

Using a Change Management Framework to Examine the Effect of a Marine Resource Policy on the Stakeholders in the Fisheries Sector, South Africa

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ABSTRACT The Marine Living Resources Act (Act No. 18 of 1998) came into effect to provide for the protection of marine living resources. This policy was essentially a form of change management, which would most impact the stakeholders involved in the fisheries system. Changes in such systems tend to be exceptionally complex due to agent heterogeneity and concomitant plurality of worldviews and schemata of stakeholders. The aim of this paper is to examine the effect of a marine resource policy on the stakeholders in the fisheries of South Africa, using a change management lens. The theoretical framework is based on change in multiple-stakeholder settings, grounded in systems thinking and complexity theory. A qualitative research approach with purposive sampling was employed. Fifteen semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals from the different stakeholder groups. This was supplemented by non-participant observations and analysis of archival data. The main finding points to the importance of balancing stakeholder needs when implementing new policy, as well as the need for increased collaboration between the various stakeholders.