

Continuing education
3-day course

ADAPTIVE NATURE MANAGEMENT

AARHUS UNIVERSITY, DENMARK

DEPARTMENT OF BIOSCIENCE

It is one thing to implement a management plan for a species or a nature area, but it is another to achieve one's desired goals. Unfortunately, we see all too often that plans are not fulfilled and objectives not realized. Adaptive nature management is a concept that can be used to deliver more targeted protection and management of species and their habitats, to monitor whether initiatives are working and achieve desired outcomes. This course will introduce you to the concept of adaptive nature management and enable you to use it in practice.

Course description

Adaptive management is an approach that managers can use to structure and implement decision-making processes for nature management. It is widely used for nature management in North America, but is only now gaining ground in Europe as a beneficial management framework. With an adaptive approach, we ensure that issues, goals and choice of actions are formulated clearly. These are expressed and agreed in cooperation with the relevant participants at the initial stage of implementing an initiative, for example the management of a nature area where there are conflicting interests. As part of the adaptive management process, actions are adjusted based on evaluations of predictions and monitoring of management actions. In this way, we continuously learn from the positive and negative results that we achieve. This leads to more well-defined and more systematic decisions and greater involvement of participants in decision-making and management processes.

During the course we will cover the following topics and their theoretical background through discussions, along with a series of practical exercises:

- o Why is it so difficult to make decisions in nature management?
- o Elements of a decision-making process
- o Problem formulation, goal and objectives setting
- o Analysis of alternative decisions and actions
- o Predicting the impacts of actions (modelling)
- o Organisation of systematic follow-ups
- o Solutions for simple versus complex and conflict-ridden cases
- o Handling uncertainties and risks
- o When to use adaptive management?
- o Participant involvement, defining of roles and organisational structures for successful adaptive management

Purpose

The course gives participants a thorough introduction to the concept of adaptive management and some simple tools to structure decision-making for a variety of actual nature management issues. The goal is to give participants a basic understanding of the concept and how it differs from traditional conservation management and provide them with the necessary skills to use adaptive management in practice.

Forms of instruction

The course will combine short lectures, group work and discussions based on specific cases, preferably chosen amongst the participants. Participants can gain concrete experience in applying adaptive management and its tools, so that they can use the concept in practice.

Number of participants

8-20 participants.

Target group

The course is aimed at all those who work with administration, education or consultancy in the field of nature and wildlife management in public administration, consultancy firms, special interest organisations as well as academics.

Instructors

Jesper Madsen, Professor, Dr. Scient., Department of Bioscience, Aarhus University, and 2-3 other instructors. Jesper Madsen is course manager; his research area is ecology and management of animal species, and in recent years, he has focused on the development of adaptive management of Danish and European animal species as well as on the development of adaptive management in Danish and European nature management.