

Linking Wellbeing and Resilience to Improve Fishery Governance

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Abstract

Transdisciplinary approaches and innovative combinations of social and ecological theory are required to deal with complexity and change in fisheries and other human-ecological systems. This paper examines the interplay and complementarities that emerge by linking resilience and social wellbeing approaches to better understand and govern fisheries. After first discussing the nature of resilience and of wellbeing, and the limitations of applying each concept individually, the paper explores the interplay of resilience and wellbeing in fostering a social-ecological perspective that promises more appropriate management and policy actions. Five key points of interplay are examined: (1) the limitations of simplistic optimization thinking; (2) the role of human agency and values; (3) understandings of scale; (4) insights on “controlling variables” and (5) perspectives on thresholds and boundaries. This analysis leads to a series of insights for enhancing transdisciplinary research and fishery governance.