



3<sup>rd</sup> World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress  
Chiang Mai, Thailand | October 22-26, 2018

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## Debrief from Community Day

### Day 2, Tuesday, 23 October 2018

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and a huge team of notetakers.*

#### Main messages

- SSF is not about just fishing. It is about place-making where identities are carved by an intimate relationship with nature. SSF are places where:
  - Entire families are involved in the activity, where women have a key role to play and inter-generational ties are crucial for their survival. It is an intimate relationship with nature that cannot be broken.
- Transdisciplinary teams need to foresee an active participation of the fisher community along the program/policy formulation cycle as a fundamental element of long-term SSF sustainability.
  - From agenda setting to community-based monitoring and evaluation.
- Land use is just as important to SSF sustainability as deploying protected areas and management of fishing resources. This is particularly true for indigenous and other traditional communities which are often displaced by aggressive profit-driven development projects.
- The negative impacts of irresponsible industrial fisheries on SSF are profound. Just one incident can wipe out an entire sector for years. The good news is that these dramatic scenarios can be reverse with an incredible effort from all stakeholders towards transdisciplinarity.

#### Challenges - past and current

- The human rights approach, will have to CHALLENGE the dominant development model and the narrow-minded conservation discourse.
  - *"We have governments that are professional treaty signees. (...) At the same time communities still do not have access to electricity"*.
- Criminal activity carried out by organized crime, illegal fishing and criminal industrial practices are ever more present in the fishing communities.
  - This leads to displacement, devastation and depression.
- Inequalities suffered by women and youth are persistent. And they are aggravated by a number of challenges such as replacement of labour with in-migration, high costs of entry, lack of visibility, among many others issues.

#### Gaps and opportunities to move forward

- We need to think of innovative policies, programs and projects that can retain the younger generations in the community. They need DECENT jobs in the fisheries sector and beyond.
  - New technologies, inter-generational initiatives, tourism are all part of the solution. BUT "We need to anticipate changes and not wait to react".
- Application of technology can have a positive impact in the community (e.g. by-catch reduction, global data networks, community-based monitoring, etc). However, with technology applications fishers are often seen only as end-users.
- Lack of interface of SSF as a sector in broader coastal or territorial planning processes. This leads to long lasting detrimental effects of SSF sustainability.

### **Policy-Science interface**

- “We still need to recognize that science is a tool and not a result in itself”.  
Traditional values need to be incorporated and the plural nature of contextual knowledge needs to be recognized.
- The policy, academic, and CSO communities need to:
  - Recognize the importance of traditional knowledge and VALUES in policy drafting and formulations;
  - Translate the technical knowledge into relevant and accessible information.
  - So that fishing communities can gain ownership of the contextual knowledge to negotiate with regulators.

### **Fisher to fisher recommendations**

- When organizations are strong they are much more effective at speaking with one voice and can build more convincing arguments against key risk factors.
- Fisher organizations need to fight for a seat at the decision-making table. This will be easier achieved if the organization is representative of its various communities.
- Transparency and participation are key to the interactive process with other stakeholders but that also means that the Fisher organizations must be accountable to the base.
- Fisher organizations need to build capacity to negotiate with regulators as equals. This means that capacity building is a permanent task!!

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3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress  
'Transdisciplinarity and Transformation for the Future of Small-Scale Fisheries'

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Contact us!



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