Case Study Name: Overcoming Barriers to Collective Action in Community-Based Fisheries Management in the Amazon

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Language: English


Region: Latin America and the Caribbean

Country: India and Nepal

Ecosystem Type: Flooded forest

Social Characteristics: Community inside/bordering protected areas

Scale of Study: Protected area

Resource Type: Protected area

Type of Initiative: Research-driven project

Community Based Work: Resource management, conservation

Keywords: Amazon, fisheries, common property regimes, conservation, ecological knowledge

Summary: A set of freshwater fisheries management institutions in the central Brazilian Amazon leads us to propose an expansion of the common pool resource (CPR) management models developed by Ostrom. We analyze the origins
and effectiveness of a community-based CPR system that has emerged despite several features that are, in Ostrom's view, barriers to local institutional development: the fish populations are migratory rather than stationary, spatial boundaries are ambiguous rather than fixed, and state support of local management is weak or non-existent rather than strong. We argue that cultural and political factors, which are given less emphasis in Ostrom's model, may help explain how these communities overcome barriers to collective action. We draw parallels between freshwater systems and Marine Protected Areas and discuss implications for local resource management.