

Collaboration across Worldviews: utilizing knowledge coproduction on Hawai'i Island to thrive through change while preparing for the future

2017 Hawai'i Conservation Conference Forum

Wednesday, July 19th, 10:30 a.m. - Noon



Small group discussions: sharing the experiences of managers, cultural practitioners, policy professionals, community groups, scientists, and graduate students to build adaptive capacity



Screening of the new MCC film documenting a remote, place-based networking experience the MCC developed in Ka'u, Hawai'i

Programmatic Context Behind HCC Forum: The Manager Climate Corps

The Manager Climate Corps (MCC; <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/pi-csc/>) was created in 2015 by the University of Hawai'i at Hilo as a member of the Pacific Islands Climate Science Center, which is a partnership between U.S. Geological Survey and a university consortium that includes the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (the consortium lead) and the University of Guam, in addition to University of Hawai'i at Hilo. The MCC was developed to support and connect the experiences of local natural resource managers, cultural practitioners, policy professionals, and researchers within long-term relationships and develop collaborative research projects through these networks. These research projects in turn are established to develop usable and immediately utilized research products within the integrated professional networks. Through knowledge coproduction, the process of producing usable science through collaboration, managers and scientists coproduce research products which directly inform policy and meaningfully address the complex challenges faced by local managers and the communities they are connect to.

Working closely with the Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science Graduate Program at UH Hilo, the MCC: 1) funds manager-driven graduate research projects that assist managers in adapting to socio-ecological shifts such as climate change, land-use change, invasive species impacts, and cultural change; and 2) develops interactive forums that build adaptive capacity by supporting diverse professional networking opportunities. The MCC currently funds four applied research projects

involving five graduate students. These five graduate students were showcased in the well-attended forum at this year's Hawai'i Conservation Conference (HCC).

2017 HCC Forum Foundations

Goals:

- 1) Introduce participants to a variety of stakeholder-driven projects that exemplify knowledge coproduction (KC) in action.
- 2) Directly engage HCC participants within in-depth discussion and reflection upon KC to better understand and improve upon the process while identifying the ways in which many organizations already actively utilize KC.

Outcomes: participants should have a clear understanding of KC as a collaboration between researchers and decision makers and specifically the following foundations of the KC process in relation to adaptation, resilience, and sustainability through climate change impacts.

- KC networks are effective mechanisms to create actionable, utilized science products and to directly support resilience, adaptation, and sustainability within local communities through socio-ecological change.
- Vital to define stakeholders early in the KC process (e.g. ranchers, farmers, cultural practitioners, native ecosystem managers, researchers, policy professionals, county planners, private business, government, NGO), as well as stakeholder scale (i.e. spatial, political, or organizational scales).
- Vital to build collaborative, iterative, and reciprocal communication throughout product/project development between knowledge producers and stakeholders.
- Vital to establish long-term relationships as the priority beyond a singular product, toolkit, idea, dataset, software package, etc. in a specific window of time.

Presentations (35 Minutes)

Becky Ostertag briefly introduced the partnerships between the Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Studies program at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, the Pacific Islands Climate Science Center, and the MCC. Scott Laursen introduced the foundations of the MCC and the collaborative knowledge coproduction process that is the foundation of the program. Next graduate students within the MCC, including Louise Economy, Cherie Kauahi, Kamala Anthony, Rose Hart, and Joanna Norton, offered short panel presentations outlining all four graduate research projects currently ongoing within the MCC to highlight on-the-ground examples of knowledge coproduction in action within local community and professional networks on Hawai'i Island.

Documentary Film (10 Minutes)

After the presentations, the MCC's new documentary film entitled "Resilient Voices" was screened as an out-of-the-box example of networking potential.

Small Group Discussions (45 Minutes)

The second half of the forum transitioned to small group discussions centering on how to utilize and improve the knowledge coproduction process across disciplines at multiple scales and, thereby, build adaptive capacity in Hawai'i. Sharon Ziegler-Chong moderated this portion of the forum. Each small group consisted of 10 individuals or less, including an individual recording key themes and one or two discussion facilitators already involved in MCC projects. Each group was given questions intended as reference points to support an open-ended yet focused discussion of how to increasingly unite diverse worldviews and build trust across growing professional networks. The questions encouraged each group to consider new pathways for supporting collaborative, long-term, and in-person professional networks that utilize multiple knowledge forms. Examples of multiple knowledge forms include intellect, experience, cultural norms/values, instinct, emotion, intuition, etc. The forum concluded with 10 minutes of plenary wrap up discussion involving teach back of takeaways from each small group to all session participants.

Outcomes

A diverse group of 52 cultural practitioners, policy professionals, scientists, graduate students, and community leaders attended the forum from a wide array of backgrounds including federal, state, county, and non-profit organizations. Of the 52 participants, 28 were women and 24 were men. Collectively the small groups contributed 11 pages of bulleted takeaways in support of collaborative adaptive action. These takeaways along with contact and association information for all forum participants were collated and emailed to the entire group after the event in support of continuing connections established in the forum. Forum participants represented wide-ranging organizations and professional networks across the state of Hawai'i.

Highlights from Small Group Discussions:

- there is a need to develop more diverse and **deeper relationships** across professional boundaries
- if we are to collaborate and build deep **trust**, we must invest **in person** (face-to-face) and connect beyond intellectual levels (**personal**); breaking down conventionally hierarchical communication lines.
 - requires much **time** and **patience** to earn trust within collaborative networks.
 - we need to be willing to put our own projects on hold and invest directly in community efforts to develop trust within local community networks (e.g. community events outside one's professional field, community work days, etc.).
 - do not come with preconceived ideas. Best to be open to developing ideas collaboratively by **listening** to others without expectation and allowing ourselves to be taught.
 - trust requires **vulnerability** and **transparency**
- professional networks need to increasingly include disciplines beyond natural resources, biology, ecology, etc., such as psychology, business, anthropology, and engineering.
- need to focus on collaboration within upper administrative levels because building trust at these levels will trickle down.
- higher education needs to improve in developing opportunities for direct community connections.
- phrase "knowledge coproduction" is difficult to connect to; could shift to different terminology

- regardless the words we choose to label the collaborative process, **action** is the most important element of this process.
- challenging undercurrents of **competition** on many levels need to be **shifted to collaboration** (e.g. competition for short-term funding can limit long-term collaboration efforts).
- need more **round table conversations** to build a diverse professional planning platform that drives collaborative action in the field. Round tables conversations are effective in drawing diverse viewpoints into one room. Round tables can be effective in creating two-way feedback loop between collaborative planning in the office and collaborative work done in the field.
- empower **local groups** to make **local decisions** through knowledge coproduction.
 - need mechanisms in place to involve more professionals and communities in the knowledge coproduction process.
 - boundary organizations can help facilitate
 - not all community groups will be ready/willing to participate. Move forward with groups that are ready to do so.

List of Organizations Involved in the HCC Forum

Ka'ūpūlehu Dryland Forest, Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Division of Forestry and Wildlife, DLNR

Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Studies, UH Hilo

Department of Planning, County of Maui

Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, UH Mānoa

Big Island Invasive Species Committee

Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA)

Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership

Hawai'i Food Industry Association

Kupu

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific

Pacific Islands Internships for Exploring Science, UH Hilo

Coral Reef Alliance

Hawai'i Sea Grant

Dept. of Natural Resources and Env. Mgmt., UH Mānoa

Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation

Kamehameha Schools

Hawai'i Pacific University
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, DOI
Coral Reef Alliance
Mauna Kea Watershed Alliance
Ulupono Initiative
The Nature Conservancy
Wildlife Services, USDA
Lili'uokalani Trust
Conservation International - Hawai'i
Ridge to Reefs
Commission on Water Resource Management, DLNR
Maui Invasive Species Committee
Hawai'i Sea Grant
Storm Water Quality Branch, City and County of Honolulu