



Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2007

Coastal CURA News & Events

Inside this issue:

Student Researchers	2
Community Involvement in Integrated Coastal Management	2
MCPEI: Restorative Fisheries Project for Malpeque Bay	2
The Meaning of Integrated Management	3
Student Film-making	3
The Coastal CURA's First PhD Student	3
Reflections Workshop	4

What Does the Future Hold for Coastal Maritimes?

Faced with population changes, with infrastructure damage from storm surge associated with climate change, with opportunities and threats from activities such as aquaculture, land-based pollution, liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants and tourism, what are coastal communities to do?

A team of university and community partners from across the Maritimes has been awarded a million dollar grant to address these challenges and provide support to coastal communities. The "Coastal CURA", a community-university research alliance funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, is a five-year research project that brings together First Nations, fishery-related organizations and ac-

demics from all three Maritime Provinces.

The principal goal of the Coastal CURA is to support communities in understanding and building the capacity to deal with coastal problems. This capacity-building includes developing research skills among the community partners as well as building the capability of academic participants to do what is called 'participatory research', working with the communities. "There are so many issues facing coastal communities today, the chance to work with universities to find workable solutions is so welcome." says Maria Recchia of the Fundy North Fishermen's Association a community partner organization in New Brunswick.

The Coastal CURA approach facilitates community involvement in both grass-roots and large-scale efforts to manage the various human uses of our coasts and oceans. This is known as "integrated management" since the goal is to coordinate or "integrate" the management of multiple coastal uses (fishing, aquaculture, shipping, tourism, etc.), ones that can have big impacts on the social and economic well-being of coastal communities.



The Coastal CURA Team



All of the partners involved in the Coastal CURA have worked together over the past five years, in a SSHRC-funded RDI project on community-based fisheries management and the 'Turning the Tide' project funded by the Pew Fellows Program in Marine Conservation. The Coastal CURA involves 8 partners. The university partners are Saint Mary's University and the University of New Brunswick.

The community partners fall into three categories. First, the two non-Native fishing organizations (Fundy Fixed Gear Council, and Fundy North Fishermen's Association) are leaders in the Maritimes in developing fishery-community networks, vertical linkages with government, and research links with both natural and social scientists. Second, the four First Nations partners (Acadia, Bear River, as well as Lennox Island and Abegweit

who together form the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI) are developing a presence in the fishery, post-Marshall, and are interested in applying CBM approaches for a range of other coastal resources. Third, a regional organization, the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre, has expertise in community facilitation and in research to facilitate integrated management that is a model in the region.

Student Researchers



Our Students (lft to rt): Kate Bigney, Sarah Bood, Robert Capistrano, Louie Porta, Robert Cameron & Don Logan (missing: Liz Wilson)

In addition to working with community partners, the Coastal CURA also promotes student research through thesis work, volunteer opportunities and paid internships.

Over the summer of 2007, the Coastal CURA supported a team of eight students some based at Saint Mary's University in Halifax and others residing in communities working with partners from across the Maritimes.

Louie Porta was in Summerside, PEI, working with the Mi'k-

maq Confederacy of PEI (MCPEI), Sarah Bood traveled to Saint John to work with the Fundy North Fishermen's Association (FNFA) and Liz Wilson worked at the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre in Cornwallis, NS. Robert Cameron, Don Logan and Bob Capistrano all worked out of the Coastal CURA office at Saint Mary's University.

Through the internship opportunities students are given invaluable "hands-on" experience in studying topics of real con-

cern to those in coastal communities.

Our students delved into many aspects of community-based research, such as the synthesis of traditional ecological knowledge and academic research, community-based coastal zone management and co-management, and ownership of community-based research.

In addition to volunteers and summer interns the Coastal CURA currently supports one Interdisciplinary PhD student,

"I conducted research that contributed to the CURA and in doing so I expanded my own knowledge and perspective of community focused efforts in the Maritimes."

Community Involvement in Integrated Coastal Management:

A Glance at Practices in the Maritimes, Canada and Abroad

Three of the CURA interns, Robert Cameron, Robert Capistrano and Donald Logan were based out of Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS. They searched databases and the internet for information related to community involvement in integrated coastal management at the Maritimes, Canadian and international level. The purpose of their work is to create a Maritime directory and collection of examples of these initiatives that can be used as reference material for anyone interested in integrated management at the community level.

The research assignment was

divided between the three interns. Don's research focused on creating a directory of community organizations from the Maritimes that are to varying degrees involved in integrated management initiatives. As Don explains, "I conducted research that contributed to the CURA and in doing so I expanded my own knowledge and perspective of community focused efforts in the Maritimes." The task of identifying other Canadian examples was given to Robert Cameron. Like Don, Rob Cameron phoned and emailed academics, non-governmental and government officials for information. "People were eager to

share their knowledge and learn about the Coastal CURA. Such phone calls were more than just research; they were networking," says Rob. Robert Capistrano, an international student from the Philippines, compiled examples from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific.

Directory updates and research are still ongoing, examples are continuously added to the collection with the goal of identifying links, similarities and/or differences that provide valuable knowledge to communities, academics and governments.

MCPEI: Restorative Fisheries Project for Malpeque Bay

Summer intern Louie Porta spent four months in Summerside, PEI jump starting MCPEI's "Restorative Fisheries Project."

The first phase of the "Restorative Fisheries Project" was to document as many examples of pre-contact Mi'kmaq fisheries and economic activities as possible. This informa-

tion was synthesized into an academic poster and paper.

The poster, "A Chronological Account of Mi'kmaq Resource Utilization," along with its corresponding paper, "How Historical Reflection Can Lead to Sustainable Resource Use For Everyone: A Case Study of the Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island",

establish a historical baseline of resource use, describe the intimate relationship between food production and consumption systems and cultural health, and convey the essential role historical reflection plays in developing restorative community-based management initiatives.



Photo by Randy Angus, MCPEI.

Student Film-making: “*Sharing the Waters: Saint John, NB*”

Sarah Bood, one of the Coastal CURA’s summer student interns, worked with the Fundy North Fishermen’s Association, dividing her time between Saint John and St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Over the summer, Sarah developed and produced a film entitled “*Sharing the Waters: Saint John, NB*”.

The film sends out an important message about the area’s

inshore fisheries and its contribution to our region’s cultural and economic heritage and identifies that with meaningful consultation, the fisheries and industry can co-exist as they have done in the past. For the creation of the film, Sarah met with fishermen and their families who generously helped her get a firm handle on the issues and kept her well fed with lobster and scallops. In her own words, Sarah acknowledges, “I

have learned a lot from this internship, I gained knowledge about the history of the traditional fisheries, the fishermen’s concerns regarding new industrial developments, and the efforts they are making towards co-existing with other water user groups in the harbour.”



Sarah Bood. Canada Day promotion of Fundy North Fishermen’s Association

Liz Wilson Explores the Meaning of Integrated Management

Liz Wilson, a Fijian national doing graduate studies in Nova Scotia, did her internship with the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre in Cornwallis, NS. As part of her research, Liz conducted interviews with community members from the Bay of Fundy in general and the Annapolis Basin, specifically. Interviews were done to provide a general overview of community-based integrated coastal management in the Bay of Fundy and identify what “integrated coastal and ocean management” (ICOM) means to local community members. Liz’s research results were also used

to develop her graduate project. For her project, Liz used a social-ecological framework to assess the resilience of community-based integrated management approaches in the region.

Asked about her experience Liz notes, “Having worked in tropical and developing countries on similar projects, this has been my first field experience in a developed and temperate country...I feel that I am starting to appreciate some of the similarities and differences within communities from both a south and north perspective.”

The research Liz conducted supports ongoing projects and also provides valuable material that can be used for a “learning circle workshop” on integrated community based coastal and ocean management. These workshops, supported by the Coastal Communities Learning Network, help with the sharing of knowledge in an interactive and informal setting. To complement her research efforts, Liz was invited to attend a Network workshop along with Coastal CURA project partners, in Tofino, BC, at the end of May.

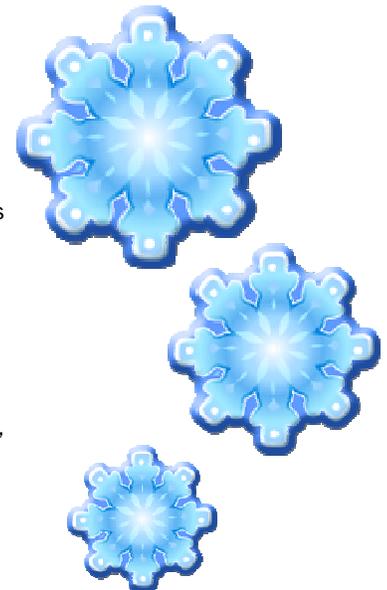
“...this has been my first field experience in a developed and temperate country...I feel that I am starting to appreciate some of the similarities and differences within communities from both a south and north perspective.”

Kate Bigney: The Coastal CURA’s First PhD Student

Kate Bigney has spent the summer completing comprehensive exams for her Interdisciplinary PhD degree at Dalhousie University. The exams consisted of an annotated bibliography on community-based and ecosystem-based management of natural resources, a paper comparing natural resource management in the Canadian North and the Bay of Fundy, and a paper critiquing contemporary models of resource management that will form the foundation for the theoretical framework of her PhD dissertation.

Kate is now looking forward to designing her PhD research and getting out of the library for a change! She will be studying models of integrated community and ecosystem-based management in the Maritimes and hopes to demonstrate how community-level initiatives can and do provide viable alternative models for policy and practice.

The CURA partners are exceptional examples of communities that are working to build and sustain healthy communities and ecosystems and Kate is excited to learn about how they work and what opportunities and challenges they face. Her supervisory committee consists of Dr. Tony Charles (supervisor), Dr. John Kearney, Dr. Marian Binkley and Dr. Jeff Hutchings.



Reflections Workshop: October 10th to 12th, 2007

The Coastal CURA Reflections Workshop was held from October 10th to 12th at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS. The workshop included representatives from our community partners and academic institutions along with our students and several invited guests.

This workshop gave project partners an opportunity to "learn from what we've done", by presenting reflective research done on the history of their community or organization. Diverse outcomes such as reports and films were produced by the partner organiza-

tions as products of their reflection process. Regardless of format, each completed study represents a process of reflective discussion relating to changes over time in resource use, coastal access and livelihood approaches. Reflection and evaluation of these experiences can be used to provide knowledge and insights that can be shared with communities, governments and international audiences.

The Reflections Workshop marks the end of the first stage of the project and leads into the second stage where work will be

done on a set of "thematic-based" research initiatives that focus on common concerns related to the management of coastal areas across the Maritimes.



Mispec, New Brunswick



CoastalCURA

COMMUNITIES MANAGING COASTS TOGETHER

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Thank you to our funding supporters :

Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Saint Mary's University

*The Coastal CURA is a 5-year project to build knowledge and capacity, across the Maritimes, in support of community involvement in managing our coasts and oceans. The Coastal CURA is a "Community University Research Alliance" of First Nations communities, fishery-related groups and university participants, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. **Coastal CURA** Project consists of eight partners spread across the Maritimes:*

- *Acadia First Nation*
- *Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre*
- *Bear River First Nation*
- *Fundy Fixed Gear Council*
- *Fundy North Fishermen's Association*
- *Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI (Abegweit and Lennox Island First Nations)*
- *Saint Mary's University*
- *The University of New Brunswick*