

# Chapter 2

## Emerging Management Concepts in an Era of Global Transitions: Co-Management of Natural Resources and the Swedish Management Style

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### ABSTRACT

*In a period of global transition, this chapter discusses emerging management practices in the context of natural resources management in international business. In the past decades, the co-management concept and practice have been of increasing interest to scholars in ecology management and marine environment management. In the late 1980s, the Swedish management style began to be explicitly debated with scholarly interest, particularly in the services industry after observing successful business practices. The literature on the co-management of natural resources and the Swedish management style in multinational enterprises point promisingly towards parallel management strategies applied in distinctly different working environments and contexts. Based on empirical data, this chapter's objective is to highlight and distill from natural resources co-management and the Swedish management style a shared management best-practice approach in working contexts that have multiple actors and stakeholders who hold multicentric agendas.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

There are many dimensions to the subject of global transition that enables and encourages ideas cross-cutting and integration between different disciplines. Scholars and practitioners in the field of international business (IB) have in the past decade debated about the ongoing developments in the global business

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environments towards greater uncertainty, and if international trade is currently witnessing a retreat of the multinational enterprise (MNE) towards their home markets (The Economist, 2017a, 2017b; Vahlne, Ivarsson, & Alvstam, 2018). In tangent development, scholars and practitioners in the study and management of ecological environments or natural resources have worked towards other management models such as ecosystem services (Elmqvist et al., 2015; Martínez-López et al., 2019), life cycle assessment (Ingwersen, Garmestani, Gonzalez, & Templeton, 2014; Lu & Realf, 2013), product biodiversity footprint (Asselin, 2020; LaCanne & Lundgren, 2018) and ecological modelling (Ingwersen et al., 2014; Koenigstein, Ruth, & Gößling-Reisemann, 2016). Indeed, current global crises such climate change, management of natural resources, global food security and global health seem to indicate that greater interdisciplinary efforts and industry-academic collaborations are imperative.

With a globe in transition towards an increasing awareness of the need to successfully provide solutions to global concerns, this chapter addresses the management practices and ideology needed to effectively work across regional boundaries towards more comprehensive solutions. This chapter follows current academic and practitioner discourse on management models from both the fields of IB and eco-environment sciences. Using existing case examples from natural resources management (Hultberg, 2018) and empirical data collected from 23 top managers working in Swedish founded MNEs with headquarters in Singapore that serve the Asia-Pacific and Southeast-Asian regions (Cordeiro-Nilsson, 2009), the main objective of this chapter is to provide parallel and complementary management thinking from both IB and eco-environment sciences towards a synopsis of management best-practices for future work scenarios.

As management thinking and practices are under increasing pressure for the need to be applied across different socio-economic and cultural contexts, taking into account the perspectives and interests of multiple stakeholders due to global issues (Broszeit et al., 2019; Buller, 2000; Pezzuto, 2019; Reilly, 2015), the suggested novel contribution of this chapter is to help academics and practitioners draw from the experiences of IB and eco-environment sciences towards new management models for global business environments. The working assumption in this chapter is that highlighting common management practices applied to two widely differing working contexts could help reveal a common management best-practice that can be further studied and tested in other working contexts.

This chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 is the literature review, written specifically in address the subjects of (i) co-management as applied in practice in the management of natural resources in the field of eco-environment sciences and (ii) the Swedish management style, as applied in practice in cross-cultural IB contexts. Section 3 describes the methodology used for this comparative study, which is a combination of collected primary interview data and secondary text data such as reports, internet website data and magazine articles. The framework of data analysis is also outlined in Section 3. Section 4 contains 3 sub-sections. These sub-sections give the case examples of the Koster-Väderö Fjord model as an example of co-management practices for natural resources, a text example from a Swedish respondent, \$SEM2, who outlines how organization transformation was achieved using Swedish management principles and the last subsection that highlights parallels between co-management and the Swedish management style. Section 5 presents the conclusions, some study limitations, and outlines avenues for possible future research in both academia and industry practices.

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