



# Assessing the contributions derived from capture fisheries from a wellbeing perspective: methodological and policy implications



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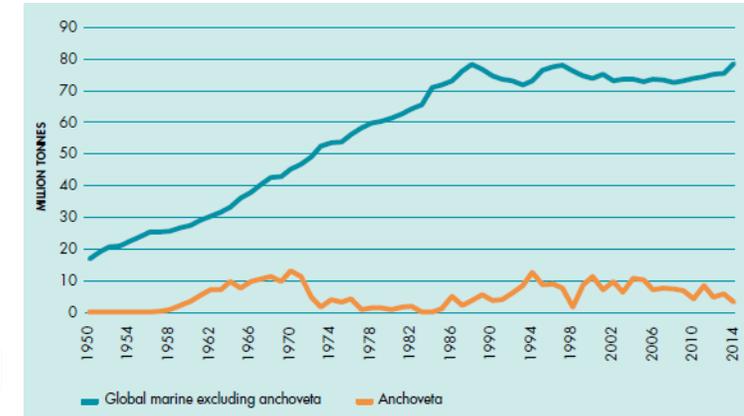
# Overview of the presentation:

- Typical examples of the social and economic benefits from capture fisheries.
- Social and economic benefits from a well being perspective.
- The role of institutions in mediating benefits.
- Methodological and policy implications.



# Most of us have a sense of what fisheries provide:

- Global total capture fishery production in 2014 was 93.4 million tonnes.
- In 2014, 37.9 million people were engaged in the primary sector of capture fisheries.
- Globally fish represents more than 9 percent of total agricultural exports and in 2014, fish exports were valued at US\$148 billion.
- Fishery exports from developing countries were valued at US\$80 billion.



## And what this is based on:

- The share of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels decreased from 90 percent in 1974 to 68.6 percent in 2013.



# Three dimensional well being framework



**Material** – ‘bank in the water’



**Relational** – reciprocating and building common identities, conflict and cooperation

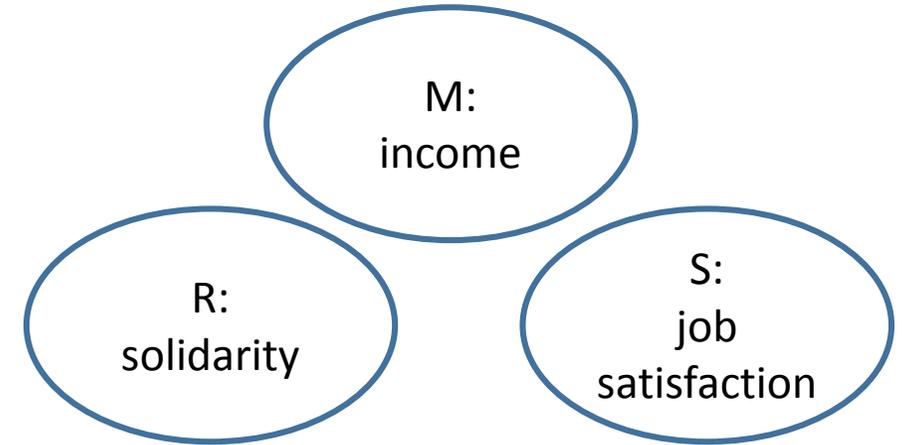
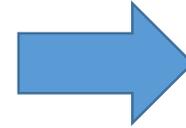


**Subjective** – job satisfaction, self-belief

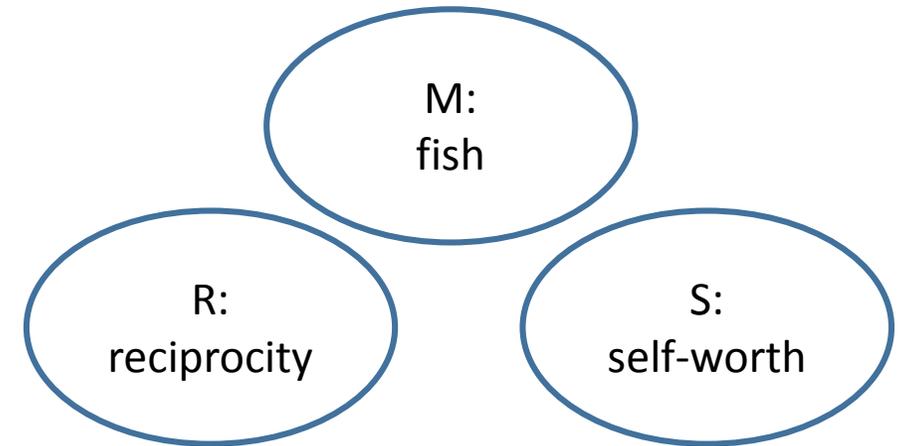
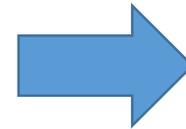
*e.g. Weeratunge, N., Béné, C., Siriwardane, R., Charles, C., Johnson, D., Allison, E. H., Nayak, P. K., Badjeck, M. -C. (2014). Small-scale fisheries through the wellbeing looking glass. Fish and Fisheries 15, 255–279.*

# Examples

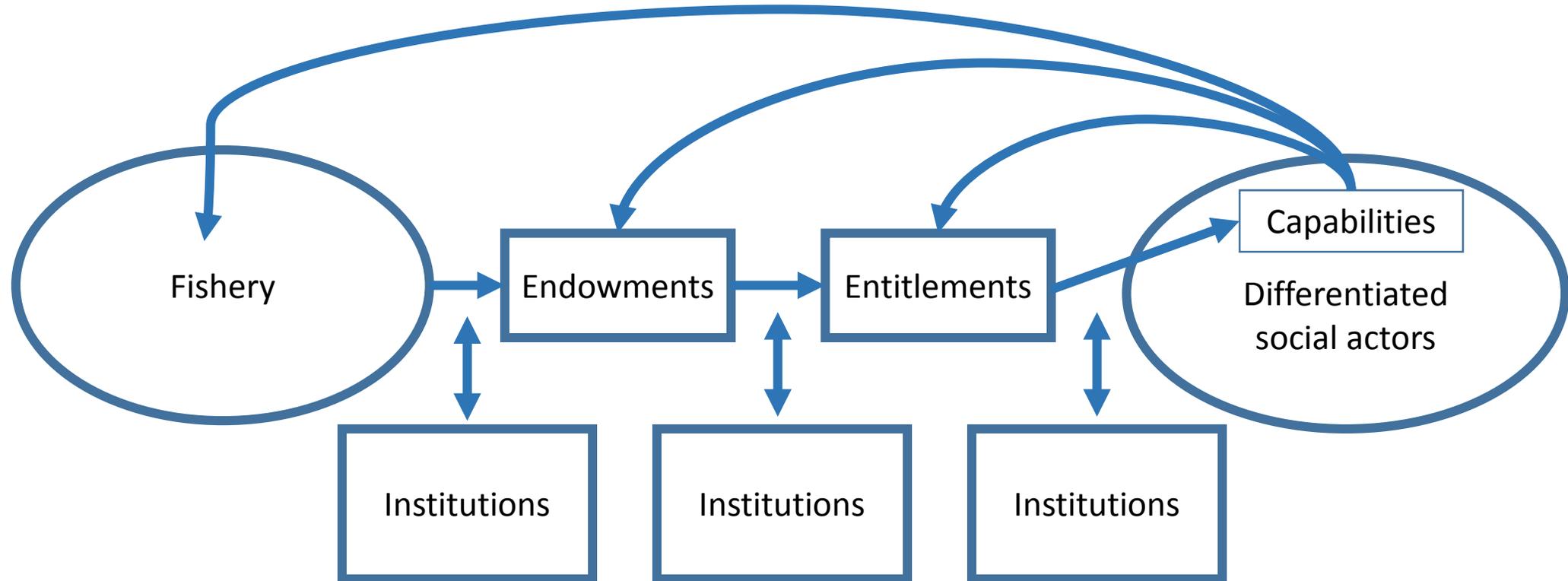
Collective fishing



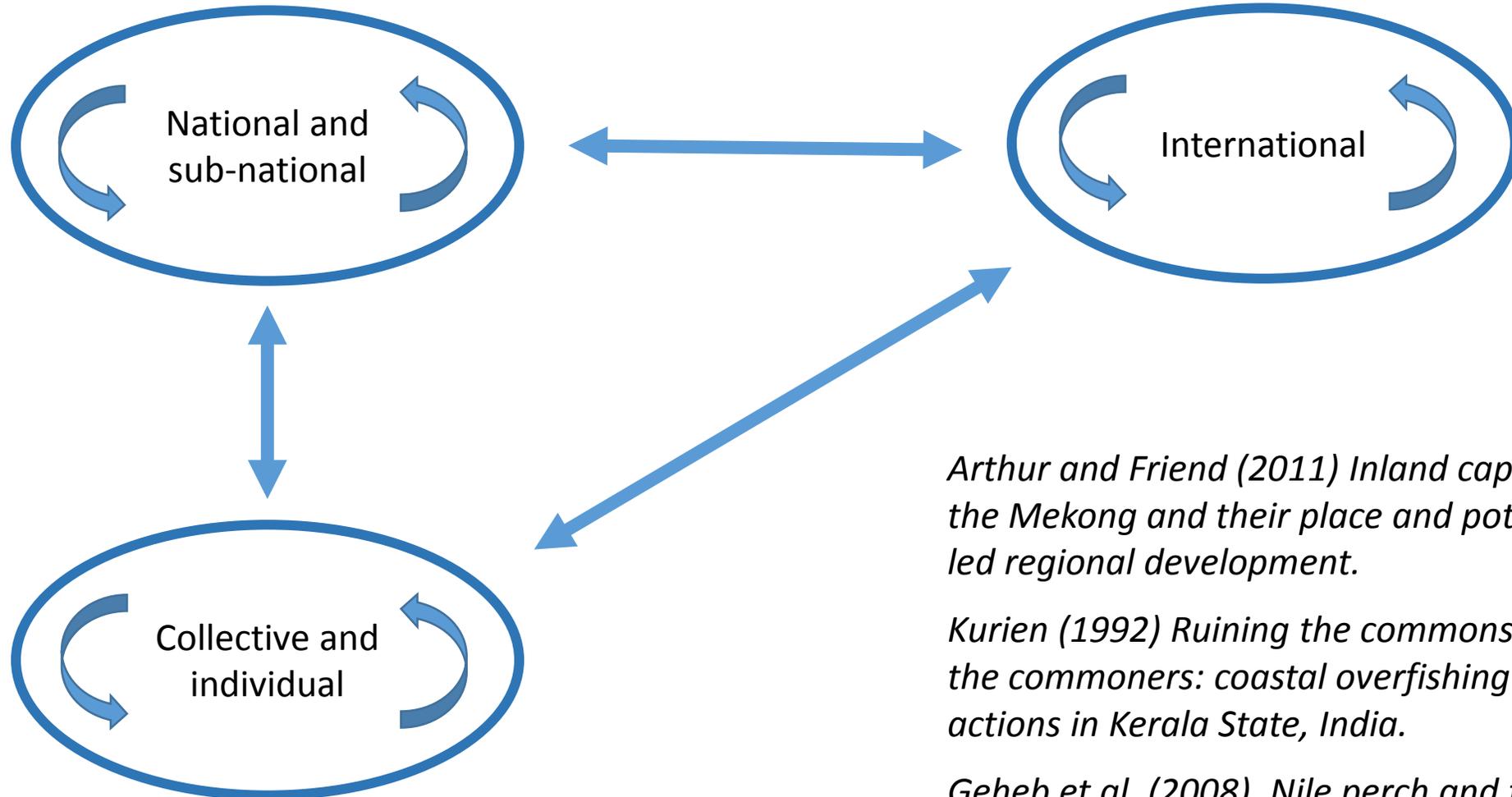
Sharing fish



# Institutions and environmental entitlements



# Claims, influence and legitimacy in institutional change



*Arthur and Friend (2011) Inland capture fisheries in the Mekong and their place and potential within food-led regional development.*

*Kurien (1992) Ruining the commons and responses of the commoners: coastal overfishing and fishworkers' actions in Kerala State, India.*

*Geheb et al. (2008). Nile perch and the hungry of Lake Victoria: Gender, status and food in an East African fishery.*

# Key aspects of this perspective

- Fisheries are dynamic and benefits have a temporal aspect – ‘when’ can be as important as ‘what’.
- Institutions not directly associated with fish and fishing can have important roles in outcomes and distributional aspects.
- There is no objective ‘decision-maker’ who is able to optimise and ensure control.
- Actors can and do self-organise to make claims, respond to threats and reinforce legitimate control.
- Because of individual values, aggregate benefits do not reveal how actors will respond to interventions.
- Institutional change is a contested process within and between levels wherein actors draw on different means to make claims on resources and for institutional change.
- The situation is likely to remain unpredictable.



# Methodological implications



- Need methods that can work with plurality of values and identities (including our own) that are historically situated.
- Need methods that recognise the complex, dynamic and often contested nature of fisheries and multiple interacting institutions.
- Need methods that avoid the need for an objective decision-maker but recognise the role of contest and power in the ways policies and institutions evolve.
- This suggests a greater emphasis on what people do and role of agency, power and institutions – people-centred rather than fish-centred approach.

# Comparing alternative approaches

## Fish-centred approach

- Focus on aggregate ecological sustainability, efficiency and managing people (primarily fishers).
- People and their poverty.....threats!
- Simplify system and process of change to a 'manageable' degree.
- Focus on institutions regulating access – diagnosis, design or reform, often through 'participatory processes'.
- Complexity appears as a persistent argument around data and need for information, tools and 'best practice'.
- Missing the significance of peoples own knowledge, skills and aspirations.

## People-centred approach

- Focus on disaggregated nature and distribution of benefits to groups and individuals within society.
- People and poverty.....political issue.
- Change not entirely predictable.
- Focus on processes of institutional emergence and evolution in terms of contest for legitimate effective control.
- Fisheries dynamic and fundamentally complex – context specific.
- Peoples' values, aspirations, human and social capital represent a potential starting point for them to address institutional change.

# Concluding remarks:

- When people are better able to represent their own interests and needs effectively, they are more likely to exert some influence on the state and other actors.
- This is particularly important for capture fisheries in developing countries where people and resources still remain marginal to many state (and donor) development priorities.
- Social science has an important role strengthening the capacity of these people to engage and represent their own interests and perspectives.



