**Ideas for adapting CAP**

**for use with indigenous communities**

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*Introduction:* Around the world, users of the Conservation Action Planning process have adapted and changed elements of it in order to make its use more successful when used by indigenous communities. Through a Coda/McLean Fellowship and a session on this topic held at the 2010 CAP Rally, some common themes and ideas have emerged.

This document is a first attempt to summarize these ideas so they are more readily available for others who are adapting CAP for use with local or indigenous communities. Our hope is that new ideas and suggestions can be added to this list over time, as others develop new approaches for making conservation or management planning more successful and accessible to community members.

The ideas have been organized by four themes:

*Process:* These ideas focus on how to adapt the CAP **process** (e.g. facilitation, steps of CAP, etc…) for use with indigenous groups. This theme emerged because many have found that the CAP process, even when highly participatory, requires significant modification to work with the circumstances of conservation planning found in many indigenous contexts.

*Compatibility:* These ideas focus on how to ensure the CAP process is more **compatible** with indigenous world view. This theme emerged because the CAP process represents a very ‘western’ cultural perspective comfortable with separating environment from culture and society, something not shared by Indigenous peoples.

*Resilience:* These ideas focus on how to ensure the CAP process is **understood** and accepted by the community now and that their **capacity** for management is strengthened into the future. This theme emerged for two reasons:

1. The investment of time, resources and relationships required to develop a CAP with Indigenous communities can be greater than in non-Indigenous contexts, and therefore greater benefit is generated if this effort produces a plan that will be implemented and revised by the community themselves.

2. Conversely, the community context is frequently one of instability, including uncertainty of ongoing external support, and therefore the likelihood is high that robust community capacity will not develop or persist over time.

*Tools:* These ideas focus on **tools** that have been developed to make it easier for indigenous community members to actively and effectively participate in the CAP process. This theme emerged because the current selection of tools needs to be supplemented so the process and its products are useful broadly; for example, the process and products should be accessible to people with varying literacy levels and computer skills, useful in outdoor or non-traditional meeting settings, and practical with large groups uncomfortable with smaller ‘breakout’ groups.

**Process**

*Adapting the CAP* ***process*** *(e.g. facilitation, steps of CAP, etc…) for use with indigenous groups*

1. Ensure *key community members* are included in the process

A. Members of all generations:

* + Young people want to learn and use traditional knowledge, use that to foster engagement
  + Traditional knowledge resides in just a few people nearing age or life expectation

B. Influential people and leaders in community

C. A champion for the process

2. Use approaches that build on *culturally normal ways of communicating and learning*

* Bring oral information into this process
  + Traditional knowledge transmission maintained through doing / traditional
  + Participatory planning approaches (also participatory rural appraisal approaches)

3. Build *social capital and trusting relationships* with the community

* TAKE TIME (this is the biggest challenge)
* Consistency: same person to build trust, long-term commitment, right kind of personality

4. *Retain the process and critical links and steps* provided within the Spreadsheet or Miradi but *use more manual and transparent approaches* to achieving these

* Avoid using a computer-based tool
* Use paper tool options
* Take digital photos of paper products for a record of decision making
* Replicate the workbook’s power to record rationale for decisions, perhaps by recording rationale on paper and photographing these.

5. Use *excellent facilitation techniques* AND techniques that are socially appropriate

* + 2 or more facilitators
  + Use breakout groups or other approaches to hear from all participants
  + Structure breakout groups in socially acceptable ways
  + Include breaks for tea, food, coffee…
  + Discuss what will happen, facilitate it, summarize findings, break

6. Consider *meeting location* carefully

* + Fractured communities because separated from lands for long time, so providing an opportunity to reconnect with their lands may be critical

7. Use *smaller working groups* of community members to complete complicated or controversial steps, always returning the product to the larger community for review and revision.

8. Work to ensure *broad attendance*

* Be creative about ways to encourage people to attend – door prizes, stipend
* Respect peoples’ time during the meetings – be efficient, cover material that is of interest and important to the participants

9. Don’t rely on linear input of information – *go with the flow*!

10. *Allow time for review* and feedback between meetings: Social norms often prevent community members from speaking their mind in public forum; for instance, people may be reluctant to contradict a chief in a public setting. Ensure you allow adequate time and informal mechanisms for feedback from community members, particularly negative feedback, to reach you before moving on and assuming everyone is on board.

11. Sometimes *process is more important that outcome*: CAP can be a very collaborative process, offering the opportunity for people to craft solutions rather than having solutions presented to them. Just this shift in ‘ownership’ of the solution can be very important for the viability of the following efforts.

**Compatibility**

*Ensuring the CAP process is more* ***compatible*** *with indigenous world view*

1. Decide with the community *how to integrate Western and traditional or local knowledge*:

* Ideas include:

\* Trusted experts complete viability or other sections requiring more detailed Western knowledge

\* Plan is completed purely with community’s knowledge

\* Plans created with two sets of information are kept separate

* Planning process may be an opportunity to introduce new Western knowledge to the community and for the planner to gain a better understanding of traditional knowledge

2. Include *cultural values* as targets

* Consult (and refine) guidance on assessing viability of cultural targets

3. Include *key cultural attributes* under viability assessment of all targets, cultural and biological: As a companion to key ecological attributes, assess the viability of all targets by evaluating their cultural viability

4. *Fit the complexity of the process to the level of the community’s* education, experience, and time and interest

5. *Understand and relate concepts* to the way the community views space / time / resource availability

* + Relate concepts to things they see and understand and their stories
* Create connections between what they know and concepts
* Position things in relation to their perspectives
* ‘Life Plans’ are an example of planning using a non-Western and non-linear concept of time

6. Recognise and use *specialised knowledge within communities*

7. Recognize and respect the need for *confidentiality* with information in the plan

Resilience

*Ensuring the CAP process is* ***understood*** *and accepted by the community now and that their* ***capacity*** *for management is strengthened into the future*

1. Spend time to *develop and maintain an open and honest relationship* with the community

* Take the time and effort to build a relationship with the community prior to planning
* Respect peoples’ time – meet when it’s convenient to them and collect only needed information but use all information whenever it is collected

2. Develop more options for *reporting back to communities* in formats that are appropriate to the education and literacy level of the community members.

* Report back to communities after each workshop or interaction
* Use reporting methods that are accessible to community members – e.g. in an oral culture, video or presentation is likely more effective than written documents, even those in their language
* Produce a final report that is accessible to community members as a whole, not just educated community members

3. Consider a focused *outreach effort before and after the planning* to avoid misunderstanding of the purpose of the plan

* General meeting with community prior to planning to ensure CAP is the right approach and to set expectations and roles
* Follow up meetings with the community to focus on understanding and implementation of the plan

4. Find someone to *champion* the planning effort

* Can be an individual or a community-based organizations
* Provide incentives for them to play this role and to keep the momentum and interest going

5. Maintain *good communication* with community members

* Define roles early on (to manage expectations)

6. Choose the *right implementers*

* Ensure they have cultural sensitivity / appropriateness
* Speak the local language
  + Consider a cultural liaison officer
  + Consider hiring an indigenous person to implement CAP

7. Appreciate the *basic needs* of community members

* + Education, health, livelihoods
  + Address human welfare (mutual vision / goals) in the plan as needed

8. Use *social mapping tools* prior to CAP

9. Make materials available in the *local language*, not just English; consider running sessions in the local language.

**Tools**

*Ideas that have been or should be developed to make it easier for indigenous community members to actively and effectively participate in the CAP process*

1. *Consider before begin planning* process which tools and approaches might be useful

* May need to adapt existing ideas
* Be creative in development of new methods and tools

2. Use *simple, plain language*

* Develop a thesaurus of CAP jargon in simple language

3. Go back to the *essence of the CAP* steps and find locally relevant ways to discuss concepts

4. Use *symbols* throughout the CAP process

* For ratings
* Colour codes and drawings as graphic tools

5. Use a *visual way of tracking progress*

6. Use *manual algorithms* for viability & threat rating

7. *Mapping* as a good tool for gathering information – targets, threats

* Try different kinds of base maps to find one that participants are familiar with – remote sensing, topo maps, marine charts
* Make sure maps are at an appropriate scale for participants to use
* Consider having the community draw the base map and then populate it

8. Consider *specific tried approaches and tools*, all of which should be simple:

* Sand table exercise
* Stones for ranking
* Social mapping
* Participatory conservation planning
* Participatory rural appraisal

9. Take time to do a *detailed conceptual analysis* – including interviews and collecting socio-economic info