# HOW TO CONDUCT A PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific Multilateral Environmental Agreements

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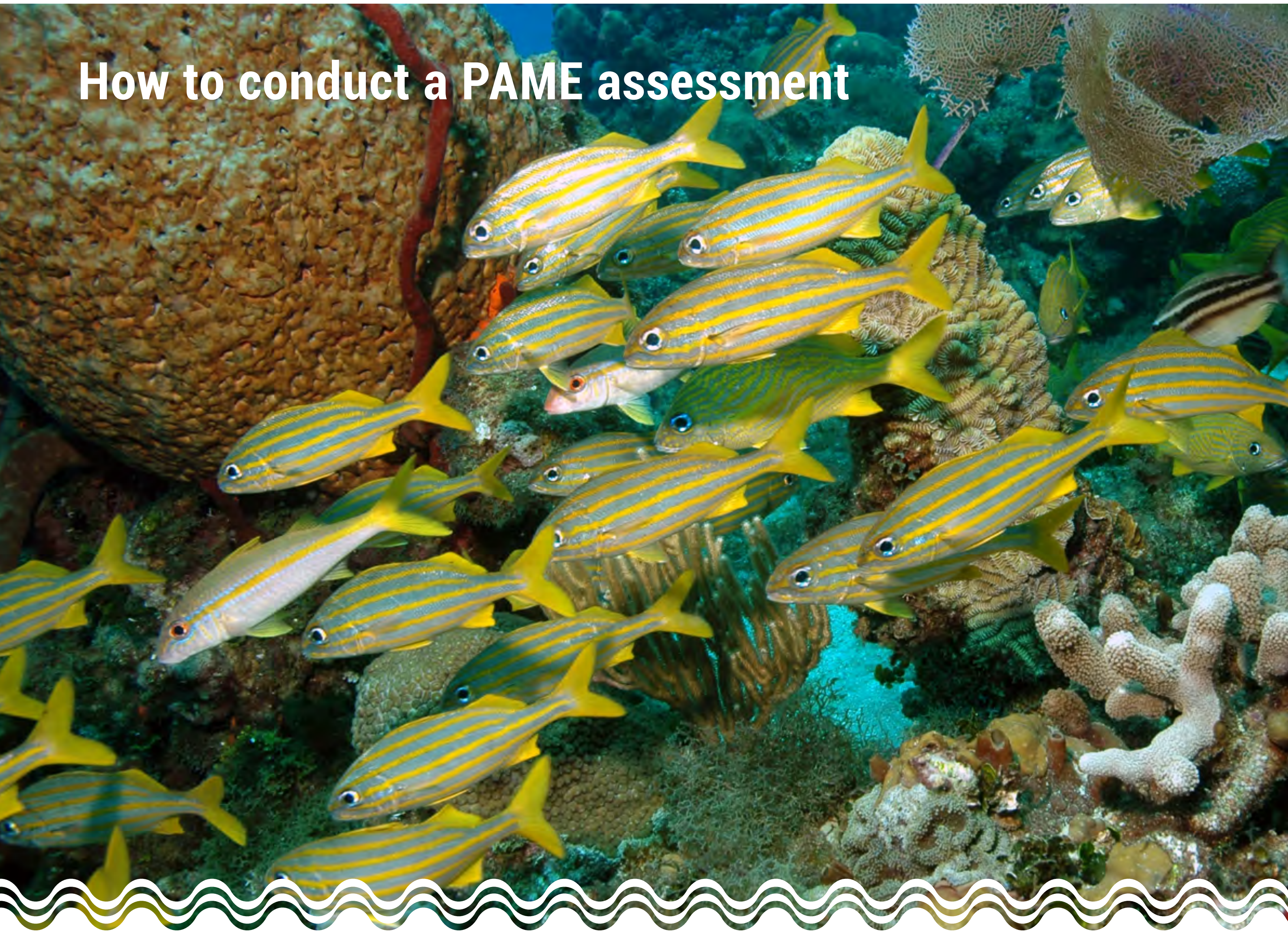
From Knowledge to Action for a Protected Planet



# How to conduct a PAME assessment

The assessment of management effectiveness in protected areas has been considered as a very important activity to learn about the management of the site and to implement actions and adapt management.

The assessment should be completed with input from different stakeholders[1] through workshops or consultation meetings. The main purpose of the assessment is to improve the site's management. The assessment will provide the information and means of verification on the status of all the aspects of management. The analysis of this information will help determine how the management is doing and which aspects need improvement. The results of this analysis will lead to adaptive management in order to be able to maintain the protected areas values and deliver the site objectives.

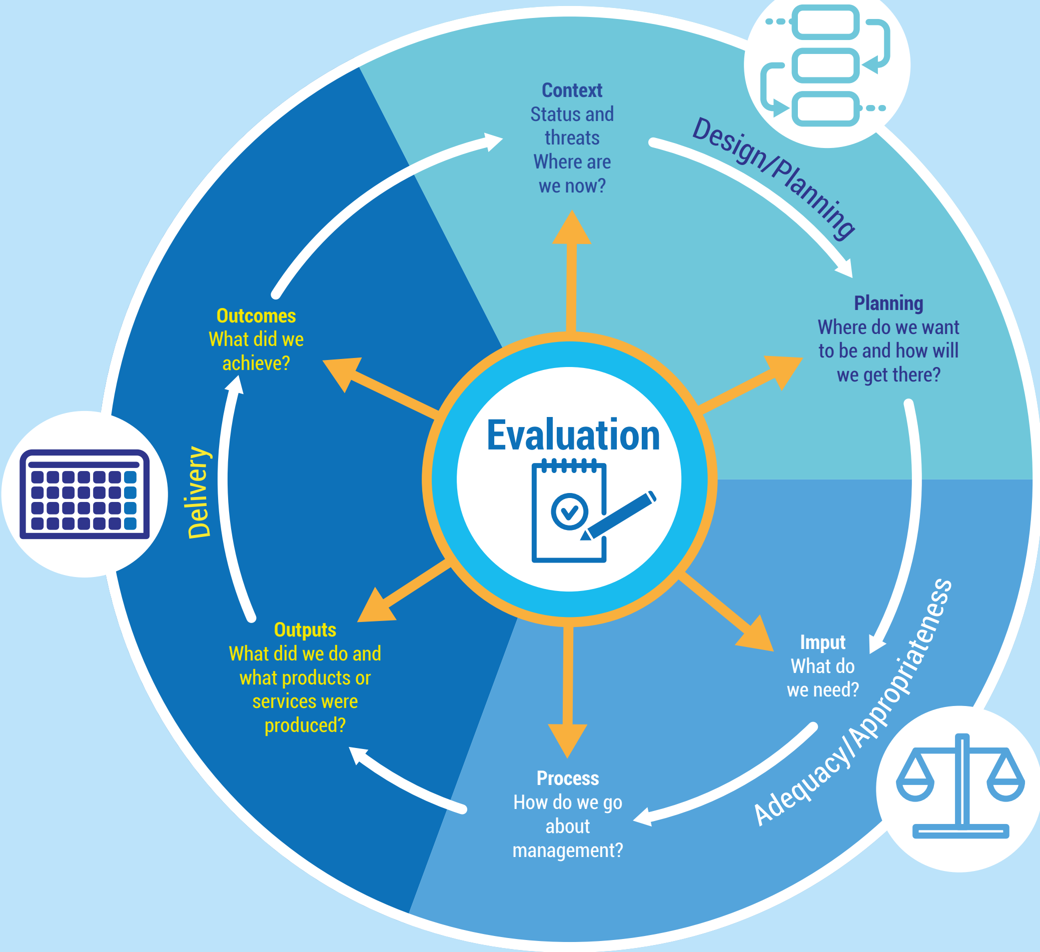
The following steps are important for a robust assessment. These do not have to be implemented sequentially, but need to be well coordinated so that they feed into each other:

1. **Define the purpose and scope for the assessment.**
   This can be defined by the protected area (or group of protected areas) to be assessed as well as the time, and funding available. It is recommended to use the 6 components of the Management Effectiveness Framework (Context, Planning, Input, Processes, Outputs, and Outcomes), as a reference to indicate the scope of the assessment. Which aspects of the Framework will be covered in the assessment? Why? Is the assessment part of the institutional processes? Is the assessment part of a project requirement? These are some important questions to answer in this section.

2. **Make a plan and secure the funding for the assessment.**
   Once you have defined the purpose and scope of the assessment, you will need to draft a plan for the assessment that secures the funding required. The plan should state who will be involved, who will be the leader, timeline for the assessment, structure of the final report, and the mechanisms

1 Stakeholders can be persons that represent groups, communities, NGOs, local and national government institutions, indigenous peoples, volunteers, researchers, academics, donors, among others, that are related directly to the protected area(s) being assessed.

**The Framework for assessing management effectiveness of protected areas**
(Hockings, M., Stolton, S., Leverington, F., Dudley, N. and Courrau, J. 2006).




for incorporating the results into the protected area management and for their general dissemination. In addition, the plan should include the mechanisms for stakeholder involvement.

3. **Select or develop the right tool for your assessment.** The purpose and scope, as well as the funding will help you identify the right tool for the assessment. In this section, you have two options: you either develop your own tool or select and adapt an existing tool. (Please see the separate guidelines on Selecting the Right Tool for Your Management Effectiveness Assessment).

   There are a series of overall recommendations to have the right tool for your assessment: The tool is useful for assessing management effectiveness and incorporating adaptive management in the protected area.

- The tool is useful for resource allocation and prioritization
- The tool contributes to transparency and accountability
- The tool helps to build constituency by engaging local people and stakeholders.
- The tool helps to determine if the protected area is meeting its objective and protecting its values overtime.
- The tool helps to analyse the results and make comparisons of repeat assessments overtime.

A. Selecting an existing tool.
There is a wide array of existing tools that cover different needs (basic tools, in-depth tools, etc.), and the selection should be part of a serious discussion. The selection of the tool in its original format implies that a revision and adaptation for the context of the protected area is required.

B. Developing your own tool.
For the development of a brand new tool from scratch, you will need to use the Management Effectiveness Framework[2] as a reference. Combining the Framework with the purpose and scope of the assessment you need, will be

2 https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/8932

useful for the development of the tool. It is important to take into account the possibility that the tool could be useful for other protected areas in your country, state, province or region. In this case, it is recommended to engage other protected area managers.

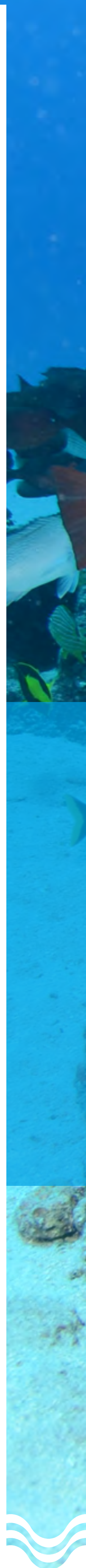
4. **Organize an assessment team, including a champion.**
   In order to move forward with the assessment, you will need a team of people that will make it happen. The team might incorporate a champion who is committed to ensuring the completion of the assessment, technical staff from the protected area system, key stakeholders, and technical staff from partner NGOs, experts from universities and/ or research centres, and a facilitator that will guide the process and who should be identified as impartial. The main requirement to be part of the team is that the persons are familiar with the protected area and are committed to completing the assessment. This team will need to provide assurance for the quality of the information being collected and ensure all relevant staff and stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to contribute.

5. **Implement the assessment.**
   The implementation of the assessment is the next step. In order to make the assessment a success, all the planning, logistics, communications and other preparations should take place in a timely manner. It is crucial to make sure the participants have confirmed their attendance and the logistics for transportation, meals, materials for the sessions, are in place. The location for the assessment needs to be confirmed and all the participants have to know where the assessment is taking place, and the agenda has to be distributed. The process to capture the information emerging from the assessment needs to be properly organized and a person must be responsible for taking the minutes.

   An important matter to define, considering the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused, is if the assessment can be done physically present or virtual. The arrangements should be organized accordingly.

6. **Prepare an assessment report, with next steps (operational plan) for a period and explaining how you are going to use the results, put it in perspective of your management plan or annual plan or program plan. Share it with the participants.**
   For this section, after the assessment is completed, within a reasonable timeframe, an assessment report with the minutes from the session has to be put together. In order to complete this report, organization, analysis and discussion of the results needs to be completed. The actions to be implemented to improve the management of the protected area that were generated during the assessment, should be organized in a plan format, perhaps an annual operation plan or a program plan for the following year(s). Once the report is drafted and the corresponding people review it, it should be shared with the assessment participants. It is recommended to organize an event to share the results from the assessment.

7. **Plan for progress reports on how you are using the results, until the next assessment.**
   The assessments results incorporate actions that the protected area needs to implement in order to learn from the assessment and improve its management. These actions are usually organized in the format of an annual operation plan or a program plan. Sometimes, the actions are incorporated into the protected area management plan for the following 5 years. After this is completed, the protected area should generate and share progress reports that show progress in the implementation of those actions along with the means of verification (evidence) that support the progress made. A discussion on the things that were accomplished and the ones that were not accomplished and the reasons for that, should be included in the progress reports.



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