

Application of the Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis Framework in Belize

Delilah A. Cabb B.Sc. M.Sc.

Coordinator

Sanitary and Phytosanitary Enquiry Point

Belize Agricultural Health Authority

STDF Workshop for the Asia Pacific Region

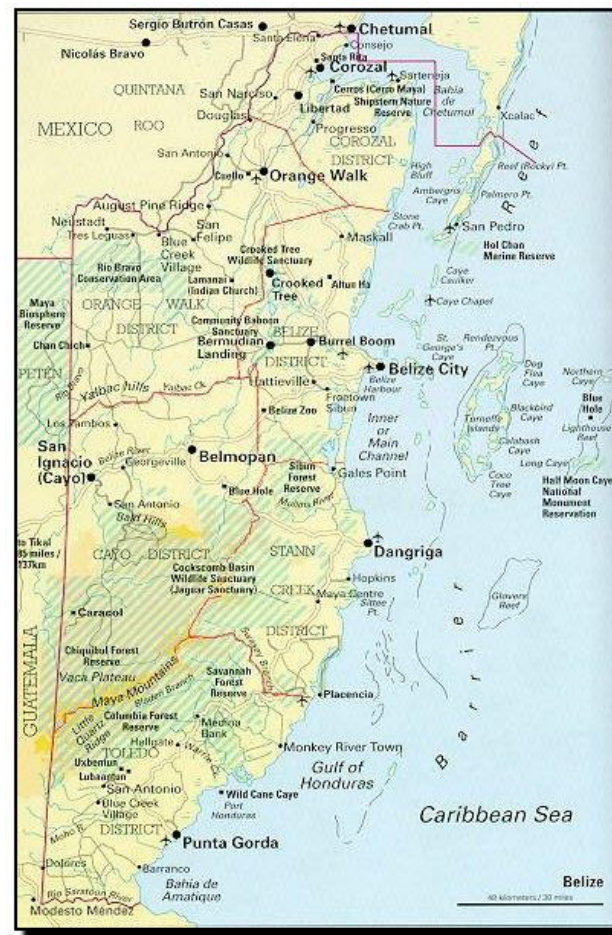


Application of MCDA in Belize

- Background
- Introduction
- Application of previous tools
- Experiences in the application of the MCDA
 - Challenges
 - Lessons Learnt
 - Benefitis

Background

- Belize - only English speaking nation in Central America
- Population of about 300,000 (2007)
- Agricultural based economy with fisheries being very important along with the growing and vibrant tourism sector



Introduction

- Belize established the Belize Agricultural Health Authority in April 2000
- Organization responsible for agricultural health and food safety
- Quasi-government
- Financed by Government and revenue generated from cost recovery scheme (we charge for our services)

Application of other Tools

- Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (IPPC) applied in **2000, 2004 and 2008**
- Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE) applied in Jan **2008; May 2009**
- PVS GAP Analysis – applied in April **2010**
- Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) Performance, Vision, Strategy (PVS) Tools – Food Safety, Plant Health and Quarantine and SPS applied in **2008;**

Approaches Taken

- Questionnaires were completed
- Consultations held with stakeholders – associations, farmers, producers, regulatory agencies, personnel within the competent authority
- Deficiencies identified
- Only the PVS GAP had estimates for each of the capacity building options identified

EVALUATION RESULTS

- Application of the tools resulted in a plethora of areas that needed strengthening
- Single Entity – the Authority has responsibility for all four Departments (Animal Health, Plant Health, Food Safety and Quarantine)
- Areas for capacity building cut across all four disciplines and thereby rely on the same pool of resources
- Which areas should be prioritized?

Application of the MCDA in Belize

- Received information on MCDA tool being pilot tested
- Application submitted to STDF
- Received approval in October 2011
- Project applied from January to October 2012
- The Belize Agricultural Health Authority – entity responsible for implementation

Application of the MCDA in Belize

- Hired International Consultant
- Compilation of the information dossier
- Submission of dossier to all stakeholders (including consultant)
- One month later – first stakeholder consultation (workshop type setting) – 35 participants representing exporters, producers, processing facilities, academia, Ministry of Health, Legal Counsel, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Investment and Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, Belize Trade and Investment Development Service, OIRSA, USDA/AHPHIS, BAHA etc.
- 21 capacity building options identified of which 13 judged not to be substantial SPS issues

Application of the MCDA in Belize

- Animal health controls for live cattle exports,
- animal health and hygiene controls for beef exports;
- *animal health and hygiene controls for chicken exports;*
- *plant health controls for pitahaya exports;*
- *food safety controls for papaya exports;*
- laboratory testing for pesticide residues and veterinary drugs and veterinary pesticide residues;
- *laboratory testing capacity for heavy metals and*
- plant health controls for citrus pulp exports.

Application of the MCDA in Belize

- Compilation of information cards for 8 remaining options
- Preliminary report with results circulated for comments
- Final Workshop – validation of results

Challenges

- Stakeholders Representation & Participation/ - User groups (letters, press release/ phone calls) – knowledge of issues
- Determining SPS capacity building options
 - Role of the competent authority very significant
 - Experts – knowledgeable of the country situation (distinguish between production/market/phytosanitary or sanitary issues)
- Completing the information cards
 - Information from both private and public sector
 - Standardization of format
 - Accuracy of the information

Lessons learnt

- Application of previous frameworks essential
 - identifying critical SPS areas that needed strengthening (e.g. Surveillance, diagnostic capability)
 - Bench mark for level of compliance (competent authorities and systems)
- MCDA –
 - Tool for prioritization
 - “Simple” approach to identifying SPS implementation issues as they relate to market access

lessons learnt

- Good stakeholder representation essential
- Provides potential trade impact at a glance
- May require previous knowledge of trading partners trade requirements
- Preferable if applied by a team of SPS experts (identification of non-SPS issues)

Lessons learnt

- Heavily dependent on stakeholder participation
– sustainable/ownership
- Stakeholder engagement allows for greater appreciation of work of competent authorities
- Sources of Funds for Capacity Building identified
 - (validation workshop – Foreign Trade, BELTRAIDE & Foreign Affairs)

Lessons learnt

- Tool is trade oriented – application of weights to capture domestic issues
- Flexibility of being reapplied – new data
 - (live cattle vs beef – real costs)
- Quality of information
- Information cards (investment)
 - Capacity of industry
 - Competent authority

Benefits

- Tool for Prioritization of Capacity building options
 - Results of prior application of OIE, IPPC, IICA tools make the application of MCDA easier
 - Shortens the time for completion of information cards
 - Information cards likely to be more accurate
- Results provide evidence to convince policy makers
 - More than three years – political support - pitahaya (*Hylocerus spp*) should be exported to USA
 - Application of MCDA – appreciation of what needs to be in place for that to happen – costs that such translates to
 - Exports of live cattle – MCDA results highlighted a huge oversight (additional costs not budgeted for/ongoing costs not previously considered)
- Advocacy group – support the work of the Authority

Benefits

- Visibility of Competent Authority –Services- Strong Support
- Versatile tool
 - Application to individual departments/ systems (plant health, food safety etc.)
 - Application by other agencies
 - Belize Bureau of Standards
 - Standard setting
 - Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE)
 - Micro, small and medium size enterprises
 - Ministry of Agriculture
 - Food and Nutrition Security and Foreign Exchange Earnings