

13

Coastlines, Communities, and Cameras: How Participatory Video Can Enhance Ocean Research

Vincent L'Hérault, Natalie Baird, Hillary Beattie, Ian Mauro, and Eric Solomon

New approaches to ocean management and conservation integrate social-ecological considerations (Long, Charles, and Stephenson 2015; Charles 2012; Ommer 2007). Given the complexity of social-ecological systems, putting theory into practice is challenging for an effective integration of human dimensions within management processes (Bennett et al. 2016). Social science methodologies in conservation studies have refined participatory approaches and have substantially strengthened community engagement and communication (Reed 2008), especially management where Indigenous communities and their knowledge and territories are a priority (Augustine and Dearden 2014; Jones, Rigg, and Lee 2010) (see also Chapter 2). This approach is more inclusive and able to bridge knowledge and epistemological gaps between local communities and research, and has demonstrated its ability to contribute to meaningful, trust-based relationships that lead to genuine collaboration (Augustine and Dearden 2014).

OCEANCANADA'S COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

The OceanCanada Partnership (OCP) sees both community engagement and communication as tightly linked and essential components of meaningful ocean research. At the onset of the partnership, a knowledge mobilization working group (KMWG) was convened with the explicit goal of developing participatory projects on all three of Canada's coastlines that meaningfully connected

community knowledge with an effective communications strategy co-designed and co-developed with community members to ensure that they had leadership over research and decision making. Our approach to knowledge mobilization was multi-dimensional, developed iteratively through respectful dialogue between researchers and community members (Figure 13.1). To avoid common institutionalized barriers that prevent meaningful community participation, OCP's knowledge mobilization team had a philosophy and practice that contextualized our approach, including recognition that it is critical that the work be done in an equitable way; early participation and relationship building; team identification overseen by the community; co-design of objectives and methods; and co-creation of knowledge, synthesis, and associated outreach strategy (reviewed in Reed 2008) (Figure 13.1).

Community benefits were a critical outcome of the participatory process if it were to be deemed effective. Our team was composed of experienced community-based researchers, facilitators, filmmakers, and students who, by approaching research through community and communication-centred objectives, helped ensure a "people-first" approach within OCP.

This chapter explores:

- the use of participatory video to promote engagement, collective capacity building, and enhanced communication