

Revisions to the “Scientific Basis of Ecosystem-Based Management”

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We received two reviews of the “Scientific Basis of Ecosystem-Based Management”, by Barb Beasley and Scott Slocombe, on January 20, 2004. All three authors read and discussed the reviewers’ comments and addressed major comments as described below. Helpfully, both reviewers provided detailed specific comments and suggestions. We made many small revisions to deal with these comments and suggestions (see #6 below).

1. Both reviewers asked for further information to be taken from the background reports and incorporated into the compendium. Barb Beasley listed several specific sections that would benefit from additional material; Scott Slocombe would have liked to see the document doubled in size (reducing the need to consult background documents). Scott’s point is valid, however, in the time available, we could not achieve a stand-alone document. We had initially intended that the document be web-based with hot-links to the background papers—eliminating the need to include information within the compendium itself. Given that this outcome was unlikely in the near future, we agreed with the reviewers, and considerably expanded some areas of the compendium to include information from background reports, generally following Barb’s suggestions. In particular, we added some quantitative descriptions of ecosystem elements in the CIT region and referenced background documents more clearly. In section 2.3, we added a series of tables and figures providing information on climate statistics, hydrology and geomorphology, natural disturbance, and break-down of the CIT region by biogeoclimatic variant and ecosystem type.
2. Scott suggested that the document would benefit from inclusion of policy perspectives to Ecosystem-based Management and of socio-ecological system concepts. We added a paragraph to the Ecosystem-based Management section noting alternatives to the natural sciences approach highlighted in the compendium based on the literature suggested by the reviewer. We did not expand the compendium to include social science.
3. Both reviewers suggested that we reconsider the organisation of Section 3 (concepts). Barb suggested that we begin the chapter with the sections on “tools used to deal with uncertainty”; Scott suggested that we try a less linear format. We considered several organisational structures, re-ordered the section, and designed a diagram to show conceptual links (as suggested by Scott).
4. Scott suggested that we include a glossary. Because the Handbook and HPG already include glossaries, however, we did not produce a new glossary for the Compendium.
5. Barb suggested that we draw confidence intervals around the risk curves. We did not feel that we could revise the curves without consulting the expert groups responsible for the initial drafting.
6. Barb’s review helpfully noted many places that could be improved by adding details, examples or references, and some places that needed clarity. We revised the text in many places to incorporate Barb’s suggestions where possible. For example, we added information on marine invertebrates and potential impacts to the ocean, expanded the description of the reserve selection algorithm, clarified the hydroriparian classification system, and explicitly listed the potential road costs associated with dispersed patches. Scott also suggested areas that need expansion or clarification. Again, we generally followed his suggestions.