

Top 10 Myths Concerning Ecosystem Approaches to Ocean Resource Management

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Abstract

Ecosystem approaches to ocean management are advocated to address continuing problems concerning the status of living marine resources. While comprehensive approaches to management appear to be desirable, there are concerns about expanding or combining institutional focus to address interactions among specific interest sectors (fishing, energy development, tourism) that use particular ecosystems. This paper outlines ten common misperceptions regarding an ecosystem approach to management (EAM) of ocean resources, many of which are often cited as reasons for not pursuing integrated management. Ecosystem approaches *are* adequately defined in terms of their institutional requirements, the use of scientific information to inform decision making, and the expected benefits to society resulting from their use. Ecosystem approaches are being accepted and used more frequently as the basis for problem solving, and ‘best practices’ are now emerging as a basis for successful EAM implementation.