

# SocMONITOR

An electronic bulletin about the Global Socio-economic Monitoring Initiative  
Editors: Maria Pena and Peter Edwards



## Improving SocMon globally

By Maria Pena

Earlier this year, the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados, received a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) valued at approximately USD 73,000 towards the *Coordination of a Global Socio-economic Monitoring Initiative for Coastal Management* (SocMon). This one-year project will build on over ten years of socio-economic data collected across six global nodes that have worked with local and regional partners to facilitate community-based socio-economic monitoring.



The project facilitates region level monitoring programs of SocMon; maintenance of the SocMon website ([www.socmon.org](http://www.socmon.org)) and, development and publication of printed products. In support of the monitoring programs, sub-grants of up to USD 6,000 have been made available to each of the SocMon regions for one or more of the following: (1) repeat assessments at previously studied sites (site monitoring), (2) follow-up after training for gap-filling and adaptive management activities, and (3) implementation of innovative projects (new approaches or material to be tested) that contribute to the development of SocMon.

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In April, regional SocMon coordinators submitted sub-grant requests, all of which were successful in their application. The Caribbean, South Asia and Southeast Asia regions are set to conduct repeat assessments at selected study sites; Micronesia is focused on developing a monitoring protocol for integrating SocMon and biophysical monitoring; Central America will be addressing enhancement of the SocMon methodology by testing the feasibility for incorporating conjoint analysis; and Brazil (the newest SocMon node) is set on developing a coordination strategy for implementing SocMon Brazil! Updates on these projects will be provided in subsequent issues of the *SocMonitor*.

## Measuring trends in socio-economic characteristics of fishing villages in Dominica

By Maria Pena

SocMon Caribbean is putting its NFWF sub-grant of USD 6,000 towards determining changes in the fisheries-related socio-economic characteristics between 2008 and 2015 of three west coast fishing villages – Colihaut, Dublanc and Bioche – in Dominica. The only SocMon assessment of the area was conducted in these fishing communities in

2008. Impacts of present and proposed development were assessed in 2008 with a view to ensuring sustainable use of the resource base of these communities. Since then, there has been no major development in the area but there has been a shift in the local fishery from coastal to off-shore operations as a result of the promotion of the FAD fishery and increase in the numbers of younger fishers to the fishing industry.

From 1–3 June 2015, Maria Pena (Caribbean SocMon coordinator) and Jehroum Wood (SocMon Spatial advisor) conducted an advance SocMon training workshop at the Dominica Fisheries Division to re-orient the previous Dominica SocMon team in the SocMon process as well as introduce new persons to the methodology. SocMon Spatial, a practical method for incorporating SocMon and participatory GIS, was pilot tested as an add-on module to enhance the training.



Jehroum (standing) discussing all things spatial

Approximately 15 persons from the Dominica Fisheries Division, the Physical Planning Department and each of the three communities participated in the training which comprised practical exercises, field trips and a community

meeting. Field data collection is now complete and was led in part by Ms. Elsa Tokunaga from Dalhousie University who is interning with CERMES from May to August this year. Stay tuned for what should be some interesting results and key learning.

## ***SocMon/SEM-Pasifika at the International Coral Reef Symposium 2016?***

By Peter Edwards



The 13th International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) will be held in Hawaii from 19–24 June 2016, and already SocMon coordinators are interested in the possibility of participating in what is the largest international meeting focused on coral reef science and management. The Symposium's theme is ***Bridging Science to Policy***. It is highly likely that there will be one or more sessions that will provide opportunities for SocMon coordinators and partners to present their work on human dimensions or integrated monitoring in coastal areas so you are encouraged to think about submitting abstracts to relevant sessions which should be confirmed by next month by the ICRS Scientific Planning Committee. The good news is that NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program has submitted a proposal for a session that focuses on integrating social science monitoring data with coral reef health or ecological indicators. The not-so-good news is that there is no extra funding to support conference participation so SocMon

Regional Coordinators interested in attending ICRS 2016 should start thinking about sourcing funding.

## **Promoting SocMon/SEM-Pasifika at ISSRM**

By Maria Pena

From 14–18 June 2015, Maria Pena participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM) in Charleston, South Carolina. She was a participant in a session organized by NOAA on *Science and Products to Enhance Decision Making for Community Well-being, Safety, Conservation, and Resource Management*. The purpose of this session was to present and discuss a variety of examples of NOAA supported science and products that support decision making for the goals of community well-being, safety, conservation, and resource management. The science and products presented all focused on decision-making. Maria's presentation provided an overview of the SocMon methodology while providing regional examples of its use with the aim of further promoting the uptake of SocMon in decision- and policy-making.



NOAA session presenters, including Maria Pena (third from right) and Peter Edwards (far right)

## **Measuring progress in effective conservation**

By Supin Wongbusarakum

The following is an excerpt from a blog written by Supin Wongbusarakum about SEM-Pasifika and the Micronesia Challenge.

In Micronesia, NOAA social scientists have worked with multiple jurisdictional and regional partners to establish and strengthen socio-economic monitoring efforts among the Micronesia Challenge (MC) countries (including Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Republic of Marshalls) to help monitor the progress of the MC's goal to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

The Micronesia Challenge 2nd Socio-economic Measures Workshop took place 10–12 June, 2015 in Guam, with Brooke Nevitt of Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance, Michael Lameier of the NOAA NMFS Habitat Conservation Division, Berna Gorong of The Nature Conservancy, and Supin Wongbusarakum from the NOAA Pacific Islands Fishery Science Centre's Coral Reef Ecosystems Program, serving as co-facilitators and resource experts. It brought together representatives from national, regional, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations and potential funding agencies to review past and ongoing socio-economic monitoring efforts in the region and to identify gaps and future steps for improving and sustaining the monitoring at all levels in Micronesia. It also initiated a discussion on how to integrate socio-economic and biological monitoring to better

understand the impacts of conservation and natural resource management.

Two key results of this workshop were unanimous agreement on the importance of sustaining socio-economic monitoring in the region and the establishment of a “Core Micronesia Socio-economic Monitoring Team” with representatives from all jurisdictions. The team will reconvene 21 September through 3 October 2015 to further build team member capacities’ in social science and training skills, and to initiate development of socio-economic monitoring plans for selected sites in Micronesia.

## ***Socio-economic characteristics of Mannar coastal villages***

By Vineeta Hoon

Eighteen participants from eight coastal villages around Mannar, Northern Province, Sri Lanka were trained in SocMon from 3–11 March 2015. The workshop was organized by the Small Fisher Federation of Sri Lanka and supported by the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project. Spread over nine days, the training included two days of field work in Vidathaltivu village.

Participants were exposed to Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and visualization techniques during a focus group discussion in which a resource activity map and seasonal diagram of marine and coastal activities were developed.

We discovered that in this village, the community has been exposed to displacement most of their lives because of the 30-year civil war. Only since 2009 has there been some semblance of normality and they are now concentrating on rebuilding their

lives. Ninety percent of households are dependent on traditional fisheries and fishing grounds of Vidathaltivu.



The finished product – resource activity map produced by participants

The church has played an important part in building the confidence and social resilience of the community. The natural resources; mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs are in fairly good condition.

The participants were quite excited by the training and were very keen to complete a SocMon village profile. They have formed a SocMon Mannar Self Help Group and teamed up with the Coast Conservation Department (CCD) to complete the study of Vidathaltivu; Mr. Mohammed Haleem of CCD Mannar will serve as the SocMon Mannar Coordinator and we will continue to provide guidance. The group has also formed a SocMon Mannar Facebook page and plans to keep their

activities posted. Check out their page and like them!

## **SocMon writeshop in Yangon, Myanmar**

By Michael Pido

This article is a bit late in its inclusion, but “better late than never”.

From 23–29 October 2014, Fauna and Flora International (FFI) spearheaded a training writeshop on SocMon data collected in 2014 from the Myeik Archipelago in the Tanintharyi Region, Myanmar.

The aim of the training was to build capacity to analyze and use socio-economic data to inform marine resource planning and management. Seven participants took part in the writeshop – three academic staff from Mawlamyine University, Myeik University, and Pathein University; two FFI staff members; one participant from the Nature & Wildlife Conservation Division, Forestry Department; and one from the Fisheries Resources Conservation Unit, Department of Fishery.

As part of capacity building, the participants learned how to process SocMon data through generating tables, graphs, and summary indices to aggregate data as well as conducting simple tests of hypotheses involving relationships. They used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel software to facilitate data analysis and presentation. The outputs of the writeshop served as inputs into the socio-economic baseline assessment document, *Thayawthatangyi and Langann Island, Myeik Archipelago, Myanmar*

*report of the Tanintharyi Conservation Program of Fauna & Flora International.*



Participants going through their data analysis exercises. In the background Prof. Pontillas (left) chatting with Dr. Schneider (right)

Dr. Helen Schneider, Program Director for Conservation, Livelihoods and Governance of FFI at Cambridge, UK, served as the lead facilitator. Prof. Marissa S. Pontillas (College of Teacher Education) and Ms. Eva Marie C. Ponce de Leon (College of Business and Accountancy), faculty members from the Palawan State University (PSU) in Puerto Princesa City, Philippines, served as the main trainers. The PSU is the SocMon Centre for South East Asia, with Dr. Michael D. Pido (College of Sciences) as the Regional Coordinator. The training was funded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), through the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project and FFI. It was also a follow-up to the initial SocMon training course held in January 2014 at the Mawlamyine University.



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