is:
- Generated
- Evaluated
- Applied

From: Van Cleve et al. (2006)
*Environ. Manage.* 37:367-379
Questions to Ponder.....

- How well is the linkage between science and decision making working? What are examples of successes and challenges?

- Is the science being adequately communicated to decision makers?

- Is the science underway adequate to address the needs of decision makers?

- Are the many reports produced by RECOVER adequate to meet decision makers needs? if not, how can they be improved?

- What organizational or process changes could be made to improve the linkages between science and decision making?

- Are there mechanisms in place to document scientific advice and decision making so that decisions and their consistency with science are transparent?
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– **Gretchen**: System-wide assessment tools developed and communication vehicles established → **prepared to characterize ecosystem response**

– **Stephanie**: professional cat herder’s perspective on NRC history and engagement → **leverage lessons from examples where managers did and did not listen**

– **John**: science knowledge -> science synthesis -> science application → **bold policy leadership, bright scientists, effective leadership**
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– **Greg**: Example of developing and applying System-wide indicators for planning and assessment efforts for restoration → **focus on mechanisms to identify sweet spot on science/policy/resources Venn diagram**

– **Paul**: mechanisms for using science for current and future water management in WCA-3A for multiple species → **desire to maximize iterative dialog, internally and interagency-wise, with scientists and managers**

– **Barry**: sea level rise science applied to pro-active structural changes in SE Florida → **apply lessons learned from other case studies; openness to examining new restoration concepts in light of CC**
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Discussions on improving science/management linkages
(Matt’s summary conclusions)

– Mechanisms (how and who)

– Forums (where and when)

– Effective Communications Products (what and why)

– Panel concluded that while all three are critical, developing mechanisms highest priority
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Discussions on improving science/management linkages

– **Mechanisms**
  - Daily, iterative interactions; within and cross agency
  - Independent processes put the issues out there
  - Interagency governance concepts that are effective
  - Explore new ideas; rebuild old methods
  - Couple of models (strategically, not piecemeal)
  - Look for agreement in process

– **Moving Forward**
  - Closing Plenary – share with GEER audience
  - Develop Call to Action white paper
  - Explore ways to get to next step: who/how/when
    – ???Focused workshop; NCER11; off-year science-management conferences???