



Section 6: Governance Types

Governance of MPAs and OECMs: Authority, Responsibility, and Accountability

Module 1.2

Introduction to MPAs and OECMs
MPA Management Training Curriculum



Learning Objectives



Governance vs. Management

Distinguish between the "who decides" (governance) and "what is done" (management) in conservation.



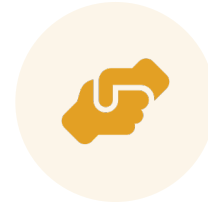
IUCN Governance Types

Describe the four distinct governance types recognized by the IUCN and CBD frameworks.



Good Governance Principles

Apply core principles of legitimacy, direction, accountability, and fairness to marine scenarios.



Belize Case Study

Examine the Belize co-management model as a regional example of shared governance success.

Governance vs. Management



Governance

"Who decides what to do?"



Determines **who has power**, responsibility, and accountability.



Sets the **strategic vision** and decision-making structure.



Establishes **legitimacy** and how stakeholders participate.

Focus: Authority & Decision-Making



Management

"What is done to achieve goals?"



The **actions taken** to implement decisions and meet objectives.



Includes **operations**: patrolling, monitoring, restoration, enforcement.



Focuses on **technical execution** and resource use.

Focus: Actions & Implementation

Four Pillars of Good Governance

Effective governance is not just about who sits at the table, but how they behave and make decisions. The IUCN outlines core principles for equitable and effective protected area governance.

Governance Quality is measured by legitimacy, strategic vision, accountability, and fairness—essential for long-term conservation success.



Legitimacy and Voice



Direction (Strategic Vision)



Accountability



Fairness and Rights

Good Governance: The Pillars



Legitimacy & Voice

Ensuring inclusive participation and consensus-orientation. Authority is respected and recognized by stakeholders.



Direction

Having a strategic vision for the long term. Clear rules, objectives, and adaptive planning for the future.



Accountability

Decision-makers are transparent and answerable to the public and institutional stakeholders.



Fairness & Rights

Equity in cost/benefit sharing. Respect for human rights, gender equity, and customary tenure.



Collaborative governance meeting in the Caribbean



Governance Diversity Framework

Four recognized governance types providing different pathways to effective conservation (IUCN/CBD)

Type 1: Governance by Government

Definition

Authority, responsibility, and accountability rest with a government ministry or agency.



State Authority

A federal or national agency (e.g., Dept. of Environment) holds legal power and sets the rules.



Strengths

Clear legal mandate, national reach, and direct enforcement capacity.



Risks

May lack local buy-in if community participation is limited ("Paper Parks").



 Example: National Marine Park Planning Meeting

Type 2: Shared Governance (Co-management)

Definition

Decision-making authority and responsibility are shared among various actors (government, NGOs, communities).



Joint Authority

Power is not held by a single entity but distributed through partnership agreements.



Formal Boards

Multi-stakeholder bodies (fishers, tourism, officials) make consensus decisions.



Strategic Benefits

Builds trust, increases compliance, and leverages diverse resources/capacity.



Type 3: Private Governance

Authority Structure

Authority is held by individual landowners, corporations, or non-profit organizations who manage the area for conservation.



Authority & Ownership

Held by landowners or NGOs; typically operates outside direct government control.



Strengths

Agility in decision-making; access to private or philanthropic funding sources.



Considerations

Long-term security of tenure; balancing private interests with public benefit.



 Example: NGO-managed marine reserve/privately protected waters

Type 4: Governance by IPLCs

Definition

Governance by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs): Authority and responsibility held by communities through customary or legal frameworks.



Community Authority

Decisions are made by local bodies (e.g., traditional councils) based on collective choice.



Customary Tenure

Often based on traditional rights, cultural practices, and local ecological knowledge.



Strengths

High local legitimacy, adaptability, and integration of cultural values



 Example: Community-led marine resource planning session

Comparing Governance Types

Criteria	Government	Shared	Private	IPLCs
 Authority	Centralized / State	Joint Decision-Making	Landowner / NGO	Community / Customary
 Participation	Medium Consultative	High Collaborative	Medium Owner-driven	High Local-driven
 Funding Source	Public Budget / Taxes	Mixed (Public + Grants)	Private / Philanthropy	Mixed / Customary
 Enforcement	High Formal Law	High Joint Patrols	Medium Trespass Law	Medium Social Norms
 Equity Focus	Variable	High	Variable	High (Local)

Case Study: Belize Co-Management

Belize is a regional leader in shared governance across the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System.



A Regional Model

Belize has pioneered a formal co-management framework where government agencies partner with NGOs to manage marine resources effectively.

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Marine Reserves

1996

System Established

UNESCO

World Heritage

Belize Model – Structure

Co-Management Framework

"A structured partnership dividing responsibilities between government authority and NGO operational capacity."



Regulator Role

Fisheries & Forest Departments handle legislation, permits, and high-level compliance enforcement.



Site Manager Role

Local NGOs conduct daily patrols, scientific monitoring, and community outreach programs.



Formal Agreements

Binding co-management agreements and multi-stakeholder boards ensure shared decision-making.



Belize Model Benefits

Strategic Advantages

Co-management strengthens capacity, legitimacy, and responsiveness in marine conservation.



Funding Leverage

NGO partners can access international grants and private philanthropy unavailable to government agencies.



Trust & Compliance

Local presence builds community bridges, increasing stakeholder buy-in and voluntary compliance with rules.



Adaptive Management

Continuous on-site monitoring allows for rapid responses to threats like coral bleaching or illegal fishing.



Belize Examples in Practice

Belize's co-management success relies on diverse NGOs specializing in different conservation aspects across the barrier reef system.



TIDE

Toledo Institute for Development & Environment

Site Managed

Port Honduras Marine Reserve

Conducts daily enforcement patrols

Runs "Ridge to Reef" education programs

Manages sustainable tourism guidelines



SEA

Southern Environmental Association

Site Managed

Gladden Spit & Silk Cayes

Protects critical fish spawning aggregations

Manages whale shark tourism interactions

Engages local Placencia fishing community



Fragments of Hope

Community-Based Restoration

Site Managed

Laughing Bird Caye National Park

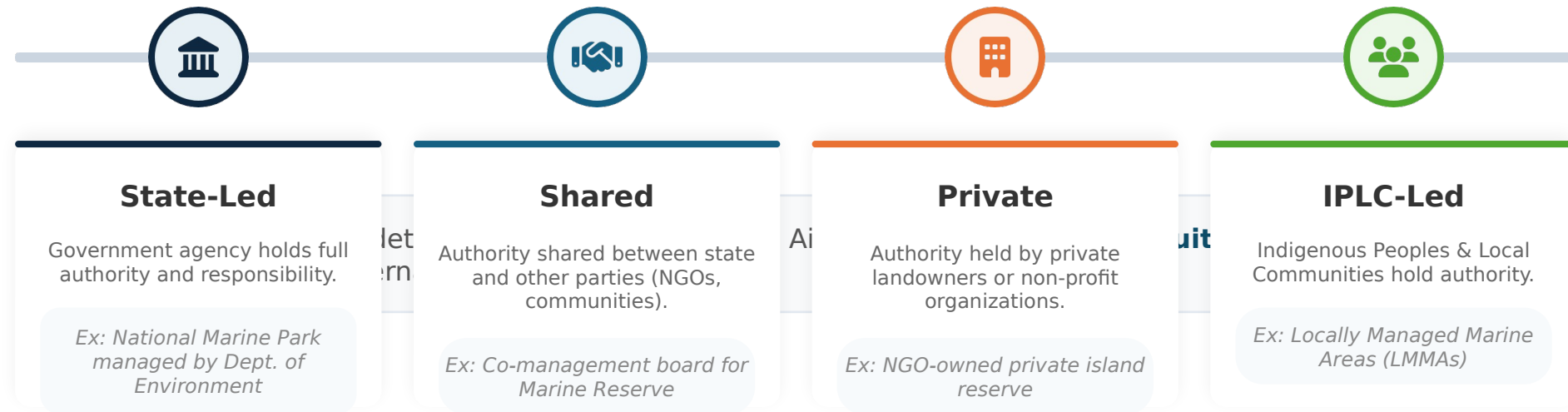
Pioneered coral restoration techniques

Trains local tour guides as coral gardeners

Restored over 85,000 corals to the reef

Governance Continuum

Progression of authority and decision-making power



Key Takeaways



Governance vs. Management

Governance determines who decides and how accountability works, while **Management** refers to the specific actions taken (patrols, monitoring) to achieve goals.



Four Recognized Types

The IUCN and CBD recognize four distinct types: **Government**, **Shared** (Co-management), **Private**, and **Indigenous/Local Community** (IPLC) governance.



Pillars of Good Governance

Effective governance relies on **Legitimacy & Voice**, **Direction**, **Accountability**, and **Fairness & Rights**—not just on legal authority.



Belize Co-Management Success

Belize demonstrates how **Shared Governance** between government regulators and NGO site managers can boost capacity, funding access, and local compliance.

Further Reading: Governance

■ IUCN Governance Guidelines

Governance of Protected Areas: From Understanding to Action

IUCN Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 20

IUCN Guidelines on PA Governance & Management

Comprehensive toolkit for assessing governance quality.

✦ CBD International Frameworks

CBD Decision 14/8

Formal recognition of governance diversity in OECMs and MPAs.

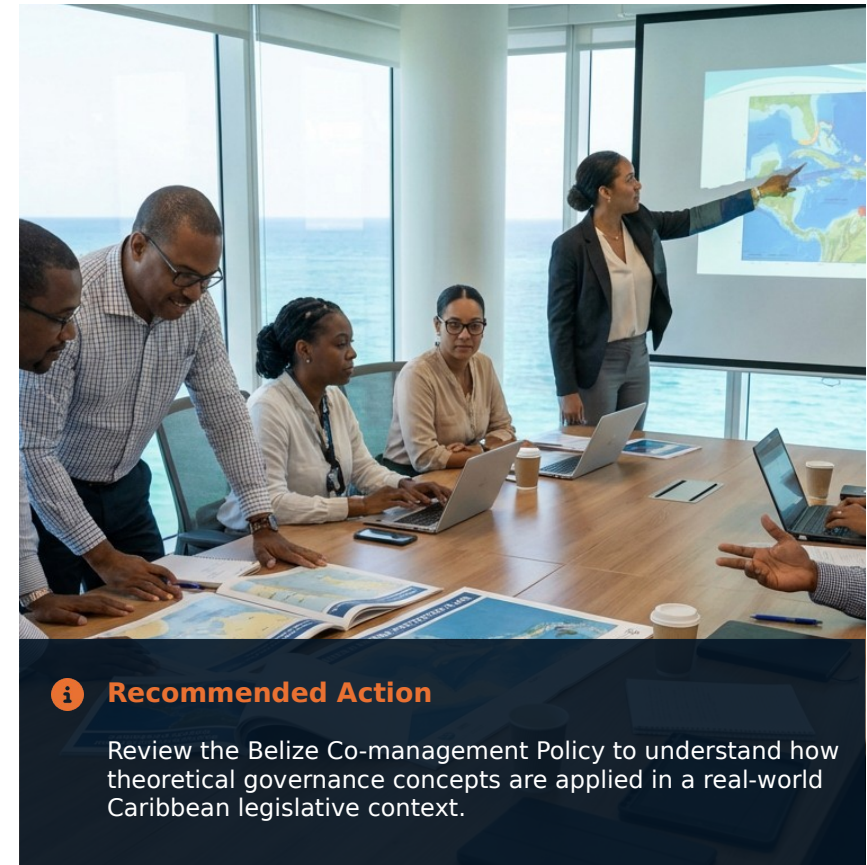
📍 Regional Case Study: Belize

Belize Fisheries Department Co-management Policy

The legal framework for shared governance agreements.

CaMPAM Resources

Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum case studies.



Recommended Action

Review the Belize Co-management Policy to understand how theoretical governance concepts are applied in a real-world Caribbean legislative context.