Coastal Community Access to Marine Resources and Conservation in Canada

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Presentation Overview

- Provide overview of OceanCanada Partnership
- Introduce the Access Cross-Cutting Theme of the OceanCanada Partnership
- Discuss the research plan and early results from the ongoing research
OceanCanada Partnership

- 6-year $2.5 million SSHRC Partnership Grant

- PI: Dr. Rashid Sumaila (UBC IOF)

- Central Question: How can Canada maintain healthy oceans and the well-being of coastal communities in the future?

- Aim: Understand past, present and future of Canada’s oceans from an interdisciplinary perceptive

- Three objectives
  1. Taking stock
  2. Scenario building
  3. Visioning

For more information:
http://www.oceancanada.org
Working Groups and Themes

NATIONAL:
• Legal and policy working group;
• Data and integrated scenarios working group;
• Communications and engagement working group.

REGIONAL:
• Arctic working group;
• Atlantic working group;
• Pacific working group.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES:
• Governance
• Changing oceans
• Access
Why a central focus on access?

What really makes business unprofitable for Pacific fishermen? About 70 per cent of the landed value of their catch can go to the holder of an evasive permit.
Access Cross-Cutting Theme

Objectives

• To define and characterize the importance of access for coastal communities in Canada
• To understand the current status of and historical changes to access for coastal communities across the three coasts of Canada, and drivers of change in access
• To examine the factors that support or undermine access
• To identify knowledge gaps and develop an agenda for future research on access issues
• To make recommendations for considering access in decision-making and policies related to the ocean
A mari usque ad mare?
So, how does one go about conducting research on access at national scale? The plan...

| Knowledge Coproduction Workshop (complete) | • Knowledge synthesis and co-production workshop  
| • Policy and literature review |
| Interviews Across Canada (in progress) | • Expert and stakeholder interviews on 3 coasts  
| • Thematically driven and open coded analysis |
| Community Case Studies (upcoming) | • Qualitative interviews and focus groups  
| • Synthetic and comparative analysis of cases |
| Quantitative Surveys (need funding) | • Community surveys across the three coasts  
| • Quantitative analysis of status, trends and determinants |
Research Methods

Knowledge Co-Production Workshop (Complete)

- Included 20 academics, practitioners, fishers and indigenous representatives from across Canada
- Co-define the problem, identify issues, and set the research agenda

Expert Interviews Across Canada (Analysis Underway)

- With academics, practitioners, managers, government, indigenous reps.
- Sample: 30 total, 10 on each coast (Pacific, Atlantic, Arctic)
- Guided by open-ended questions related to objectives of Access CCT
Coastal and Indigenous community access to marine resources and the ocean: A policy imperative for Canada

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(Bennett et al, 2018)
Access is “the ability to use and benefit from available marine resources or areas of the ocean or coast”

(Bennett et al, 2018)
Use vs benefit

Right to harvest

Who benefits

(Caught up in catch shares, Robertson et al, 2014)
Importance of access

Community
1. Fundamental to community livelihoods and well-being
2. Declining vs thriving coastal communities
3. Indigenous rights

Canadian Society
1. Urban-rural dynamics
2. Functioning food systems
3. Claims to sovereignty

Environment
1. Coastal response capacity
2. Coastal stewardship and management capacity

(Bennett et al, 2018)
Factors that Influence Access

- Availability
  - Environment & Climate Change
  - Competing Uses
- Governance & Management
- Rights (Property & Allocations)
- Capacity (technical, human & finances)
- Use and Benefit
  - Geographic location (Proximity, access to markets)

(Bennett et al, 2018)
Early insights from cross-country interviews

- Fisheries rights and allocation are pressing concern on all coasts
- General downward trend, but some exceptions
- Historical and geographical factors have major influence on current access
- Application of policies related to access at local levels is fluid and contested
- Spatial access is an increasing concern
- Loss of access is hard to reverse
- Addressing access issues is necessary - requires knowledge, will, capacity and concrete action

(Bennett & Bailey, in prep.)
Early insights on relationship between access and conservation
Bill C-68: An opportunity to address access issues in environmental decisions

- Traditional and community knowledge
- Social, economic and cultural factors in the management of fisheries
- Preservation and promotion of ... commercial and inshore fisheries
Next Steps...

Questions or Thoughts?

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Research challenge

How can Canada promote healthy, ocean-related economies and communities without further degrading the marine environment?

• Develop an enhanced understanding of the current and future social-ecological stressors affecting Canada’s three coastal-ocean regions (Climate change, ocean acidification, globalization, management innovations);

• Effectively integrate social & natural science research in order to optimize national-level policy planning and management;

• Work collaboratively towards a pan-Canadian vision for sustainable & healthy coastal-ocean regions by 2050.
Three objectives

• Taking stock:
  – Integrate existing information from several disciplinary areas & identify gaps in our current knowledge.

• Building scenarios:
  – Map future health of marine living resources under different biophysical and policy pathways;
  – Compare & ‘ground-truth’ our scenarios at local levels using case studies in each region.

• Develop a shared vision:
  – Disseminate research findings to community stakeholders & the broader research community;
  – Engage with governments, industry, NGOS, & communities.
A small piece of the big *OceanCanada* picture…
Accounting for Access in Ocean Policy

• Key consideration across all ocean policy realms
• Opportunity: Proposed amendments to the Fisheries Act

• But...
  – Need will to implement.
  – Need adequate social science capacity.
  – Just transitions
  – Etc.

(Bennett & Armitage, in prep.)