

EBM Toolbox: Social science tools for ecosystem-based management

Editor's note: The goal of The EBM Toolbox is to promote awareness of tools for facilitating EBM processes. It is brought to you by the EBM Tools Network, a voluntary alliance of tool users, developers, and training providers.

By Sarah Carr

The Social Science Working Group of the EBM Tools Network recently surveyed the types of tools that could help EBM practitioners incorporate socioeconomic considerations into their work. Some of the key types of tools they found and examples of these tools were:

For understanding communities

- **Social science database tools** allow practitioners to access information about communities and generate summary reports. Example: STICS census mapping tool (<http://marineeconomics.noaa.gov/socioeconomics>)
- **Social assessment tools** provide frameworks for analyzing and incorporating social information and identifying stakeholders. Examples: Surveys and questionnaires such as SOCAT (<http://bit.ly/424kEQ>)
- **Social network mapping tools** increase understanding of the relationships between people/groups, and also help to plan improvement of these relationships. Example: Social Network Analyzer (<http://bit.ly/bfodTN>)

For understanding human drivers of change and mitigating impacts

- **Impact assessment tools** help identify future social and economic consequences of current or proposed actions. Example: CommunityViz (www.communityviz.org)
- **Decision analysis tools** help incorporate risk and uncertainty into decision making. Example: Netica (www.norsys.com)
- **Economic valuation tools** help put values (often monetary) on ecosystem goods and services. Example: Environmental Valuation Resource Inventory (www.evri.ca)

For managing adaptively

- **Management strategy evaluation tools** facilitate incorporation of multiple objectives into planning and model tradeoffs in potential management plans. Example: InVitro (www.cmar.csiro.au/research/mse/invitro.htm)

Read the full survey at www.ebmtools.org/social-science-tools.html. Learn about other tools at www.smartgrowthtools.org/ebmtools and www.spatial.redlands.edu/toolsgallery.

(Sarah Carr is coordinator for the EBM Tools Network. Learn more about EBM tools and sign up for Network updates at www.ebmtools.org.)