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Evolution of integration of Human Dimensions into WGNARS - challenges and possibilities.

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The Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea (WGNARS) is developing a “worked example” of an Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) to demonstrate how it can support decision making in complex, multi-sector ocean management, with sufficient flexibility to be used in U.S. and Canadian national and regional governance scales. A fundamental part of this work has involved integrating human dimensions into this process. Integrating human dimensions involves merging the expertise and knowledge of social scientists with that of natural scientists, as well as considering the roles that a diverse range of stakeholders and viewpoints might play in developing IEA objectives and other parts of the process. This paper describes the evolution of the integration of human dimensions into the WGNARS process. It reports how the group has worked together to integrate social science ideas and tools for a regional IEA. It also shows how the group’s thinking about IEA has evolved as a result of this collaboration. Finally, constraints for integrating HD into the existing ICES indicator framework will be discussed.