

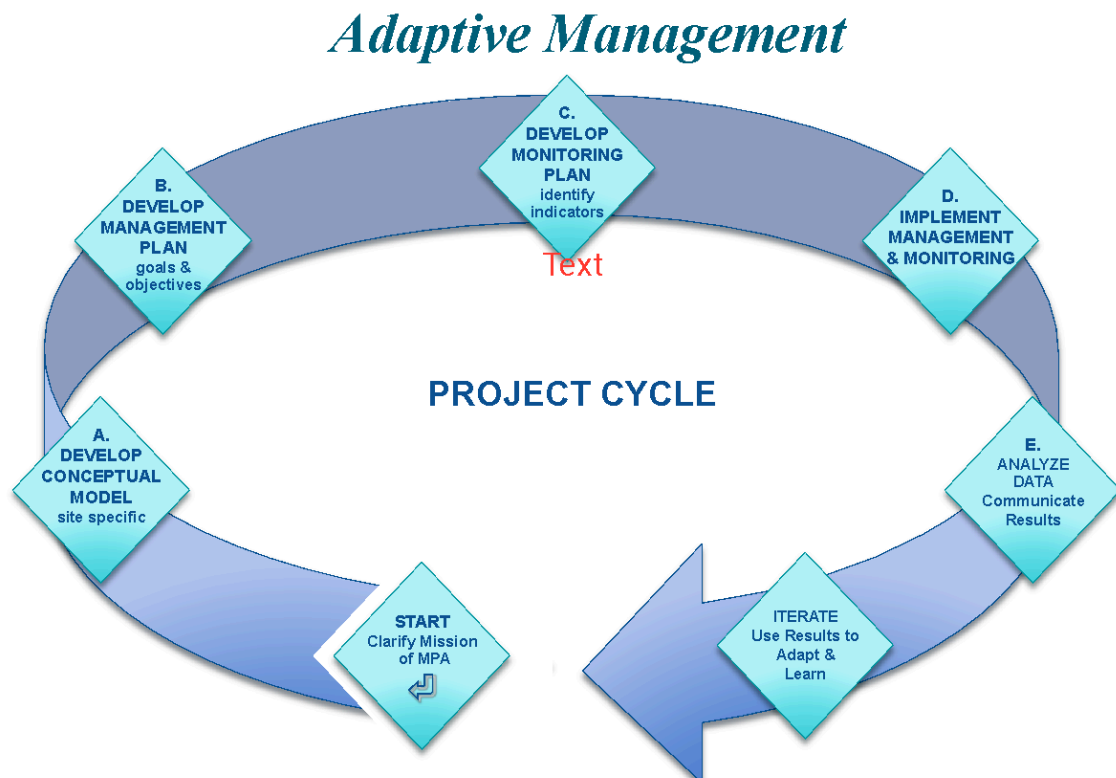
HANDOUT 3.6: Adaptive Management Response

WHAT IS ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT?

The adaptive management process involves the integration of the design of an effective management plan and a monitoring and evaluation program to systematically test the assumptions of the management plan in order to learn and adapt to the results.

Adaptive management is not a trial-and-error process, but rather a set of management strategies based on:

- Identification of target resources
- Identification of threats associated with the target resources
- Understanding the root cause of these threats
- Identifying the human behavior associated with the threats
- Selecting management actions that address the root cause of the threat, and the associated behavior
- Monitoring and evaluating the success of the management actions on a regular and on-going basis
- Repeating the process to continuously improve the success of the management plan by going through this cycle to identify and adapt new management activities as needed to achieve the anticipated results



So what do we do with the results of the management effectiveness monitoring and evaluation program?

If you are not meeting your management objectives, then:

1. Check monitoring methods and data collection to see if your monitoring program might be faulty
2. Make sure the indicators reflect the objectives, they may not be suitable
3. Check your assumptions about how/why your management actions will result in meeting your management objectives
4. Check to see if your management activities were well executed or not
5. Evaluate whether the conditions – both biophysical and human use – have changed or not
5. Or, is there a combination, in whole or in part, of the above happening

In any case, adaptive management responses should take place BEFORE you have reached your impact threshold or LIMIT OF ACCEPTABLE VARIATION.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT RESPONSES REQUIRE:

- An open and transparent management decision making process
- Institutional support and governance framework that allows for change in management approaches regardless of what is in the management plan
- Periodic review and adjustment of management activities
- Technical support and expertise to identify appropriate alternative management responses