A clean slate? Sharing the return of the Tasmanian scallop fishery.

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Tasmania
Tasmania’s scallop fisheries

- island state, most southern part of Australia
- temperate water and extensive embayments
- major fishing areas
Tasmania’s scallop fisheries

- fishery based on three species
- commercial fishery uses dredges
- recreational fishery has used dredging and diving
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History of development

Tasmanian scallop fishery

- Commercial fishery closures
- Recreational fishery closures
Recovery?

• Resource surveys find significant recovery
  – 2002 Bass Strait beds
  – 2003 D’Entrecasteaux Channel
• But we do not want to see history repeating
  – common misconceptions about the fishery
    • boom and bust - the scallops are the problem
    • ‘collapse’ what collapse
    • fisheries management strategies have failed and indeed promote bad fishing behaviour
• Different approaches must be developed
  – development of better co-management approach
  – changes to regulations to deter bad decisions
New approaches - Commercial fishery

- previously all waters open
  - competitive fishing
  - no sharing of fishery intelligence
- new approach “paddock fishery”
  - all waters closed
  - cooperative industry survey
  - selection of candidate areas
  - fishing of that area to set levels
  - reservation of other areas
  - continued closure of sensitive areas
- fishery response
  - highly supportive of new approach - have developed regulatory and non regulatory changes to support
New approaches - Recreational fishery

• previously
  – high daily bag limits (2000 in the 1960s, 500 in the 1980s)
  – short seasons and small areas concentrated fishing
  – wastage and illicit commercial fishing

• new approach
  – dive/hand collection only
  – all waters and long season - reduce pressure to fish
  – low bag limit (40)
  – high size limit
  – public education

• fishery response
  – post season survey, high level of satisfaction, support for strategy
Resource sharing

- are we starting from a clean slate?
  - Previous fishery allowed similar gears, areas and season
- Fishing methods
  - commercial - dredge - strict criteria for areas
  - recreational - dive only
- Spatial
  - commercial - no access to sheltered waters, paddock fishing
  - recreational - exclusive access to sheltered waters
  - overlap - commercial industry establishing Code of Practice to limit minimum depth
Resource sharing

• **Season**
  – commercial - quality of meat - cold water, winter and spring
  – recreational - comfort and opportunity - warm water, summer and autumn

• **Quantities/access**
  – commercial - licencing, quotas,
  – recreational - licensing, bag limit for fair use

• **Summary**
  – no formal approach (other than on depth separation)
  – high level of satisfaction and support for strategies
Conclusion

- long history showing clear signs of over-fishing
- failure of management strategies
- long period of closure provided opportunity for change
- co-management approach
  - design new approaches
  - high level of support
- decisions on gear, access, seasons, areas have
  - limited conflict and need for formal negotiations
  - where there is overlap, groups are actively working together to resolve