

# DISCUSSION OF KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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Mick Olsen wanted to know what percentage of the budget is ever put towards educational use amongst the fishermen, for example in Alaska? Did Stan Moberly have to use very much of funds allocated to the programme he directed to make the fishermen understand what they were trying to do in fisheries management?

Stan Moberly thought the answer was no. The mandates are given that direct managers to outreach and inform fishermen but when you look at the budgets of the programmes you find that almost all of it is allocated to *collecting data*, not to turning the data into useful information and then outreaching the information to fishermen. Outreach is almost always stated as a programme goal and something managers say they want to do. Stan Moberly sits on the Advisory Committee for the Secretary of Commerce which has responsibility for management of the nation's living marine resources. When you look at the federal program you find strong mandates for protecting and conserving habitat and for outreaching to the fishermen and the public. But when you examine the budget and see how the agency allocates its resources then you see the true picture. What the agency says it is going to do is one thing but what they really do is revealed in the budget process, which is that the agency has allocated little to protecting and conserving habitat and outreach to the public and the fishing industry.

Another thing that complicates the situation further is that fishery biologists do not like doing this work, so they often transfer the task of

outreach to an Information Education Section of information specialists. These specialists in turn have a fight to get the biologist to even talk to them - because they won't be busied with them. And often, even in the Information Education Sections, when budgets are shrinking so does the outreach program. They continue to produce the information and do even less outreach. Through the F.I.S.H. ("Fishermen Involved In Saving Habitat") Coalition, on the other hand there is no attempt to create any new information or educational material. There is already sufficient information available if only it can reach people so that they are aware of conditions or circumstances. If people who are concerned about aquatic resources are informed they usually support a higher priority to conservation and protection of these resources.

Peter Young commented that at the International Fisheries Congress in Athens earlier on in the year there was a lot of talk from social scientists, particularly from the USA, complaining bitterly that they had been effectively excluded from the whole fisheries management process. Did Stan Moberly think that in the USA there is an increasing awareness that these people can actually be allies in the whole process and become a very powerful lobby on behalf of these kinds of issues?

Stan Moberly believed they are an essential part of the process. Fisheries are a common resource and belong to the public. In the mid 1980's the American Fisheries Society created its first dual-disciplined section called the bio-

engineering Section. You wouldn't guess where most resistance in the Society came from - the fish culturists. Fish culturists require expertise and assistance of engineers to construct successful culture facilities. Stan Moberly believed that fish culturists would "pour their own raceways" if they could secure the building permits. Administrative procedures and building codes require that licensed engineers be part of the process of designing and building fish culture facilities. Despite the resistance, the next attempt at a dual-disciplined section was to bring in the anthropologists and the economists to try to form a Socio-economics Section. This effort was successful and occurred without much resistance. The Society was changing. The theme of the Society's 1988 annual conference, held in Toronto, was centred around "what is biologically possible, economically feasible and politically doable," that fish management is a "three-legged" stool. This is the part of the whole system that fisheries scientists haven't been trained to do. We look and observe and collect data and enjoy our jobs but never expect that we would have to transform what we see and know into information beyond our own disciplines. But in modern fisheries management it is absolutely essential that we do this. We have to understand and interact with disciplines such as engineering, economics and sociology. We don't number enough! There are approximately 18,000 fisheries professionals in North America but there are tens of thousands of engineers—and they don't spend very much of their time designing and helping to build fish hatcheries; they're pushing dirt around the shoreline and building condominiums and highways. We need a multi-disciplined approach in managing fisheries as there are too many competing interests for habitat essential for fish. He noted that we are seeing more and more of a multi-disciplined approach in North America and he hoped that it will continue.

Bryan Pierce's opinion was that the education component within South Australia and Australia all over is generally lacking. The Australian Fisheries Service has tried quite a few

different approaches. Is there any quantitative information as to which is the best approach towards activating the community response?

Stan Moberly thought there wasn't enough experience for that. He could only point to what had actually worked. It was less a question of obtaining new information, which would have been the easier option, than of circulating and doing outreach with already available material. The difficult part is transferring information to those who need the information so that they can involve themselves in the decision processes. The most powerful process the F.I.S.H. Coalition offers is for getting the diverse, warring components of the fishing community talking to one another and all marching in the same direction at least on one issue—conservation of aquatic habitat. In North America, those in the fisheries community have a reputation of cancelling each other out—sports fishermen lobby their point of view followed by the commercial fishermen followed by the scientists followed by the land developer and so on, by which time the politicians are pretty comfortable in not doing anything. If we expect change and if we expect the political process to work for us we must reach consensus as much as possible and then represent our position in the political process. The members of the F.I.S.H. Coalition reached consensus on the necessity to conserve and protect aquatic habitat and then, when they all marched together with this message, the politicians started to pay attention. When the Coalition lobbied in Washington, the team consisted of a representative from the top recreational fishing groups, one from the National Wildlife Federation (representing the environmental community), one from the commercial fishing industry and one representing the scientists and managers, and the four of them visited Congressmen and Senators. The essential approach is to be seen to be in agreement to lobby for those issues on which consensus can be reached.

Stan Moberly suggested that the Society has two roles—one is its traditional role of scientists and managers, and the other is to

function as an "honest broker" to run a neutral podium, to call the meetings, to be the gelling agent, the catalyst and to assist the fisheries community in reaching agreement as much as possible and to work together on those issues they agree upon. He thought that probably this approach has to be the formula, at least this seemed to be working for them in North America. Its better to fight for those issues you agree upon than fight over what you disagree on! And everyone agreed that it was more fun to fight over more fish than less fish! Less fish is the result of lost habitat.