



Australian Government

Fisheries Research and  
Development Corporation

# Co-management, an Australian experience

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# A little about the FRDC



**CO-FUNDED** by the Commonwealth Government (68%) and the fishing industry (32%)

Currently manage 400+ projects across Australia

Portfolio is worth over \$120 million

12 staff, all based in Canberra

Plan, invest, manage and extend research to increase knowledge that fosters sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits for the Australian fishing industry

# Commercial value and volume

The commercial component is valued at A\$2.19 billion

Top 5 by Volume	Tonnes
Australian Sardines	33,600
Salmonids	25,500
Prawns	22,400
Tuna	14,700
Rock lobster	13,800

Top 5 by Value	\$
Rock lobster	407 million
Salmonids	299 million
Prawns	268 million
Tuna	210 million
Abalone	189 million

Made up of 140 sectors using various catching and growing techniques

# Why co-management

Costs increasing

Moves to cost recovery

History of conflict, confrontation and distrust

Concerns over efficiency and effectiveness

Managed fish and not people

Move towards MEY

# Co-management study



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## Co-management: Managing Australia's fisheries through partnership and delegation



REPORT OF THE FRDC'S NATIONAL WORKING GROUP  
FOR THE FISHERIES CO-MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE  
— PROJECT NO. 2006/068

# Definition

Fisheries co-management: An arrangement in which responsibilities and obligations for sustainable fisheries management are negotiated, shared and delegated between government, fishers, and other interest groups and stakeholders.

# What it is

Delegation of functions to  
fishers/stakeholders

Building of Partnerships

Better information flows

Administrative efficiency

# What it is not

Delegation of all responsibility

Powers to grant initial authorisation to fish

Compliance at its highest level

Powers to make legislation



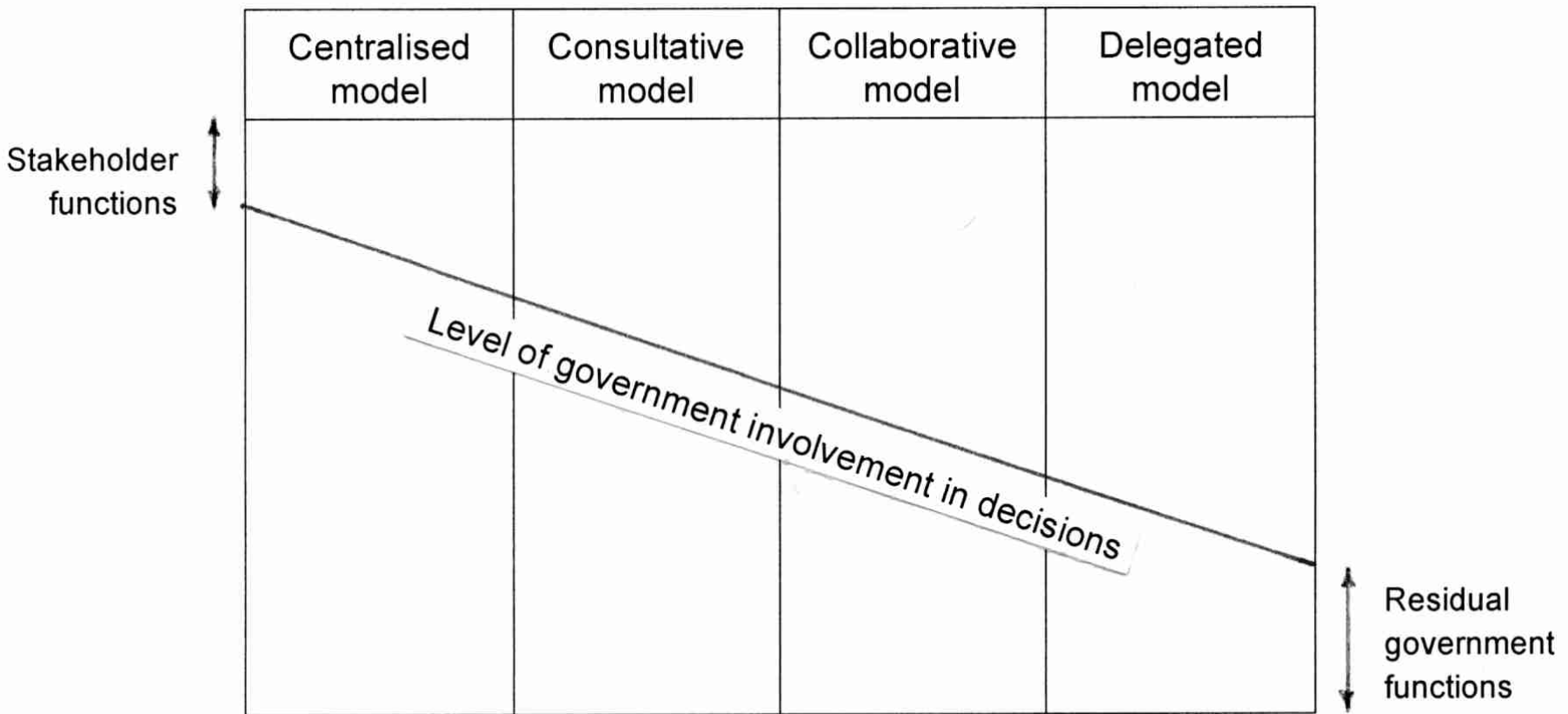
# Drivers for co-management

## Two categories

Process Driven – improved processes and cooperation in making, delivering and enforcing management decisions

Cost driven – potential for cost savings

# The continuum



# Pre-conditions and delegation

Pre-conditions enhance the chances of successful adoption and security and ability to undertake functions and delegate these functions

# Essential pre-conditions

Willingness by Government



Willingness by industry - majority

Industry building organisational ownership, structures and supporting those structures

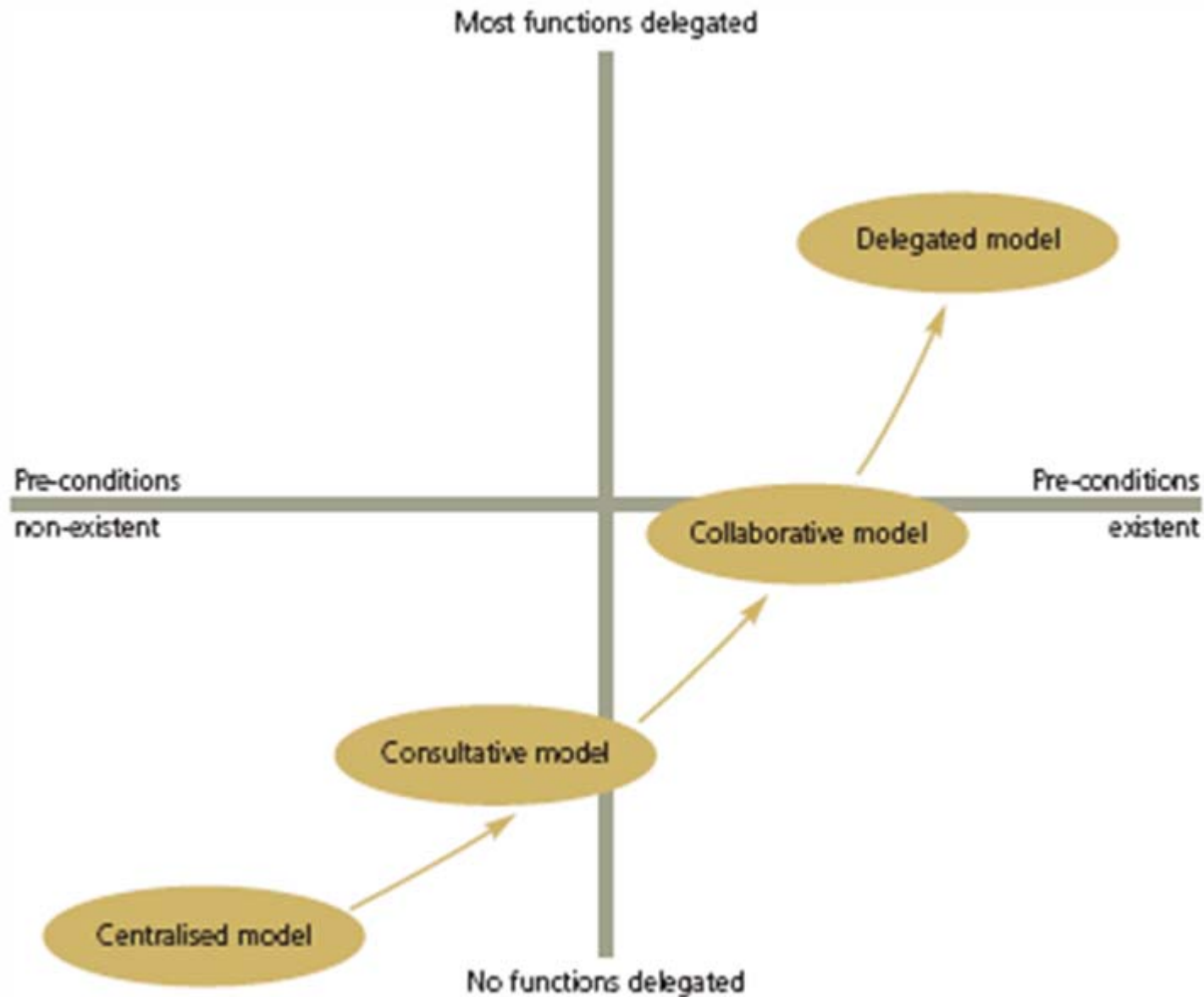
Legislative base to delegate powers

Ability to generate and adhere to MOU's, contract or other form of agreement

Ability for fisher organisations to legally enforce agreements

Conflict resolution mechanisms

# Pre-conditions and delegation



# Steps for co-management

Step 1 – Birth of the idea

Step 2 – Develop business case

Step 3 – Acceptance and commitment

Step 4 – Legal structure

Step 5 – Implementation

# In practice – Spencer Gulf Prawn Fishery



1. Currently has a strong collaborative process, drivers were apparent, many pre-conditions satisfied
2. Three scenarios were tested
3. Government and conservation representative have agreed to process, with conditions
4. Changes to fisheries legislation already passed, MOU to be developed
5. Phased approach for smooth transition

# Australian Fisheries Management Authority



1. Initial agreement to be part of the trials, real desire by industry
2. Largely outlined in the MOU
3. Collaborative project also involving environment representation
4. Requests made to vary the Management Act
5. No implementation yet



# What else are we doing?

Project Id	Status	Title
2009/211	Underway	Whose fish is it anyway? - Investigation of co-management and self-governance solutions to local issues in Queensland's inshore fisheries
2009/050	Approved	Tactical Research Fund: an innovative approach to co-management in the Cockburn Sound Blue Swimmer Crab fishery
2008/059	Completed	Tactical Response Fund: Co-management strategies for WA State Managed Fisheries using the Exmouth Gulf Prawn Trawl Fishery as a case study
2008/045	Underway	Co-management in Commonwealth fisheries
2007/025	Underway	Competition to collaboration: exploring co-management models for the Spencer Gulf Prawn Fishery
2006/068	Completed	Fisheries co- management initiative
2006/026	Draft Report	Development of co-management arrangements for Queensland fisheries - stage 1 picking the winners
2005/024	Underway	Abalone Industry Development: local assessment and management by industry