



Not Out of the Blue: Ethics to Intersect Civic Participation and Formal Guidance

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What is the function of ethics for governability?

The Approach: Insights from marine small-scale fisheries and seabed mining are embedded into a generic conceptual framework. The framework draws on

- the theory of complex-adaptive socio-ecological systems and Kohlberg's model of moral adequacy,
- the design features of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and the concept of Geoethics,
- features of Corporate Social Responsibility and the role of creativity to hone participatory processes.

Here we only emphasise principal findings in relation to small-scale fisheries with emphasis on those that suggest wider applicability in other complex-adaptive systems.

Characterising small-scale fisheries

	LARGE SCALE 	SMALL SCALE 
Number of fishermen employed	 AROUND 500,000	 OVER 12,000,000
Annual catch of marine fish for human consumption	 AROUND 29 MILLION TONNES	 AROUND 24 MILLION TONNES
Capital cost of each job on fishing vessels	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ 30,000-\$ 300,000	\$ \$ 250-2,500
Fishermen employed for each \$ 1 million Invested in fishing vessels	 5-30	 500-4,000
Fish destroyed at sea each year as by-catch in shrimp fisheries	 6-16 MILLION TONNES	NONE

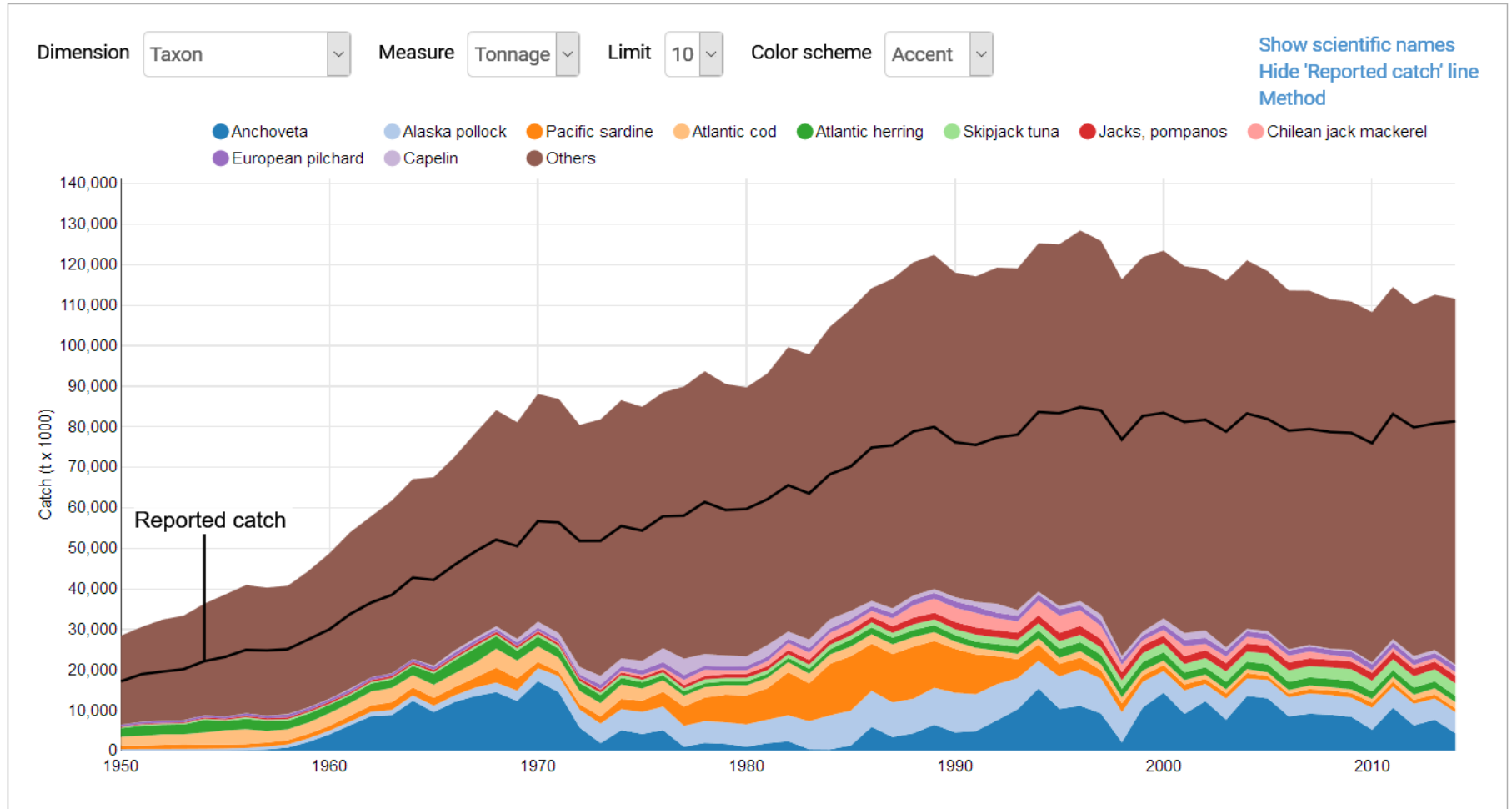
Carvalho, N., Edwards-Jones, G. & Isidro, E. (2011). Defining scale in fisheries: Small versus large-scale fishing operations in the Azores. *Fisheries Research*, 109(2-3):360-369.

A few facts and figures

Where does the fish come from? - Global capture by Sea Around Us

Global ocean | [High seas](#) | [EEZs](#)

[Feedback](#)



Addressing complexity

The intersection of industrial fishing and artisanal fisheries shapes complex-adaptive Socio-Ecological Systems (local, regional & global)

Response through SSF Guidelines

- Voluntary – thus more comprehensive, adaptable to different circumstances
- Social innovation - requiring multi-stakeholder approaches
- Human rights-based approach, women's rights, community empowerment



SSF Academy

Challenge – 'multifunctional' local realities

- Denied access to raw material for local processors (mostly women), not getting bank loans and suffer from difficult market access
- Local fishers contract work for export companies
- Disruption of social tissue

Response – capacity raising

- Co-produce new knowledge
- Empowerment to be change agents, ability to innovate
- Prioritise local value added



The findings

- No simplistic answers as one-dimensional “sectoral” thinking solves one issue by creating others.
- When taken together, then ethical frameworks, civic participation and formalized guidance favor a multi-actor/multi-level practice and policy-making in complex-adaptive socio-ecological systems.
- Considerable effort needs to be made into honing skills and practice of agents to juggle the different dimensions in peaceful ways, especially if activities are remote from access of civil society.

NB: It's hard work, but it can be done as empirical evidence shows.

The spirit of our work

Invest in people, connect to the Blue Planet, build bridges between the global agenda & local experience



Thanks for your attention



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A paper presenting the research is available at:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328412675_Not_Out_of_the_Blue_Ethics_to_Intersect_Civic_Participation_and_Formal_Guidance

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