



*Improving the Practice of Conservation*



## Foundations of Success Newsletter December 2008

### **In This Issue**

- :: Adaptive Management Concepts Take Off in Europe
- :: Conservation Practitioners around the World Use Miradi Software
- :: Micronesia Challenge Provides an Opportunity for Applying Adaptive Management to High-Profile Policy
  - :: FOS Goes Independent
- :: FOS Strives to Meet a Growing Demand for Training in Adaptive Management
  - :: Highlighted Publications from 2007 and 2008



### **Did You Know...You Can Rate Threats at Your Site to Help You Determine What Action to Take?**

Conservation takes place in the face of a wide variety of threats to natural resources and biodiversity. A common challenge, thus, is to determine which threats to address. Often, managers and practitioners make decisions applying an implicit set of criteria to evaluate threats. The danger with this approach is that different people might use different criteria or apply them differently. Moreover, there is a tendency to address threats for which strategies and expertise already exist, rather than addressing those threats that pose the greatest risk to the biodiversity at a site.

Threat rating is a method for making this implicit assessment of threats more explicit and more objective. It involves determining and defining a set of criteria and then applying those criteria systematically to the threats directly affecting a project's conservation targets so that conservation actions can be directed where they are most needed. [Miradi Adaptive Management Software](#) includes a built-in function for rating direct threats. You can also refer to [FOS's resource page](#) on our web site for publications related to threat rating.

## Adaptive Management Concepts Take Off in Europe

Just one year ago, FOS began exploring the potential for applying adaptive management to the work of conservation groups across Europe. This initial exploration has resulted in exceptional interest from European partners. To efficiently and effectively reach many of these groups, FOS has partnered with Eurosite - a network of 100 site management organizations - to initiate the "European Platform for Adaptive Management" (EPAM). By January 2009, EPAM hopes to develop an initial set of European standards for doing adaptive management, using guidance from the Conservation Measures Partnership's *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*. FOS has also worked closely with Eurosite members and European universities to provide training in adaptive management and [Miradi software](#). To meet the demand for additional training our initial outreach has generated, FOS intends to develop and mentor coaches who could guide other teams in the implementation of the adaptive management process.

## Conservation Practitioners around the World Use Miradi Software to Plan Their Projects

FOS continues to work with [CMP](#) members and [Benetch](#) on [Miradi Adaptive Management Software](#) - software that takes practitioners step by step through the adaptive management process. Conservation practitioners from Mexico to California to Tanzania are now using Miradi to develop robust strategic plans and monitoring plans. CMP members and Benetech are continuously revising Miradi to add new and improve existing features - incorporating feedback provided directly by Miradi users. Most recently, Miradi exporting functions now allow users to better export Miradi data to a document that can be easily edited in standard word processing programs. FOS now uses Miradi in its trainings, helping to train conservation teams in the adaptive management process as well as a software tool they can use for current and future projects.

## Micronesia Challenge Provides Opportunity for Applying Adaptive Management to High-Profile Policy Initiatives

In 2006, leaders of the Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Guam signed the [Micronesia Challenge](#) - a shared commitment to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020. Working closely with the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) and [The Nature Conservancy](#), FOS co-facilitated a workshop to determine how to measure impact at jurisdiction- and Challenge-wide levels. FOS staff used [results chains](#) (a tool for measuring effectiveness) and previous jurisdiction work on TNC Conservation Action Plans to identify appropriate indicators and assessment approaches.

## FOS Goes Independent

This may come as a surprise to some, but since our founding in 2000, FOS has been legally and administratively a program within the Wildlife Conservation Society. After eight years of generous assistance and support from WCS, FOS became its own non-profit on July 1, 2008. We deeply appreciate WCS's support that helped incubate FOS. We are very excited about this new phase for FOS and look forward to continuing to serve the conservation community.



## FOS Strives to Meet Growing Demand for Training in Adaptive Management

In 2008, FOS formally launched our new training initiative that now includes our standard on-site trainings, as well as regional trainings for multiple teams, academic training for graduate students and practitioners, and online or distance training for project teams. Some highlights include:

- **[University of Maryland](#) course for conservation practitioners and students:** This course helps participants apply adaptive management to their own real projects. We will use lessons learned from this course to develop similar regional courses.
- **Joint course with [Organization for Tropical Studies](#):** FOS and OTS will offer a pilot course to university students in January 2009. This partnership will help FOS provide expertise in project and adaptive management to a key audience (tomorrow's leaders) by tapping into OTS's network of universities and colleges.
- **Online Training and Coaching for [National Audubon Society](#):** FOS is facilitating online training in adaptive management and Miradi for 30 Audubon staff. We are using innovative web-based tools, small-group discussions, and readings and assignments from our new online training manual. The training will also build the capacity of 10 Audubon staff "coaches" in adaptive management.
- **WWF Market Transformation Network Initiative:** FOS is working with WWF on the development of the Market Transformation Network Initiative. This program aims to transform markets of various big commodities and specifically those that have the highest impact on priority places.
- **Foundation coaching:** FOS is helping several key funders develop strategic and monitoring plans for grant-making programs. Donor participants include The Packard Foundation's Ecosystem Based Management and Science programs, the Moore Foundation's Marine Conservation Initiative, and the Doris Duke Foundation's Habitat Conservation Initiative. We are coaching staff in the use of conceptual models and results chains to articulate strategies and define monitoring indicators and methods.

## Highlighted Publications from 2007 and 2008

- Foundations of Success. 2008. Conceptualizing and Planning Conservation Projects and Programs: A Training Manual.
- Margoluis, Richard, Caroline Stem, Nick Salafsky, and Marcia Brown. 2008. Using Conceptual Models as an Evaluation Tool in Conservation. *Journal of Evaluation and Program Planning*, forthcoming.
- Margoluis, Richard, Caroline Stem, Nick Salafsky, and Marcia Brown. 2008. Design Alternatives to Evaluating the Impacts of Conservation Projects. *New Directions in Evaluation*, forthcoming.
- Salafsky, Nick, Daniel Salzer, Alison J. Stattersfield, Craig Hilton-Taylor, Rachel Neugarten, Stuart H. M. Butchart, Ben Collen, Neil Cox, Lawrence L. Master, Sheila O'Connor, and David Wilkie. 2008. [A Standard Lexicon for Biodiversity Conservation: Unified Classifications of Threats and Actions](#). *Conservation Biology*, 22: 897-911.
- Salafsky, Nick, Daniel Salzer, Guillermo Placci, Alison J. Stattersfield, Stuart H. M. Butchart, Caroline Stem, Rachel Neugarten, and Marcia Brown. 2007. Measuring Threat Magnitude: A Comparison of Existing Methods and Recommendations for a Standard System. Draft paper.
- SEPA Project, 2007. [Experiences from Ecuador and Mexico with the Implementation of Conservation Easements: A Case Study](#). Also available in Spanish.
- SEPA Project, 2007. [Experiences from Costa Rica with the Implementation of Conservation Easements: A Case Study](#). Also available in Spanish

**Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2009!**

**The FOS Team**

Email Marketing by

