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# Observations on Making Evaluations Effective

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# Introduction

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Evaluations are performed for a purpose. If that purpose is to *inform decision making*, we want to be effective in answering the key questions of decision makers.

We, as evaluators, know something about what is effective -- but better to *ask the consumers* of evaluations (but I happened to be available to give a talk.)

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# Main Themes

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- Be relevant
- Work with the data you can get
- Involve stakeholders
- Deliver actionable recommendations

# Be relevant

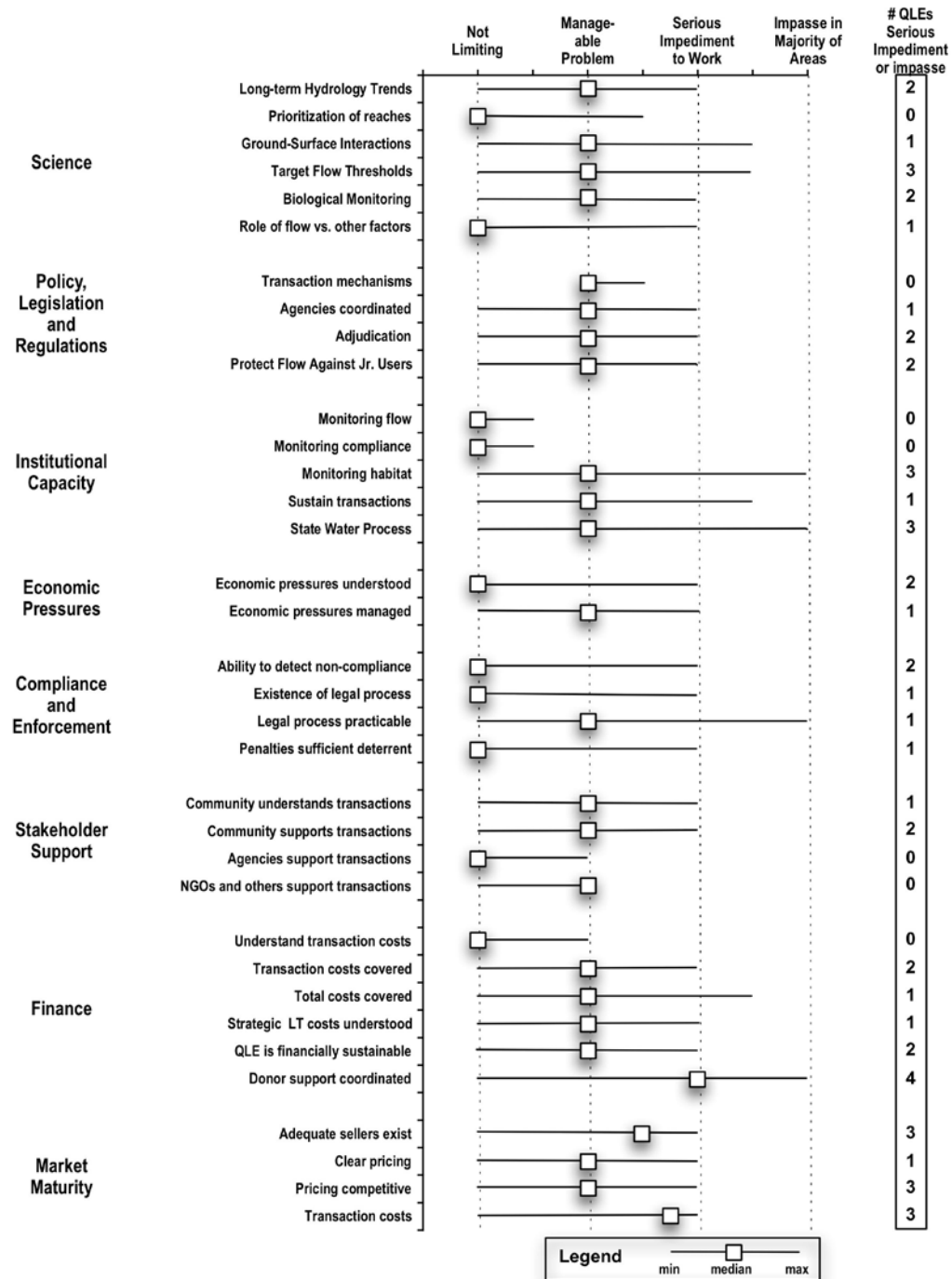
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- Who will use the evaluation?
  - Are they placed to make decisions? What types?
- Did they ask for it?
  - Who, if anyone, asked for the evaluation?
- How do they want to use it?
  - Inform a decision process
  - Summarize progress
  - Fulfill accountability requirements

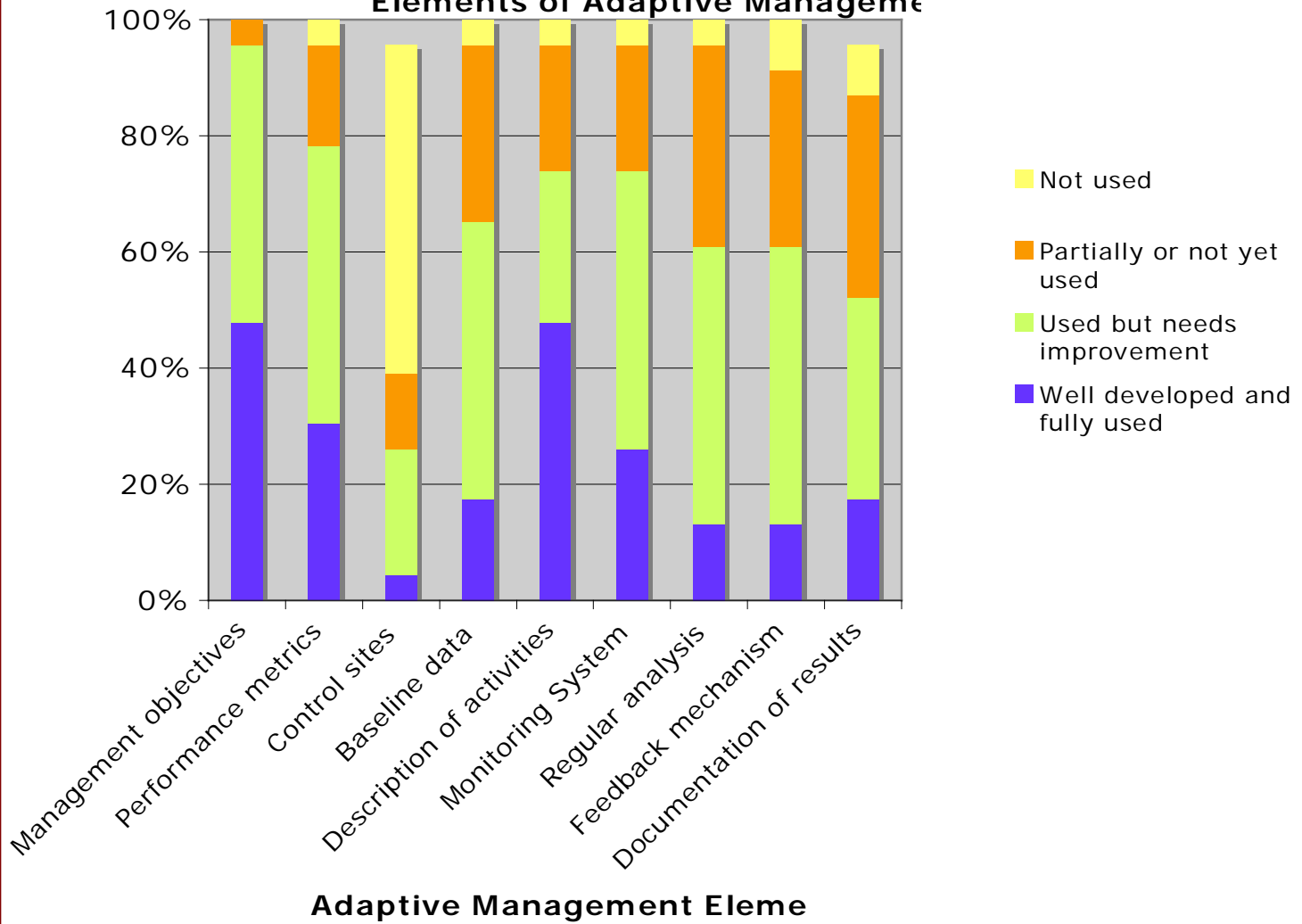
# Work with data you can get

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- Quantitative rigor wherever possible
- Place yourself on “Research--Evaluation Continuum”
- Practical solutions: 80% of answer with 20% of data



## Percentage of Sites Employing Specific Elements of Adaptive Management



# Involve stakeholders

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- Design of evaluation questions and framework
- Review of initial findings
- Review of final evaluation



# Involve stakeholders

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## **Step #1**

### *Client Question*

What have been the site-level conservation results of the program?

# Involve Stakeholders

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## Step #1

### *Client Question*

What have been the site-level conservation results of the program?

## Step #2

### *Evaluate Questions*

What have been the challenges faced at the site level and on which have site managers made the most progress?

What are the landscape-scale conservation planning approaches used by GCP partners?

What influence has GCP had in their development?

What are the adaptive management approaches used by GCP partners?

What influence has GCP had in their development?

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# Involve Stakeholders

Step #1	Step #2		Step #3
<i>Client Question</i>	<i>Evaluate Questions</i>	<i>Data</i>	<i>Analysis</i>
What have been the site-level conservation results of the program?	What have been the challenges faced at the site level and on which have site managers made the most progress?	Site-level survey GCP-Rep survey & interviews Site visits GCP PMP indicators and other partner reports to USAID	Compare rating of challenges at outset of GCP funding with today (or end of GCP funding). Themes that should be addressed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Project design</li> <li>-Spatial scale</li> <li>-Management system</li> <li>-Policy &amp; legislation</li> <li>-Institutional capacity</li> <li>-Economic factors</li> <li>-Financial sustainability</li> <li>-Other</li> </ul>
			Short case studies, noteworthy successes and challenges at site level.
			Relate results of above analysis to GCP PMP-level indicators as reported by GCP partners

# Deliver actionable recommendations

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Strike a balance:

- Decision Makers: Limited number of actionable recommendations
- Managers/Evaluees: Details of findings, relevant info for implementing change

# Summary

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- Our 4 observations
  - Be relevant
  - Work with the data that exists
  - Involve stakeholders
  - Deliver actionable recommendations
- Other factors affect decision making
  - Ideology, institutions, interests, information