

# **Ocean Governance on Canada's West Coast**

**Victoria, BC – 8 June 2007  
Lecture Notes**

## **Applied Institutional Analysis: The Diagnostic Method As Applied to Ocean Governance Oran R. Young**

**Goal: Drawing on lessons from IDGEC as they relate to marine systems**

**IDGEC – Institutional Dimensions of Global Environmental  
Change**

**A core project of IHDP now in its synthesis phase**

**Focus on institutions as assemblages of rights, rules, and  
decisionmaking procedures and the social practices  
that grow up around them**

**Analysis of the roles that institutions play in causing and  
in addressing largescale environmental problems**

**Research foci: causality, performance, and design**

## **The Appeal of Institutional Design to Both Practitioners and Analysts**

- 1 We now live in a world of socio-ecological systems or human-dominated ecosystems**
  - o The need to endogenize human actions on a large scale**
  
- 1 The need to govern or guide human actions is greater than ever before**
  - o Steering collective behavior**
  
- 2 The role of institutions as core elements of governance systems**
  - o Institutions as sources of problems AND as solutions**
  
- 3 The idea that institutions are socially constructed and therefore more malleable than others factors, such as PAT**
  - o A cautionary note on institutional stickiness**

## **Institutional diagnostics**

**The need to fit or match institutions to the character of the problems at hand**

- 4 Issues vary; one size does not fit all**
- 5 The devil is usually in the details**
- 6 Need to design institutions on a case-by-case basis or in the light of major features of specific situations**

## **The diagnostic method**

- 7 The role of expertise**
  - o Examples from engineering, architecture, agronomy as well as medicine**
- 8 Diagnostic queries**
  - o The idea of interrogating a situation in detail to make an accurate diagnosis**
  - o Launching a sizable number of diagnostic queries or questions designed to help identify what is needed**
- 9 The four P's in the case of applied institutional analysis**
  - o Problems, Players, Practices, and Politics**
  - o Provide some examples relevant to ocean governance**

## **Problems**

- 10 Is there consensus regarding the appropriate way to frame the issue for purposes of problem solving?**
  - o What is to be maximized – MSY, MEY, OY, some broader criterion of ecosystem services?**
  
- 11 Is the problem simple or compound?**
  - o Issue complexes; interacting issues**
  - o Place-based vs. sectoral approaches – many issues in one place vs. individual issues in many places**
  
- 12 Does the problem involve complex systems characterized by non-linear dynamics?**
  - o Role of initial conditions, thresholds and tipping points, abrupt changes, irreversibilities**
  - o Early warning, quick reaction**

## **Players**

**13 Does the problem involve different types of actors with distinct interests and behavioral characteristics?**

- o Coastal/port/flag states**
- o States vs. nonstate actors**

**14 Do the major players respond to the logic of consequences or the logic of appropriateness?**

- o Implications for compliance and enforcement**

**15 How large is the group of subjects likely to be, and how transparent is their behavior?**

- o Implications for monitoring**
- o Equipment standards vs. discharge standards**

## **Practices**

**16 Are the parties free to design any type of agreement they prefer or must they operate within a broader constitutive structure?**

- o Relevance of UNCLOS as an overarching arrangement**

**17 Is the arrangement expected to operate as a stand alone system or can it be nested into a larger system for purposes of implementation?**

- o Example of MARPOL within IMO vs. ICRW on its own**

## **Politics – power-interests-ideas**

- 18 Is power/influence concentrated or disbursed among the players?**
- o Does the group constitute what is known as a privileged group?**
- 19 Are there negotiating coalitions or blocs whose members can be counted on to stick together and to stick to commitments?**
- o Role of transactions costs – UNCLOS example**
- 20 Is there a dominant discourse that controls thinking about framing and solutions?**
- o Dueling discourses: EBM vs. MSY**

**Concluding remark**

**Windows of opportunity and the importance of advance preparations**

**21 Constitutive moments**

**22 The case for being well-prepared when they occur**