



The small-scale fisheries academy in Senegal, a resource for promoting stewardship and implementing the SDGs

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This contribution is about sharing experiences on socio-economic circumstances in which artisanal and industrial exploitation of resources enter into conflict, such as artisanal mining and fishing. The focus is on processes that support stewardship (of local resources including social structures) and favour sustainability of social-ecological systems that are strongly affected by global players.

Stewardship is a frequently used concept in conjunction with drives for transitions towards sustainability. It encompasses notions of care about complex social-ecological relations, knowledge as embodied and practised, and place-based relations in the tension between different interests, representations and politics. The recently launched small-scale fisheries (SSF) academy in Senegal is cited as an example of a multi-stakeholder space for sharing experience, the co-production of knowledge and for honing stewardship towards sustainable social-ecological systems.

The serious overfishing, primarily by industrial fleets, places serious challenges to the continued profitability of traditional seaborne and land-based activities. These threats are amplified by a warming ocean as far as resource availability is concerned, while the traditional processing and marketing of fish for human consumption in the region are increasingly jeopardised by the industrial fishmeal plants of Asian investors with higher purchasing power. These developments are discussed from the perspectives of responsible public policy and social implications with emphasis on features that may be generalisable. The potential for wider application is explored in socio-economic sectors that, like SSF, face overexploitation, climate change and pressure by globally acting competitors.

Appropriate levels of education and access to information are part of the core requirements for understanding and the ability to act on such challenges as illustrated by a spot sample of women fish processors and traders in Hann, Senegal. Education is not necessarily confined to formal school education.

The academy therefore strives to accumulate and share information and experiential learning to achieve essential capacity building. To that end, among others, teaching aids for the ecosystem approach to fisheries (developed earlier for FAO) will be adapted and insights used from the literature about ingredients of successful strategies for how to act on marine climate and global change challenges.

The academy will support accumulating experience with policies and technological (and social) systems seeking to address overexploitation as a way to lower current obstacles to action. This is expected to enhance the human and institutional capacity of men and women in the SSF and provide functional support to the government's work on an action plan to implement the FAO Guidelines in view of safeguarding prosperous and sustainable SSF.

These experiences are discussed from the perspective of how co-production of knowledge (across a range of local and global 'owners') can enable social action and policy implementation.