

Too Big To Ignore Report
Number R-04/2019



Too Big To Ignore

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Global Partnership for Small-Scale Fisheries Research

Transdisciplinarity and Transformation for the Future of Small-Scale Fisheries

Report from the 3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress

October 22-26, 2018
Chiang Mai, Thailand

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RESEARCH

POLICY

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HOW TO CITE: Kerezi, V. and Chuenpagdee, R. (2019). Transdisciplinarity and Transformation for the Future of Small-Scale Fisheries: Report from the 3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress. Too Big To Ignore Research Report, number R-04/2019, St. John's, NL, Canada, 32 pp.

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WSFC

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



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List of Acronyms

COFI – Committee on Fisheries

CSO – Civil Society Organization

FAO – Food and Agriculture Agency of the United Nations

ISSF – Information System on Small-Scale Fisheries

MPA – Marine Protected Areas

MSC – Marine Stewardship Council

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

RFBs – Regional Fishery Bodies

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SSF Guidelines – The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication

SSF – Small-Scale Fisheries

TBTI – Too Big To Ignore research network

TD – Transdisciplinarity

TEK - Traditional Ecological Knowledge

3WSFC – 3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress

Summary

Close to 400 researchers, practitioners, small-scale fishers, civil society organizations, environmental organizations, and government representatives gathered on 22–26 October 2018 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to discuss transdisciplinary strategies to sustain small-scale fisheries as a global food production system, as part of the [3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress](#). The congress was co-hosted by [Maejo University](#) and TBTI, in partnership with Department of Fisheries, Thailand, [Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center](#), [Kasetsart University](#), [Mahidol University](#), the [Marine Biodiversity Research Group of Ramkhamhaeng University](#), and the [Marine Science Association of Thailand](#).

To foster interaction and promote transdisciplinarity, the congress followed an innovative and dynamic format with activities organized around four streams: science, community, policy and action. The dynamic nature of the congresses was also carried through science symposium, policy forum, community roundtables, storytelling and talk circles, cultural exhibition, and a field visit to nearby inland small-scale fishing and farming village.

As a way to further inspire thinking outside of the box about what can be done collectively to enhance understanding, promote the importance of small-scale fisheries, and support their viability and sustainability, participants were encouraged to think about five cross-cutting questions as they move through the congress. These five questions included: (1) What is the major knowledge gap in small-scale fisheries?; (2) What are the major challenges facing small-scale fisheries?; (3) What kind of change in science, community, markets and policy is required to improve viability of small-scale fishing communities, reduce their vulnerability and to promote small-scale fisheries sustainability?; (4) What actions are required from civil society organizations, research community and policy people in order to implement the SSF Guidelines?; and (5) How to strengthen the policy-science interface?

In terms of the SSF Guidelines, participants were given the opportunity to share up-to-date information about various aspects of small-scale fisheries and to formulate action plans and capacity development programs to support the SSF Guidelines implementation. The highlights from these discussions are presented in a recently published report on ‘Supporting the implementation of the SSF Guidelines’, outlining, in particular, the roles of governments, community supported organizations, and research community in the implementation.

The overall aim of the congress was to find feasible and innovative solutions to make fisheries sustainable, including ways to support implementation of the SSF Guidelines and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The outcomes from these discussions lay down the foundation for greater coordination across the sector leading up to the [Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development in 2021–2030](#) and the [International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022](#).

Introduction

The last decade has seen a major spotlight being put on small-scale fisheries. The adoption of the '[Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication](#)' (SSF Guidelines) by FAO member states in 2014 gave the much-needed visibility to this important sector, calling all parties to promote small-scale fisheries sustainability through human-rights based approach. In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were rolled out, with the first Ocean Conference held in 2017 in New York. Many of us were there to make sure that the discussion about ocean sustainability paid due attention to small-scale fisheries beyond Target 14b (SDG14b), a target that calls for the provision of 'access of small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets'.

In the recent years, knowledge production and mobilization was another big theme for small-scale fisheries community. Many papers, reports and documents have been produced to address big questions in small-scale fisheries from a wide range of disciplines, as well as from multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary perspectives. New lines of inquiries, new ways to frame research methods, new approaches and tools, and new thinking in governance are all part of the exciting efforts to enhance understanding about small-scale fisheries and to achieve small-scale fisheries sustainability. Never before had we seen a surge of interests in small-scale fisheries, and it is not only from researchers, practitioners, civil society, fisher groups, and environmental organizations, but also from national, regional and intergovernmental governing bodies, as well as funders and philanthropies.

A common theme in all these initiatives is the need for transdisciplinarity in policy making, capacity development and knowledge building and integration. They also encourage innovation in all aspects concerning small-scale fisheries, including social transformation and governance reform, in order to protect the rights of small-scale fishing people and to promote sustainable and viable small-scale fisheries. This premise underlined the theme of the [3rd WSFC 'Transdisciplinarity, Transformation and the Future of Small-Scale Fisheries'](#), which was held on 22-26 October, 2018, in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The congress was intentionally organized inland as a way to give a much needed spotlight to the inland fisheries sector, which remains under-explored. Hosting the 3rd WSFC in northern Thailand, in the Province of Chiang Mai, and bringing congress participants to a small freshwater lake in Phayao some 150 km away during the one-day excursion, was an ambitious but certainly worthwhile agenda.

In order to facilitate interaction, information sharing, cross-fertilization of ideas and networking opportunities for congress participants, the congress followed a dynamic format with activities organized around four theme days: Science, Community, Policy and Action. Highlights from each of these days are provided in the sections below.

Debrief from Science Day – Monday, October 22

Science Day was designated for participants to share their findings from small-scale fisheries research and showcase how local, traditional, and scientific knowledge can be used as a driving force in decision-making and for making a real impact on the ground. Participants were encouraged to highlight innovative, transformative, and transdisciplinary approaches in doing and communicating small-scale fisheries science.

Debrief was prepared by *Evan Andrews, Jack Daly, Jennifer Beckensteiner, Diego Salgueiro Otero, Carlos Montero-Castaño, Kashiefa Parker, Andrew Song, and Alida Bundy*

Main messages

- Small-scale fisheries are important places (i.e., human rights, food security, and livelihoods)
- Their sustainability is affected by interacting, levelled social and environmental drivers of change including climate change
- Not all small-scale fisheries are the same or similarly affected by these drivers
- Implementing the SSF Guidelines in these dynamic contexts represents scientific and moral imperatives
- Human rights and social justice perspectives are guiding lights for our work
- This includes bringing the research & messages to where the people are and facilitating increased voice for communities
- We also have imperatives for more attention to inland fisheries

Data and methods

- Data for small-scale fisheries remains uneven (still 'data poor' for some)
- New technologies like mobile apps, crowdsourcing, mapping with diverse knowledge types can help bring small-scale fisheries data into policy processes.
- Participation and adult learning techniques in training workshops are effective ways of communicating and exchanging knowledge with local communities.
- Inclusion of TEK is as foundation for moving forward scientifically (e.g., MSC certification)

Innovations

- New methods/approaches discussed during Science Cafés and special sessions

- Crowdsourcing portal used by ISSF, activities and exercises, games, interactive discussions and pictures are effective ways of relaying messages to communities who have few facilities and low levels of literacy.
- Social, policy and institutional innovations need attention to advance ACCESS that is critical for livelihoods in small-scale fisheries e. g., new policy instruments, ways to address multiple dimensions of justice (e.g., conflict, corruption, and livelihoods), and advance means for collective action

Bright spots about progress

- Much work has been completed over the past 8 years (VISIBILITY for small-scale fisheries)
- The SSF Guidelines in place
- Development of Global Strategic Framework in support of implementing the SSF Guidelines
- Together the SSF Guidelines and SDGs can be used as the blue print for sustainable development of small-scale fisheries
- Various ways developed for outreach to community (e.g., CSOs in Africa)
- 2018 – FAO COFI propose new subcommittee of fisheries management
- 2022 - International Year of Fisheries and Aquaculture
- There is more interdisciplinary and perhaps transdisciplinary research, across the social and natural sciences

What is the major knowledge gap in small-scale fisheries?

- Implementing the SSF Guidelines at all levels
- Building capacity, collective action insights
- Comparative analyses challenging due to heterogeneous nature of small-scale fisheries
- Not all fisheries are doing equally well – why?
- Debating critical questions: development the right goal?

What are the major challenges facing small-scale fisheries?

- Dealing with change
- Translating policy into action
- Advancing social, policy and institutional innovation
- Implementing the SSF Guidelines
- Engaging stakeholders who did not participate in the consultations for the SSF Guidelines
- Encouraging the development of international or national initiatives to collect more consistent data on small-scale fisheries for integration in the policy processes

What kind of change in science (community, markets and policy) is required to improve viability of small-scale fishing communities, reduce their vulnerability and to promote small-scale fisheries sustainability?

- Inland fisheries coming into focus
- The changes affecting fisheries, which are resilient, which are not
- When do changes occur? Shifting baselines.... does a situation have to reach crisis point before there is a response?
- Tied to funding, global and local institutional constraints, and making people care (i.e., TBTI is a great example of clear message)

What actions are required from civil society organizations, research community and policy people in order to implement the SSF Guidelines?

- With implementation of the SSF Guidelines comes monitoring = civil society has a large role
- Strengthening small-scale fisheries' capacities
- Organizing women to be involved in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines

Debrief from Community Day – Tuesday, October 23

Small-scale fisheries communities play an imminent role in shaping the future for fisheries. This day focused on the work that helps enhance the understanding of small-scale fisheries communities and illuminate their importance. Participants were encouraged to present their experiences in community-based innovation and successful transformation.

Debrief was prepared by *John Matias Wojciechowski and Silva Salas and a huge team of notetakers.*

Main messages

- Small-scale fishing is not about just fishing. It is about place-making where identities are carved by an intimate relationship with nature. Small-scale fisheries 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 small-scale fisheries sustainability.
 - From agenda setting to community-based monitoring and evaluation.
 - Land use is just as important to small-scale fisheries 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 small-scale fisheries 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 small-scale fisheries as a sector in broader coastal or territorial planning processes. This leads to long lasting detrimental effects of small-scale fisheries 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!!

Debrief from Policy Day – Wednesday, October 24

Policy Day focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities to explore factors that may facilitate improved governance, enhanced legitimacy of formal and informal rules and regulations, and meaningful inclusion of various stakeholders groups in the decision-making process towards transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector. Special attention was placed on the discussion about how to pursue principles in the SSF Guidelines and to achieve SDGs.

Debrief was prepared by Milena Arias Schreiber, Madeleine Gustavsson and a team of notetakers.

Roles of Government in the SSF Guidelines implementation

- Describe the complexities and hierarchies involved in the SSF Guidelines implementation associated with governmental and bureaucratic processes
- Acknowledge the importance of international collaborations
- Attempt to integrate national targets with local needs
- Recognize core social principles that go beyond fisheries or resource management alone (e.g. human rights, gender equality, dignity, cultural identity, etc.)
- Highlight the importance of participation of local small-scale fishers' representatives and CSOs at the early stages of implementation

Roles of Policy Influencers in the SSF Guidelines implementation

- Adopt a multi-dimensional, transdisciplinary approach
- Seek broader connections across sectors
- Understand that we have to build and collect information and data *with* communities – not just *about* them
- The SSF Guidelines can be used to self-evaluate the work of NGOs
- Shift the discourse to '*adopting*' rather than '*implementing*' the SSF Guidelines

Protecting livelihoods, promoting wellbeing and values

- Nine speakers presented their work on livelihood aspects of small-scale fisheries from contexts as diverse as Brazil, Australia, Ghana, Gambia, Canada, and Papua New Guinea

- The session discussed factors underpinning the resilience and vulnerabilities of small-scale fisher communities enabling them to respond to rapid change and enhancing their livelihoods
- Brazil: individual and household-level responses to external change do not translate to community level resilience and adaptation
- Papua New Guinea: recreational-small-scale fisheries interaction are not well understood and need more attention
- By highlighting livelihoods and their diverse connections, the speakers stressed the importance of what lies beyond the small-scale fisheries economic contribution

Tradition and innovation in governance

- Implementation of the SSF Guidelines: walking the talk, needs new thinking
- Blue economy is used widely but abstract. How does it impact small-scale fisheries?
- Knowledge gap: How does small-scale fisheries fit within the blue economy?

Multiple tools, approaches and perspectives in small-scale fisheries governance

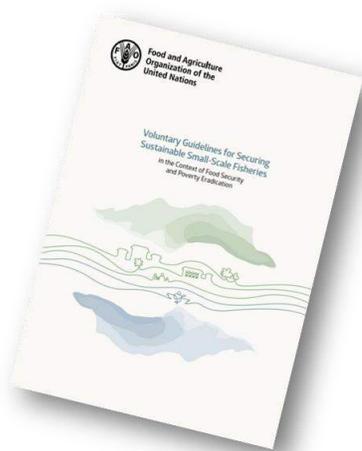
- MPAs bring different forms of contestations: what it means; and how they are implemented
- Small-scale fisheries governance needs to be analyzed under different perspectives and include all components of the systems (natural, socio-ecologic and government)
- Failures in the governance process is the disconnection and no dialogue among the regional, national and local management
- Examples of “communities enforcement committees” were presented
- Small-scale fisheries need to be involved in the international policy reform not just national levels – specific for those small-scale fisheries targeting migratory fish (e.g. tuna)

Multiple demands, multiple governance challenges

- Social equity can be an outcome of co-management, and also a tool to reach the outcomes which we desire. Community-based marine reserves can have benefits but we should understand them well to maximize their outcomes
- Governance rules from government to community have to be well applied and at regional scale
- We cannot let the communities alone to deal with the problems. There is a need for more clear, connected and regionalized regulations

- Need to think more about the role of markets. Technical solutions about markets, must address the relations that sustain poverty (e.g. the question of land ownership and reform)
- Accommodation of local and scientific knowledge

Towards the implementation of the SSF Guidelines



In June 2014, the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) endorsed the SSF Guidelines. This endorsement marked the conclusion of several years of ardent effort that went into the development of the SSF Guidelines through consultations and negotiations. The preparatory work on the instrument was carried out in close collaboration with governments, CSOs representing fishers and fish workers, academia, regional fishery bodies (RFBs), and other organizations and stakeholders. The SSF Guidelines are the first ever international instrument specifically designed for small-scale fisheries sustainability, taking into consideration

their nature, concerns, and potentials. Through human-rights based approach and several key guiding principles, the SSF Guidelines call on all stakeholders at all levels to contribute to their implementation. While the finalization and endorsement of the instrument itself were of critical importance, the real challenge lies in its implementation. The SSF Guidelines are broad in scope, and their implementation must necessarily engage a wide range of government agencies, CSOs, and research community, as well as small-scale fisheries stakeholders along the entire chain from harvest to markets.

The 3WSFC was an opportunity for researchers, practitioners, fisher organizations, CSOs, and policy makers to share up-to-date information about all aspects of small-scale fisheries and to formulate action plans and capacity development programs to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. The input from the congress participants has been summarized in a recently published [‘Supporting the implementation of the SSF Guidelines’](#). The report presents the summary of the discussion about the SSF Guidelines, outlining in particular the roles of governments, CSOs, and research community in the implementation process, and illustrating some of the main challenges and opportunities in the implementation. In addition, the report provides insights on what kind of governance transformation is needed for a successful implementation as well as how best to integrate knowledge and foster communications to enhance this process. From a practical standpoint, the report provides direct examples of how the SSF Guidelines are being implemented in five countries across the globe.

Reginal roundtables

Enhancing the understanding of small-scale fisheries globally, one region at a time

On [Action Day](#), a regional roundtable was opened with a quick overview of the TBTI Regional Synthesis Reports, which present a global picture of the small-scale fisheries characteristics, challenges, threats and opportunities. The reports from Africa, Asia and Oceania, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America were developed by TBTI with inputs from academics and experts from around the globe. With these reports, TBTI aims to put small-scale fisheries on the map and in the right perspective, such that small-scale fisheries sustainability can be improved through policies that maximize their contribution to the regional and national social and economic development.

1) Asia and Oceania Small-Scale Fisheries

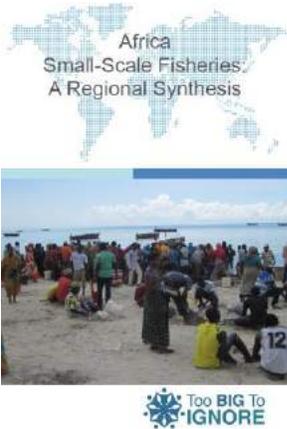


“ *The Asia and Oceania region encompasses the world’s major fish producing countries with small-scale fisheries generating over a half of the global small-scale fisheries production. It is estimated that the 90 percent of the region’s small-scale fisheries landings are retained locally for human food consumption, indicating an important role for food security and poverty alleviation. In all reality, the actual importance of small-scale fisheries for the Asia and Oceania region is even greater, when we take into account that these numbers are likely underestimates.*

From the TBTI ‘Asia and Oceania Small-Scale Fisheries: A Regional Synthesis’ report. To read the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

To read the highlights from the REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE on Asia and Oceania small-scale fisheries, [CLICK HERE](#).

2) African Small-Scale Fisheries

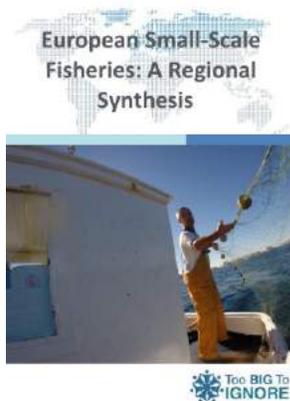


“ *Small-scale fisheries in Africa are important for the food security of more than 200 million people, and for the employment of around 2.3 million fishers targeting fisheries in the various marine, brackish and freshwater environments. As one of the world’s richest regions in terms of biodiversity and species exploited for livelihood and subsistence purposes, Africa has a long history of catching, trade and consumption of fish with fishing practices and know-how transferred from one generation to another.*

From the TBTI ‘Africa Small-Scale Fisheries: A Regional Synthesis’ report. To read the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

To read the highlights from the REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE on African small-scale fisheries, [CLICK HERE](#).

3) European Small-Scale Fisheries



“ *Although representing only 8 percent of the global small-scale fisheries catch, small-scale fisheries in Europe are of vital importance, particularly in terms of social and cultural heritage. For centuries, not only has fishing been a main source of food and income but it also represents a way of life for people living along the coastline. Traditional knowledge, fishing practices, and rituals are inseparable elements of small-scale fisheries. A long history of catching, trade and consumption of fish has molded a rich heritage that oftentimes transcends national borders and connects distant communities.*

From the TBTI ‘European Small-Scale Fisheries: A Regional Synthesis’ report. To read the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

To read the highlights from the REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE on European small-scale fisheries, [CLICK HERE](#).

4) North America Small-Scale Fisheries

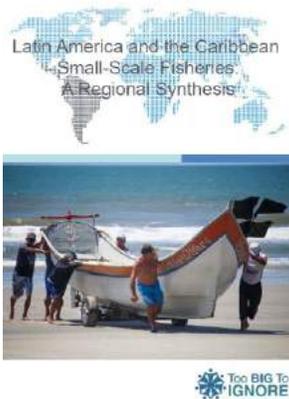


“ *Small-scale fisheries in North America makeup a small percent of global small-scale fisheries but have great social and economic benefits to the areas in which they are located, as well as contributing to regional identities. The waters off of North America are highly productive, particularly in the Northwest Atlantic and Northeast Pacific. North American small-scale fisheries are not easily defined, with vessels and methods ranging greatly. Small-scale in North America can compose commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing, although there is great heterogeneity in the fishers that compose these groups.*

From the TBTI 'North American Small-Scale Fisheries: A Regional Synthesis' report. To read the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

To read the highlights from the REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE on North American small-scale fisheries [CLICK HERE](#).

5) Latin America and the Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries



“ *Small-scale fisheries in Latin America and the Caribbean support livelihoods, employment and food security of more than 2.3 million people in marine, brackish, and freshwater environments. Small-scale fisheries in Latin America and the Caribbean are characterized as multi-gear and multi-species, accounting for about 16% of the global small-scale fisheries catches, and almost 20% of the total landed value. Compared to the global average, small-scale fisheries in this region receives a relatively high proportion of beneficial subsidies.*

From the TBTI 'Latin America and the Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries: A Regional Synthesis' report. To read the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

To read the highlights from the REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE on Latin America and the Caribbean small-scale fisheries [CLICK HERE](#).

Ways forward - What would you like to see by 2022 and beyond and how to get there?

Action Day was about moving forward and looking at ways to integrate knowledge and approaches discussed during the four previous days of the Congress. The goal was to come up with a number of actions plans regarding what is needed to transform small-scale fisheries, from the perspective of innovation and transdisciplinarity.

In the last congress session, participants joined action circles focusing on key topics that emerged during the congress, to further discuss and propose some concrete ideas about the ways forward, thinking in particular about what they like to see by 2022 – the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, and how to get there. The following summarizes the discussion in the action circles, as reported in the plenary, which offers an important starting point to build a strategic science-policy-community platform for small-scale fisheries.

TBTI will continue to facilitate conversation and discussion about these action items, promote transdisciplinarity capacity building of multi-stakeholder groups, networks and governments at local, national and regional levels, especially for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and the SDGs. TBTI will also coordinate research activities and produce communication strategies to keep the small-scale fisheries momentum going, particularly focusing around concepts like [Blue Justice](#) and the [Meaning of Small](#). Stay tuned for calls to actions and get ready to contribute!

Action circle #1	The Meaning of Small --- definitions, conceptualization, language etc.
<i>Facilitators: Svein Jentoft and Annie Lalancette</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we talk about small-scale fisheries in a way that ensures fishers and communities can recognize themselves? • How do we change the existing language and vocabulary at a global level so that it reflects the local realities? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is an issue of power: the words that we use will impact what is done, what we think can be done, and whether decisions will be taken to strengthen or replace fishing communities. There are inherent problems with defining inherent concepts: what is small-scale fisheries is relative and dynamic. 	

2. Several aspects should be considered in these definitions: a) should we go broader than just fisheries; b) should we start looking more at communities so we encompass the gender dimension; and c) we need definition that will capture the diversity of small-scale fisheries.
3. How we talk about small-scale fisheries needs to be critical about what threatens those communities, namely neoliberalism and capitalism, and these discourse need to be contextualized with other current discourses.
4. Our language has also a moral dimension; small has a connotation of diminutive so maybe use another word?
5. In terms of action: think of vocabulary and language but also challenge the language that is already being used by all actors.
6. Look at what is happening in the field of indigenous peoples' rights as inspirations for changing discourses in small-scale fisheries.

Action circle #2

The Fishers' Voices

Facilitators: Alifereti Tawake and Marc Fruitema

This statement represents the group of participants from the following countries: Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, and South Africa.

Small-scale fishers are at the interface of knowledge and action: our commitment is to go and mobilize.

1. The World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress should acknowledge that fishers' future and survival depends on sustainability of small-scale fisheries so any research and dialogue must intentionally involve leaders of fishing organizations and fishers themselves.
2. Fishers alert the world of impact of climate change on small-scale fisheries. We recognize and stress the urgency of global climate change on all small-scale fisheries.
3. Governments need to recognize community's rights to their fishing areas; the SSF Guidelines are a useful tool for this but they must be accessible in different media and languages beyond the five UN working languages.
4. The congress should allow a separate space for fisher dialogue with specific fisher-to-fisher dialogues where the agenda comes from fishers and there is translation capacity to bridge languages. Funding should be identified and make available to facilitate this.
5. We want direct representation in discussions and panels in the plenary.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Materials should be available during the coffee breaks from fishers sharing the info about their area, their knowledge and resource. 7. We need to be visible, we need to be heard and leaders of fishers must have the opportunity to speak and present and translation should be available to facilitate this. 8. Academics and the scientific community must value and recognize the traditional knowledge of small-scale fishers and ensure that the results of their research are presented back in a timely manner to communities so that it can contribute to the social and environmental development. 9. Small-scale fisheries must be recognized as including inland fisheries, artisanal, indigenous, subsistence, as well as commercial small-scale fisheries. 	
Action circle #3	Rights/access --- what to do to secure small-scale fisheries rights, prevent privatization and ocean grabbing? Let's talk ' Blue Justice '
<i>Facilitators: Paul Onyango</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to ensure Blue Justice, we need to introduce education on access rights of small-scale fisheries at all levels of school so that it becomes an issue of the whole society. Steer the focus on rights (take insights from CSOs). Monitor that those who are supposed to ensure the rights are actually doing so. Finally, fishers should be organized to have a stronger voice. 2. Prioritize access rights to ensure these rights stay protected within the constitution. 3. Don't talk about the access rights only among ourselves; instead, bring the discussion of small-scale fisheries rights to the human rights officials and let them recognize that these rights are part of the broader human rights. Also, we need to bring politicians onboard. 4. How do we raise resource in order to ensure human rights are protected? By: a) building relationship with conservation groups (they should protect the communities that are in the area that they are conserving, not only conserve the protected area); b) building relationships with consumers (e.g. restaurants) and get them engaged in protecting the rights of small-scale fisheries; and c) working with financial institutions. 	
Action circle #4	How to enhance value-chain to support small-scale fisheries?
<i>Facilitators: Jose Pascual and Derek Johnson</i>	
The premise: Value-chains have to satisfy multiple different values, not just economic	

but also social, ecological, cultural values. Also, we need to think of value-chains in an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary ways.

What do we need in order to enhance value-chain to support small-scale fisheries?

1. Vast diversity of experience and practice in terms of engaging with the economies; there is a lot of opportunities for learning. We need to foster platforms for sharing knowledge between small-scale fisheries, producers and traders.
2. Interventions into small-scale fisheries value chains have to be context specific.
3. Research is a necessary part of action and it has to be built intelligently into value-chains interventions. In addition, the research has to be done in a transdisciplinary way, in collaboration with fishers and economists, social scientists, and governmental representatives.
4. Fishers don't know everything about markets - there are significant knowledge gaps in their understanding of markets, which is why the people who collaborate with them in trying to enhance the value chain should strengthen their knowledge base and provide access to other types of knowledge.
5. Need mechanisms to better inform consumers about sustainable, socially just value chains, producers and processors.
6. Strengthen organizations in different segments of value-chains, whether of producers, processors or traders.
7. Recognize that middle-man often play an important role and provide information that producers often don't have.
8. Foster the capacity of small-scale fisheries in value-chain to adapt to changing context (climate, markets, and others).
9. Crucial to value-chain are gender and market distinctions. Gender must be integrated throughout the whole process of designing and implementing interventions.

Action circle #5

Governance transformation - How to do better at SSF Governance, also for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and the SDGs?

Facilitators: Milena Arias Schreiber and Alicia Said

1. Values of small-scale fisheries need to be reflected in policies.
2. Implementation of the SSF Guidelines based on social license to operate. Building trust with local communities is imperative.
3. Have a clear example of how the SSF Guidelines have been implemented.
4. Use the SSF Guidelines as a boundary object to create international collaboration for transboundary problems.

5. Governance to be based on more data and synthesis of social science research.
6. SDGs to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.
7. Measure endorsement of the SSF Guidelines and create mechanisms for governance accountability.
8. More opportunities to sit down with the decision-makers (must be bottom up).
9. Scientists should stop naively believing that they will change governance with science. Science communicators can help fill the gap between science and policy.
10. More transparency in governments.
11. Stronger, innovative partnership with news and social media, NGOs, and CSOs.
12. Fishers should capitalize on their strength and come together, speaking in one voice.
13. More studies on collective action.
14. Monitor leadership, maybe create corruption index to understand legitimacy and equity issues.
15. Make governments accountable for erroneous decision making.
16. Tap into various windows of opportunity to influence policy at all levels.
17. In Africa: review the ongoing governance transformations imposed by the World Bank through the [PRAO project](#).

Action circle #6

How to integrate knowledge and foster communications and sharing?

Facilitators: Maria Jose Espinosa Romero

1. Identify the learning circles and platforms that are out there and start connecting.
2. In addition to regional and global platforms, as well as learning circles, create spaces at the national level that are conducive to learning. Governments might not necessarily be open to sharing power but there might be individuals within it who are willing to do so.
3. In terms of learning circles, we need to anticipate that this is about trust building, power-sharing and institution building. In order to make the circles effective we cannot avoid going from community to community and working around specific problems and specific solution in order to demonstrate the benefits of the SSF Guidelines.
4. Women have a key role in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Also, we need to incorporate human rights dimensions – this is a key factor for learning groups.
5. Work at multiple levels if we want to get communities engaged, empowered and get the governments onboard.

Action circle #7	Long-term interventions --- funding and mechanisms to keep it going!
<i>Facilitators: Chris Giordano and Ahmed Khan</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize that wealth is a representation of power. 2. Determine where wealth is currently located and shift it to where is needed. 3. Engage the communities from the beginning of whatever interventions we use, applying context-specificity; from there help and engage community in local projects/ These communities should exude their power through the wealth of the project they want to support. 4. Moving from community level further up: different funding mechanisms required at the regional and national level - these could be trust funds to taxes on foreigners that are put back on the communities. 	
Action circle #8	Fishery Science and the Design of Harvest Strategies in Latin-America
<i>Facilitator: Carlos Alvarez</i>	
<p>The purpose of this proposal: a) produce a set of guidelines to assist in the assessment of the status of small-scale fisheries in situations of data limitation and be able to design harvest strategies that satisfy previously set management goals. This is based on the fact that the viability of the resource is indispensable in order for prosperous and vibrant fishing communities.</p> <p>The aim is to create a working group of experts from Latin-American to produce the guidelines based on assorted methods that are appropriate for the characteristics of data poor small-scale fisheries. An important goal of the group is to produce information to develop management policies, based on adaptive and innovative co-management perspectives.</p> <p>The group would understand the concept of ‘harvest strategy’ as a set of actions that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of management goals and management units. • The assessment of the status of stocks and the performance of the fishery based on suitable approaches and methods. 	

- The collection of data to satisfy the requirements of the assessment approach assuring the participation of fishers and the inclusion of their knowledge. Consider the use of databases already available to determine assessment approaches.
- The definition of reference points to make decisions about the status of the stock.
- The construction and use of procedures to facilitate decision making which can include control rules or other feasible mechanisms.
- Discuss feedback mechanism and the evolution of the systems.

The group will also search for ways to effectively communicate the results to managers, fishers and other stakeholders. We expect that the group would produce a report of this process by 2022.

Building the future of small-scale fisheries research and practice: reflections from students and early-career scientists

Eva Coronado, CINVESTAV, Mexico



“ Como estudiante, participar en el congreso fue muy satisfactorio, ya que tuve la oportunidad de presentar los resultados de mi investigación y obtener retroalimentación y críticas constructivas por parte de los asistentes, estas observaciones, sin duda enriquecerán mi trabajo de tesis. Además, los vínculos de trabajo, futuras colaboraciones y nuevos lazos de amistad forjados durante el evento, representa un aporte invaluable para mi crecimiento profesional y personal.

Dr. Mbach Ruth Msomphora, UiT The Arctic University of Norway

“ The 3rd WSFC 2018 is one of my best Conference attended so far. I gained a lot of knowledge from the Congress about transdisciplinary research approach in small-scale fisheries, especially when it comes to participation in an interactive way; besides enabling me making some research network, which is important for me as an early career researcher. The Congress was full of activities, including practical stories from the fishers/stakeholders themselves. Such a variety of activities made it impossible for one not to find a niche that suits best the future research ambitions as required. Besides, I liked the idea that the Congress had many early/young researchers as keynote-speakers, especially with the aim for dealing with the future of the world's small-scale fisheries. Having said that, the best part of the Congress for me was Session 15, Building capacity for the community people and SSF communities with the goal of achieving sustainable Food and Nutrition for the livelihood of the poor in Cambodia.



Evan Andrews, University of Waterloo, Canada



“ Beyond my doctoral work, the Congress helped to strengthen my own voice. I gained **access** to a diverse group of people, ideas and research. With encouragement from others, I stepped out of my bubble, reached out, and became more critical about what was said and unsaid. For example, I was lucky to present a debrief from the Science Day in front of the entire Congress. These precious five minutes resulted from the generous coaching by Alida Bundy who taught me how to

better synthesize, integrate, and communicate a range of observations succinctly and effectively. From the Silver Fins and Dories story-telling session, I observed that **standing** in the discourse of small-scale fisheries is earned and learned through a lifelong commitment to preparation, thought and practice. I took a big step towards my commitment during the “Pesca-Kucha” session when I argued that the weak governability of change is one of the most pressing challenges for the sustainability of small-scale fisheries. I am not sure my ideas had any **influence**, yet. But, I received master-class on influence from Moenieba Isaacs who flipped a narrative from ‘Blue Economy’ to ‘Blue Justice’ artfully and thoughtfully to encourage us to think about race, class and gender. I hope my voice is strong like that one day.

Wilson Mhlanga, University of Western Cape, South Africa

“ The presentations covered experiences from different parts of the world and this helped me to gain an insight into the characteristics of different types of Small Scale Fisheries at a global scale, as well as the challenges and opportunities facing these fisheries. From the presentations, I noted that in many parts of the world, there are several issues in Small Scale Fisheries that are similar, irrespective of geographical location.

To read the complete reflections from students and early career scientists, [CLICK HERE](#).

Blue Justice for Small-Scale Fisheries



Discussion around the 'Blue Justice' was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the congress. The concept of 'Blue Justice' was presented and discussed during the congress, urging all involved actors to critically examine what 'Blue Economy' and 'Blue Growth' initiatives mean to small-scale fisheries and their communities, in terms of distributive justice, community empowerment, human rights, food and nutritional security, gender equity, and sustainability.

Following the congress, TBTI submitted its ['Blue Justice for Small-Scale Fisheries' commitment](#), as a Voluntary Commitment towards fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Our pledge joins more than [1,400](#) other voluntary commitments to save our oceans, all registered on a [UN platform](#). The commitment, which is part of our [ongoing 'Blue Justice' campaign](#), calls attention to the current discourse about Blue Growth/Blue Economy, which poses potential risks to the rights of small-scale fisheries to the fishing livelihoods, which include access to fisheries resources, to coastal and ocean space, and to local, national and international markets. The campaign is urging for the social justice of small-scale fisheries be recognized not only as a basic right, but also an important condition for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of the SSF Guidelines

To find out more about our Blue Justice campaign, [CLICK HERE](#).



Blue Justice for Small-Scale Fisheries

by TBTI Global

The majority of the world's fisheries are small-scale. They employ millions of people - men and women, providing them with income, jobs and livelihoods, make significant contribution to local and national food security, and are integral to the social fabric, cultural identity and heritage of many coastal communities around the world. In recent years, the values of small-scale fisheries have increased with the increased public awareness about the benefit of locally sourced and sustainable seafood and the growing interest on cultural or experience-based tourism. Small-scale fisheries are clearly not only "too big to ignore" but are also "too important to fail."

The importance of small-scale fisheries has been promoted in the 'Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication' (SSF Guidelines). Yet, the current discourse about Blue Growth/Blue Economy poses potential risks to the rights of small-scale fisheries to the fishing livelihoods, which include access to fisheries resources, to coastal and ocean space, and to local, national and international markets. As the largest research partnership on small-scale fisheries, Too Big To Ignore (TBTI) is committed to rectify the inconsistency between the development agenda and Target SDG14b through 'Blue Justice for Small-Scale Fisheries' program.

TBTI has developed the online information system (ISSF), conducted in-depth research and built capacity that helps elevate the profile of small-scale fisheries, enhance values, improve viability, reduce vulnerability, address key concerns affecting fisheries sustainability, and argue against marginalization of small-scale fisheries in policies and governance. For "Blue Justice for Small-Scale Fisheries," TBTI is committed to:

- Share stories and case studies that illustrate how policies, decisions and development agenda affect access and rights of small-scale fisheries and challenge "social justice" principles
- Facilitate science-policy dialogue to recognize the rights, values and concerns of small-scale fisheries in the discussion about sustainable development at all levels
- Build "transdisciplinary capacity" among governments and non-governmental organizations, researchers and community of practices to improve governance of small-scale fisheries, for fisheries sustainability worldwide

Transdisciplinary Dialogue

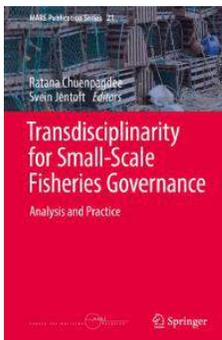
“ TD dialogue is about recognizing the need for meaningful engagement and mutual understanding among resource users, governments, scientists, and civil society organizations. Ultimately, the TD dialogue allows us to bridge the division between scientific and local knowledge, examine policy trade-offs and on-the-ground consequences, and bring about appropriate governance transformation.

Ratana Chuenpagdee, TBTI Project Director and 3WSFC Co-chair

Early in the planning phase of the congress, it was clear that the congress must promote the transdisciplinary (TD) approach, which argues that the problems and priorities in fisheries, ocean and environmental governance require a broadening of perspectives that cut across academic disciplines, bridge division between scientific and local knowledge, and bring about innovation in teaching and learning. This is especially the case where small-scale fisheries play a prominent role in the production and supply of fish and seafood, as well as in supporting livelihoods and providing jobs to the local communities.

The TD perspective is particularly important when dealing with the ‘wicked problems’ in small-scale fisheries governance, due mostly to insecure tenure rights, lack of livelihood options, poor access to markets, and marginalization of small-scale fishers in decision-making. When adding other uses of the ocean and the tendency for governments to support development agenda that may not be sustainable, the problems become ‘super wicked’. Thus, building transdisciplinarity capacity at local, national and international levels is imperative in order to overcome these challenges, as well as to help promote viability of coastal communities, and the overall sustainability of fisheries and ocean. The transdisciplinary approach also lends itself to the process of implementation of the SSF Guidelines and achieving the SDGs.

TBTI’s pioneer work on ‘*Transdisciplinarity for Small-Scale Fisheries Governance*’ captures the essence of this new philosophy and promotes the practice of it through workshops and training programs. The objective of the training is to expose participants to a range of issues, challenges and concerns related to fisheries, ocean and environmental sustainability, especially those affecting small-scale fisheries, as well as to deepen the understanding about their causes and effects, and to broaden the perspective about how to address them.



At the Chiang Mai Congress, TBTI launched its new book '[Transdisciplinarity for Small-Scale Fisheries Governance: Analysis and Practice](#),' which summarizes the diverse research findings that TBTI has produced during the years. The book also establishes the methodological foundation for the next phase of TBTI research and outreach, one that is focused on promoting transdisciplinarity capacity building of multi-stakeholder groups, networks and governments at local, national and regional levels.

Additional information

Congress program

New lines of inquiries, new ways to frame research methods, new approaches and tools, and new thinking in governance are all part of the exciting efforts to enhance understanding about small-scale fisheries and to achieve small-scale fisheries sustainability. Check out the official program of the 3WSFC where close to 400 participants contributed to the conversation about small-scale fisheries through oral and poster presentations, interactive sessions, panel discussion, science café and talk circles.

To download the 3WSFC program, [CLICK HERE](#).

Congress videos

For the 3WSFC, we made sure everyone could participate: researchers from around the globe, early career scientists, students, small-scale fishers, NGO, and governments. But not only that, those who could not attend in person were able to check the live-stream on our YouTube channel! If you still missed it, we have it all recorded in our video gallery.

To see the videos, [CLICK HERE](#).

Congress proceedings

Want to stay up to date with current research and practice on small-scale fisheries that have been presented at 3WSFC? Read our congress proceedings to learn about what small-scale fisheries experts around the globe have been working on!

To download the 3WSFC proceedings, [CLICK HERE](#).

 Congress in the news

Interested in seeing what others had to say about the 3WSFC? Check out the news articles about the congress and help us spread the word!

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the support and assistance of many people and organizations, sponsors, staff and volunteers who have contributed to making this congress possible. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the support of the following organizations.

Collaborating and Supporting Organizations



Special recognition

WALTON FAMILY
FOUNDATION



We thank Walton Family Foundation Inc. for their generous financial support. In addition, we would like to express sincere gratitude to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Oak Foundation, and WorldFish for providing financial and in-kind contributions that made it possible for a number of fishfolk, CSOs and government representatives to be part of this congress.

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