



Social Impacts of Fishing
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**The Social Impacts of England's Inshore Fishing Industry:
Final Report**

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1. Introduction

The coast is an ending and a beginning, a zone where different things come together; this is as true of social and cultural processes as it is with physical and ecological ones. Fishing follows this pattern of being simultaneously ancient – hunting and gathering fish in ways that in some instances have not changed over hundreds of years. Yet modern, as alongside these old technologies can be the very latest electronics that provide insights into life below the water's surface in ways unimaginable a generation ago, whilst much of the marine ecosystems remains unseen. This encounter of the traditional and the contemporary can be seen throughout commercial fishing as science, economics and culture meet. The coast, the meeting place of land and sea, has become the area where people pursue their leisure interests; take their holidays, make their livings and where a substantial amount of the heritage of our island nation is found. The meeting of these flows means that there is tumult and tensions but also a huge amount of energy and possibility. Fishing is not a 'special case' rather it is woven into a set of ecological, economics and social processes that make it particular, these specificities mean that attention needs to be paid to those factors as well as what it has in common with other activities.

This research project has been concerned with a sub-section of the fishing industry - the inshore fishing sector. Defined as the fleet of boats under 10 meters in length, inshore fishing employs 3,000 fishermen across 2,599 boats, which have access to a pool of fishing quota administered by government. Inshore fishing is characterized by a wide diversity of vessel configuration, fishing gear used, the ecological areas they fish and the species sought. Many lack the ability to stay at sea for long periods, so are generally subject to the limitations and opportunities of the locality they operate within.

Quite what constitutes this sector in the industry is still debated, but as a rule of thumb the length of boats is commonly used and it is the one we have adopted for this report. For the inshore sector the distinction is made that the boats that constitute it are under 10 metres in length – but apart from that the sector is characterised by an enormous diversity. Fishermen use a wide range of equipment (*fishing gear*) to catch a wide range of finned fish, shellfish such as crabs and lobsters, as well as prawns (*nephrops*), and then have a set of business practices to get those to the end consumer. As well as a form of community within themselves, fishermen and their families are part of the social life of towns, villages and coves that are spread along England’s coast. Although far from the industry it once was - in national economic terms it is a very small industry - it continues to have impacts of profound cultural and social importance in the coastal settlements it is based in as well as on communities beyond.

Fish stocks pose a classic problem of how to manage a common and fragile environmental resource. In the past, policy was focused on reducing conflict over access to this resource, still a feature in some circumstances, but increasingly the locus of debate and concern has been how to manage this valuable set of ecosystems. Commercial fishing is regulated under the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which is then managed at national and sub-national levels. The restrictions, and the form of those restrictions, have been the subject of sustained friction between fishermen and policy makers, as has the science on which they are based. At the same time conservationists and many consumers of fish are concerned about the state of the fish stocks with high profile campaigns and interventions designed to protect those populations. Fishing has become an activity and occupation that is socially contested. The recently published decade long *Census of Marine Life* notes that: “Historically, overfishing and habitat destruction lead the ranking of threats to marine life associated with human activities”¹(p.4). The report emphasizes that fish

¹ Census of Marine Life (2010) First census of marine life 2010: Highlights of a decade of discovery. in, (Washington: Census of Marine Life International Secretariat Consortium for Ocean Leadership):4

species have in the past become extinct and that others have recovered from sustained periods of over-exploitation.

In 2009 there were 570 fishing boats over 10m registered in England, with 2599 boats under 10m registered, of those 1746 were under 8m in length. Working on these vessels were 5358 people, a decline of 22% since 2000². Figures from 2008³ show that approximately 3000 people worked full time on these boats suggesting that the balance of employment in commercial fishing is provided by the inshore boats. These figures suggest that most boats are run on an owner-operator basis, with few crew employed in the inshore sector. Employment is obviously a profound social benefit to those people who make their livelihood in this way and to the communities that they are part of, but the form of those benefits, how they relate to the configuration of the industry, the communities and markets in which these fishing businesses are embedded is the substance of this report. Employment as a basic figure leaves aside much of the more subtle and ephemeral impacts that fishing has on those interwoven with it, or those who just come into contact with it. Most of those who go to sea define themselves as 'fishermen' drawing pride, identity and solidarity from that as well as an income. Those who live alongside fishermen are often proud to belong to a community or place that is, in at least part, defined by this relationship with the sea. The second part of this report then attempts to relate insights from our investigations into these interlinkages with how fishing might be managed in the future. From there the report suggests ways in which inshore fishing might be developed.

The report is based on research in six case study towns that we name, but the people we interviewed and talked with to inform this report we do not. In protecting their identities we were able to ask them to be more candid than they might otherwise be, about their own communities and the way they are making their

² Marine Management Organisation (2010) UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2009. Pp. 120 in C. Irwin and B. Thomas eds., (Newport: marine management organisation and Office of National Statistics)

³ Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries (SAIF) Advisory Group (2010) Steps towards sustainable inshore fisheries - proposition paper. Pp. 13 in, (London: Defra, SAIF project)p.3

livelihood. Without their generous contribution of time and attention this report would not have been possible. We quote extensively below from what people said to us, and relate examples, to illustrate what we found. The social and cultural picture is complex and intricate and to ignore that would be to oversimplify what we have been told. Similarly we have tried to avoid jargon and technical terms apart from where they lend precision and concision. Our goal has been to produce an analysis that whilst acknowledging the particular qualities of each case study also points to common themes and experiences.

Some communities have been able to make more money from fishing than others, and certainly where that takes place the impacts of fishing are greater. Yet direct earnings are not the whole or even perhaps the most important benefit, as fishing plays a role in a much larger and important industry – tourism. At the national scale inshore fishing is a small, fragile industry that rests in the hands of a group of people who tend to be older but who are using their skill and determination to sustain it. Despite its economic marginality and because of its social and cultural importance we believe that fishing could yet play an even more vivid role in the future of a range of communities. The challenges between those possible futures and the contested present are not, unfortunately, inconsiderable.

We have structured this report to focus on the findings of our research, which is based on a considerable body of qualitative research. The main body of the report sets out the aims of the project, the methods used to collect the data, and then moves to discuss the evidence and findings from the two stages of the research. It concludes with observations and suggestions as to how the inshore sector can be taken forward. To make the report more readable we have placed supporting documents into the appendices; the review of the academic literature that informed this research, the methods deployed, a technical discussion of some of the data analysis and the questionnaire tools used.

1.1 Project Aims

The project had five interconnected aims, two of which - a and c - are discussed in the first stage of the report (sections 4 and 5) with the other three aims in the second stage and the conclusions relate to all of the project's aims.

- a. To establish the nature and scope of the social and cultural impacts of inshore fishing.
- b. To relate the social and cultural impacts of the inshore fishing industry to broader policy objectives.
- c. To understand how the social and cultural aspects of fishing interact with other constraints to impact differently on people.
- d. To relate the understanding of specific locations and communities to policy and management measures.
- e. To identify examples of best practice in developing positive social impacts of inshore fishing, which may be used as models.

1.2 Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries (SAIF) context and goals

The Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries (SAIF) project was set up in 2009 and is about long-term reform of the English inshore fishing fleet. Its specific aims are to:

- Achieve a greater understanding of the problems currently facing the English inshore fishing industry;
- Determine the economic, environmental and social impacts of inshore fishing and how associated benefits might be maximized in the future;
- Ensure that the inshore fishing industry can secure optimum economic benefits whilst operating in a way that is not damaging to the environment and safeguards stocks for future generations.

To achieve those ends SAIF has an advisory group comprising of stakeholders, who published a proposition in paper in January 2010, to create a debate about the future possibilities for inshore fishing. The SAIF advisory group's final report and an

initial Government response were published in September 2010⁴. The SAIF project is supported by several research projects, of which this is one, and a programme to engage with relevant stakeholders.

2. Literature review

2.1 Key points of the literature

We have reviewed the existing social science literature about the social impacts of inshore fishing, which is presented in appendix 1. The key points of the literature are:

- Inshore fishing is not yet precisely defined but is characterised by a complex diversity of fishing tackle, technical capacity, tactics and employment practices.
- Data about the social aspects of fishing is scarce, as it is not consistently collected, making it hard to define communities dependent on fishing.
- Studies of the social impact of fishing have highlighted the role of the family with crews often made up of kin and the identity of fishing passing across the generations. A study in southern England has emphasised non-familial social networks and the importance of first generation entrants into fishing (e.g., Just et al, 2005).
- Restructuring in the industry is challenging the traditional gender roles in fishing families.
- There is strong evidence to suggest that people's involvement is based on place, as well as, occupational identity. Loyalties are to particular places and traditions not just a shared occupation.

⁴ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/fisheries/policy/saif/pag.htm>

- Fishing communities are often tightly knit, which is often reinforced by a sense that the community is stigmatised and little is known about relationships with other communities.
- A distinction is increasingly drawn between communities making their living from 'real' fishing and those based on 'virtual' fishing closely allied to the tourism industry.
- Some social scientists points to the role of the Common Fisheries Policy in undermining traditional communities, others point to problems in the management of common resources and others the effects of the market for fish.
- It is argued, by Symes in particular, that the social aspects of fishing policy have been generally sidelined in policy.
- Fishing as an economic activity that has considerable effects on the marine environment has a extensive evidence base; those aspects of fishing that are about social identity and the cultural importance of fishing are not so well underpinned with data.

The literature on the social impacts of inshore fishing is diffuse with little work specifically on social impacts; the studies have been dominated by ecological and economic approaches. Those that have been more qualitative have tended to focus on remote communities, where commercial fishing is the dominant form of enterprise and way of life. Therefore, although this literature has an important role in informing this study, it has significant limitations in terms of the data collected, assessing social impacts in more complex local economies or those not dominated by fishing, and the frictions caused by social and ecological change.

To address some of these gaps we have included in the literature review a discussion of the social impacts and the role of food products in fostering community development. This highlights the challenge of assessing social impacts of an activity that is deeply historically embedded and may now often be more culturally than economically important. Many rural and community development projects based around agriculture use food as a vehicle to not only add value to the product but keep as much of that value in the local community. This requires using food as a way of integrating a range of actors within a locality to their mutual benefit rather than developing the individual sectors found within a community in parallel. This is a very different set of ideas and practices, or 'paradigm', than the approach of developing the fishing industry that appears to be more common in discussions of commercial fishing. Throughout this report we refer to fish in different ways, as with all food products there is an increasing differentiation. By commodity we mean a fish that is sold on the basis of its weight, species and technical quality by has no provenance or 'story'. Counter posed to these fish is a much smaller range of fish that have a narrative that is attached to a certification scheme or its association with a place. Often these two different types of fish speak to the different paradigms, commodity fish to sectoral developments and those with provenance to the paradigm of integrated development.

2.2 The coastal tourism industry

Tourism is a complex industry, and not the central focus of this report, but as part of the later discussion it is worth reflecting on its scale and scope to provide context for the rest of the study. The form of tourism most immediately relevant to this report is 'seaside tourism' although gastro-tourism may be important for some towns. We do not have complete data for the case studies but for those where we have data we present in the case study sketches. In 2008 England and Wales seaside tourism employed approx 210,000 people, or as many people as the coal mining, steel, pharmaceutical and aerospace industries combined. In 2009 fishing both inshore

and deep water employed 6,209 people directly in England and Wales⁵. Tourism is not evenly distributed with approximately 61,000 jobs in the 2006/8 period in the South West, 46,000 in the South East, 29,000 in the North West but only 7,000 in the North East. In this it broadly mirrors the geographic distribution of the inshore fishing sector. At a county level, in 2007 estimates for the gross value added to county economies by seaside tourism ranged from £250 million for Cornwall, down to £20 million in Cumbria and £10 million in Northumberland⁶. Often in coastal towns and villages, after employment in the public sector, tourism is the pre-eminent economic activity.

3. Methods and Methodology

The project was divided into 2 phases, the first sought to understand the social impacts of inshore fishing on coastal communities in England and the second phase how these might inform policy scenarios and how stakeholders responded to those scenarios. In order to understand the way in which inshore fishing interacts with communities the research team decided on a case study approach to provide information on a selection of different communities on the coast of England. Case study methodology allows the research team to focus on developing an in-depth understanding of a community relatively quickly and to explore not just the economic but social and cultural links to fishing. To make the findings from case studies generalisable it is important that those selected are broadly representative, and that the number of case studies allows comparisons to be made. This process is discussed below.

The research team opted to use qualitative methods to lead the enquiry backing those up with a quantitative technique, providing flexibility and variation in gathering data from a diverse group of people. Through a semi-structured

⁵ Marine Management Organisation (2010) UK sea fisheries statistics 2009. Pp. 120 in C. Irwin and B. Thomas eds., (Newport: marine management organisation and Office of National Statistics)

⁶ all tourism figures in this paragraph Beatty, C., S. Fothergill, T. Gore and I. Wilson (2010) The Seaside Tourist Industry in England and Wales. Pp.68, (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research)

questionnaire the research team looked to interview those who were obviously involved with inshore fishing as well as those people who lived in communities alongside those who fish for a living (see appendix). In each case study area as well as interviews with individuals the research team looked to convene a focus group to allow local people to discuss the issues around fishing in their community. The quantitative technique used was social network analysis to explore some of the networks around fishing businesses and their principals. Taken together these techniques would allow the research to form a picture of the interactions between inshore fishing and the wider community, considering not only business transactions but also the social connections.

The second phase of the project was to create a set of policy scenarios and through discussion with stakeholders discern how these might provide insights in how fisheries might be managed in the future. These scenarios needed to be based on the research in phase 1 and the analysis made of the results from that work.

Discussion groups have a number of advantages as a research method as they bring together representatives of those groups who have a stake in the topic to discuss and if necessary debate a topic. Scenarios allow discussion of 'what if's' in a way that can, through analysis, allow the research team to discover not only pragmatic objections but also differences in outlook and philosophy. After this stage in the research we interviewed by telephone those with responsibility for tourism management at a regional or a large scale about the relationship between tourism and fishing.

To bring the various streams of data together the research team elected for an adjusted constant comparative method that is based on iterative rounds of analysis and through which the analysts search for emergent themes. Therefore the first round of analysis was based on the phase 1 data, with the next iteration being the data from phase 2 on its own, with the tourism interviews analysed on their own and then the final round all of the data collected. The adjustment to the classic constant comparative method was the presence of the quantitative data which was used to

triangulate the emergent themes and so helped guide the rounds of analysis rather than lead them.

3.1 Selection of Case Studies

The selection of the case study communities was an iterative process that aimed to capture the diversity of the inshore fleet and the communities it is intertwined with. Our analysis clearly showed that the inshore fleet was concentrated in the South West of England. In order to have wider policy relevance the sample was guided in order to ensure broader geographic coverage.

Stage 1:

Data was obtained for a total of 135 ports in England. Where available, the key variables compiled were:

- Resident population (all ports)
- 2003 Fishing income, all species (66 ports)
- 2009 Boats registered (74 ports)

Using this data, the following variables were computed in order to try and identify ports where fishing was likely to be significant in socio-economic terms:

- Fishing income per capita
- Boats per capita

For each variable, the top two quartiles were initially shortlisted. It was suggested by the research team that contextual factors such as remoteness, geographical spread and population size could also be taken into account when selecting study areas. A further three ports highlighted as being potentially important inshore fishing ports by the Vivid Economics report were also added⁷. This was on the basis of median boat size and the significance of under 10m boats in their fleets. These were – Mevagissey, Portland and the Scilly Isles. To widen criteria that might suggest social relevance, the following two variables were added:

⁷ Vivid Economics (2008) The economic benefits of fisheries management: Regulatory design for stock recovery, equity and an efficient fleet. Pp.74, (London).

- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) (Most deprived 10% for England falls below 3249, least deprived 10% falls above 29233)
- Percentage of registered boats that are under 10 metres in length

The resulting list of 17 potential candidates was then selected on the basis of needing to represent the 6 relevant regions of England; this produced two possible combinations.

Table 1 - Case study selection options

Case Study Selection 1	Case Study Selection 2
Newlyn, Cornwall	Newlyn, Cornwall
Padstow, Cornwall	Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk
Appledore, Devon	Amble, Northumberland
Whitby, Yorkshire	Southwold, Suffolk
Rye, East Sussex	Scarborough, Yorkshire
Portland, Dorset	Mevagissey, Cornwall

Overall, the final case studies selected in consultation with Defra represent a number of key factors in the inshore fishing industry and different types of communities (see Table 2 below). The six case studies cover the major regions of England; ranging from communities where fishing is economically important through to those where it is symbolically central, from small villages to larger towns, from the poor to the affluent, remote to accessible places and with a range of tourism offers. The research team interviewed a wide group of citizens in these communities along with both down and up-stream interests and the catching sector itself.

Table 2 – Case study selection figures

Port name	County	Pop'n	Fishing income /Income per capita 2003	Number of under 10m boats	Boats registered / Boats per capita (*100) 2009	Under 10m as % of all boats	IMD ranking 2007
Newlyn	S. Cornwall	2687	£17.7m / £6,570	88	140 / 5.21	63%	3709
Padstow	N. Cornwall	2449	£1.7m / £713	13	18 / 0.74	72%	12,267
Whitby	North Yorkshire	13594	£2.7m / £196	20	34 / 0.25	59%	8176
Amble	Northumberland	6044	£1.2m / £196	22	30 / 0.50	73%	22,349
Rye	East Sussex	4195	£0.7m / £170	25	27 / 0.64	93%	21,991
Whitehaven	Cumbria	24978	£2.17m / £87	15	15 / 0.06	100%	11,116

Table 3 - Number and categories of interviewees by case study

Case study	Fishermen	Fishing family	Allied Industry	Citizen
Amble	4	2	6	4
Newlyn	4	1	6	7
Padstow	4	1	3	2
Rye	4	1	2	10
Whitby	5	0	6	10
Whitehaven	3	0	3	2

3.2 Fieldwork and analysis

The fieldwork took place during the winter of 2009-10 and resulted in some revisions to the methodology initially envisaged. It became quickly apparent that ‘gatekeepers’ were important in contacting fishermen; these influential individuals

introduced the researchers to the fishermen and vouched for the value of the research being undertaken. Although not unusual as many social groups and networks have such individuals, it was an important finding and meant that researchers were tracking existing social networks in many instances. The researchers endeavoured to interview people outside of these networks to provide balance. The pilot and first case study saw some changes to the types of quantitative data collected, as interviewees were reluctant to answer some of the wide-ranging questions, as they could not relate them to the expressed goals of the research. This led to the adoption of attitudinal questions that were analysed through factor analysis (see appendix). Only in Padstow were a significant number of interviewees familiar with working with social researchers but the research team was welcomed and levels of co-operation were high. The goal of having focus groups in the case studies was only partly successful with groups taking place in Rye, Amble and Newlyn. Phase 1 also demonstrated that recruitment for participation in phase 2 would have to be more widely drawn than initially envisaged, as the range of stakeholders identified was diverse. Recruitment for phase 2 was greatly assisted by participants in the focus groups and at that stage expression of disappointment by community representatives that their town had not been chosen as a case study in the project.

The pilot and first case study provided guiding themes that informed the first round of analysis of the case studies and those themes in turn were revised in the light of that round of analysis. The research team then created a summary of their findings to date as well as the policy scenarios to inform the discussion in phase 2. Once the entirety of the data had been collected those initial themes that had informed phase 2 were re-scrutinised and all of the data analysed to discern common themes and findings.

4. Case studies

Those people who took part in the interviews for the case studies did so anonymously for the purposes of this research and the research team has ensured they cannot be identified in this report. Often local people provided us with estimates of activity in their community, although wherever possible we found a second source for these figures. Whenever we have been able we have found third party figures but these are not always available.

4.1 Amble, Northumberland

Amble is one of Northumberland's small traditional coastal communities that have seen traditional industries such as mining decline alongside fishing. There are around 100 people making their living from fishing now: 50 on the boats and 50 in support services⁸. As a result, tourism is becoming increasingly important in the town as other industries decline, with 100 people employed year round or 8% of total employment in the town⁹. Visitors are drawn to the harbour, the marina, the town's Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and views of Warkworth castle.

Amble remains a tight knit community where people have lived and worked alongside each other for generations and where the harbour remains the hub of community life. Fishermen play an important role in the town sponsoring events at local schools, crewing the local lifeboat and drawing in tourists. The harbour is the social meeting point for both residents and tourists alike and is characterised by fishing activity. As a result, fishing is central to Amble's sense of identity. Our interviewees, both working on land and in the fishing industry argued that the close-knit values held in Amble relate to the traditional working relationships of the fishermen and are supported by the fishing families that live there.

⁸ Local estimate

⁹ Beatty, C., S. Fothergill, T. Gore and I. Wilson (2010) The seaside tourist industry in England and Wales. Pp. 68, (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research).

Fiercely proud of their community, our interviewees in Amble see fishing as playing a key role in the future of the town as it develops in new directions and creates new forms of employment and industry after the closure of the area's mines. The town has a thriving marina that is used by pleasure vessels as well as some of the fishing fleet. However, the fishing industry is conscious of being close to what it perceives as the better supported Scottish industry. Fishermen are restricted on their ability to fish for the finned fish generally eaten in the community and are reliant on distant markets. In a town where fishing has been passed down from generation to generation, prospects for the future of the fishing industry mean young people no longer want to go to sea and existing fishermen are discouraging their sons from entering the industry. The traditional way of life is beginning to break down.

4.2 Newlyn, Cornwall

Located at the extreme end of the South West peninsula, Newlyn is one of the largest fishing ports in England, with 140 under-10m registered boats. The town's identity, local services and socio-economic structures are all associated with fishing, although it is also known for its community of artists and galleries. Fishing not only dominates the physical infrastructure of the town and facilities but it permeates the identity of individuals and the community. The majority of community events, initiatives and interests in some way relate to fishing. A variety of upstream and downstream businesses exist in the town including the prominent fish market where the majority of catch is sold. Further services are indirectly supported by fishing, the number of which has diminished over recent years in line with the decline in the scale and value of the industry. Hospitality services primarily serve the fishing industry rather than tourism, although tourists are drawn to the art galleries, fish festival and to view fishing activities on the harbour side.

The most common social distinction is that between fishermen and artists, with some perceiving them as quite separate and others as integrated. The fishing community itself is close knit, with the principal meeting places being public houses and the Fisherman's Mission, a hub of the community in terms of knowledge exchange, networking and socialising. Although important and a highly valued

resource for the community, expressions of support for it are highly gendered. Women are more likely to acknowledge the role of the Mission, whilst men although the main users of the Mission's services are not so open about its role.

Many inshore fishermen supplement their income by crewing on larger trawlers or working outside the industry. The inshore sector plays an important role in providing skills, training and knowledge for the wider industry and is often seen as more aesthetically pleasing than the deep-sea sector. Trust and community support appears strong within the inshore fleet, both on and off shore; inshore boats often go out as a group and many of the lifeboat crew are inshore fishermen. High levels of cooperation and active networks exist between the various organisations present. A traditional view of the role of fishermen is apparent with relatively few fishermen capitalising on the marketing opportunities of the fish festival, which attracts thousands of visitors every year. From fishing regeneration projects through seafood initiatives to the producer organisations, networks are active and high levels of knowledge; trust and reciprocity are evident among those involved in addressing the industry's concerns. Because of its role in both Cornwall's and England's fishing industry, Newlyn hosts several initiatives to develop it. Project officers work closely with fishermen to take these initiatives forward. Some political tensions exist and power is an issue in Newlyn, with perceived shifts in the balance of power towards the wider community emerging.

4.3 Padstow, Cornwall

Padstow is a small town on the north coast of Cornwall, on the estuary of the river Camel. The town has become internationally famous in the last 20 years because of its association with the TV chef Rick Stein and as the base of his hospitality businesses. The town promotes itself as a historic fishing village, with 18 inshore boats registered in the port. Fish and fishing play a central role in the most important industry in the town - tourism. In the height of summer over 30,000 people visit a day, eating at more than 40 establishments and the harbour is at the

centre of town¹⁰. Tourism provides 1300 year round jobs, or 51% of employment in the town, contributing £17 million GVA to the town's economy¹¹. To gain access to the town, visitors can park next to a boat builder's yard and the lobster hatchery and walk past the fishermen's sheds. Fishing is the lens through which the visitors' impression of the town is filtered. Fish caught by local boats and landed in Padstow does go directly into the town's restaurants but other fish is sold into the continental markets.

Many local people have been pushed away from the harbour side by second and holiday homes but still maintain their traditions and have pride in their community. Ancient annual festivals, local traditions, songs and the natural beauty around Padstow mean that in a town marked by the cosmopolitanism of tourism it remains a unique place and community. The remaining fishermen have found market and regulatory niches to allow them to continue, with support from the rest of the community. They face the challenges of uncertain continental markets, concerns about secure access to their fishing grounds and an ageing workforce. Although they have a significant market for fish on their doorstep, there remains the challenge to match that to the species available locally.

4.4 Rye, Sussex

Inshore fishing is historically an important part of the Rye community, and it remains so in terms of contemporary economy and culture. In economic terms the fishing industry contributes up to £1 million per annum into the local economy directly through income and related inputs¹². It also contributes indirectly to the local economy through its connections with Rye's primary economic sector - tourism. Given that Rye, like many other small coastal communities, suffers poor economic indicators in term of employment and other factors, this is very significant. The fishing industry is also absolutely central to the community's collective identity and

¹⁰ Figures from interviewees in the town

¹¹ Beatty, C., S. Fothergill, T. Gore and I. Wilson (2010) *The seaside tourist industry in England and Wales*. Pp. 68, (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research).

¹² Arup and Environment Agency (2002) *Harbour of Rye Review*. Pp. 54

sense of place. Any decline in the industry at Rye would thus bring both cultural and economic negative impacts to the area. For most of the local residents it would be the cultural significance of fishing that would be most important with the economic impact largely being felt by those directly involved with fishing, partly because the fishermen are not linked into extensive local social or family networks. Half the 100 or so people who work in the industry live outside of Rye itself.

The Rye fishing fleet is flourishing with numbers of boats up (now at a total of 27) in the last decade and a waiting list to get into the harbour. This success is due to the recent upgrading of the fishing quay facilities and the apparently healthy state of fish stocks in Rye Bay. The harbour remains tidal and thus fishing times are restricted. This acts as a brake on the over exploitation of local stocks. Rye lands a very diverse catch but diversifying into new catches, particularly scallops, has contributed to this success. The final component in this recent success reflects collective efforts in wholesaling and distribution, which means that 80% of the catch now is exported to France.

The Rye fishing community has demonstrated a willingness and ability to co-operate and self-regulate - finding new markets, organising the Rye Scallop Festival and a voluntary closed season on scallop fishing to preserve the stock. There is plenty of room for new economic activity to develop particularly in relation to value added food markets and tourism. The scale of the industry in volume terms probably cannot increase markedly due to the restrictions on boat numbers and the tidal nature of the port. The main challenges it faces, in the opinion of those people we interviewed, comprised in dealing with quotas and regulations and an ageing workforce.

4.5 Whitby, Yorkshire

Whitby on the North Yorkshire coast was historically significant for shipbuilding, potash, and fishing. Today, there is still one company building small ships, mostly trawlers, but the inshore fleet of 34 under-10m boats is struggling to survive; the local industry is seen as “poised on a knife edge.” Loss of more boats may result in

knock-on effects on other activities such as the fish market and fish processing. Despite the decline, fishing and fish processing continue to be important economic activities. Current local estimates of employment in fishing suggest that there are around 250 – 300 people making a living directly or indirectly from fishing.

Tourism is the most important economic activity and is based on the maritime, fishing and cultural heritage of the town (Whitby Abbey, Captain Cook); with a gradually expanding season that brings visitors year round. There are approximately 2,000 year round jobs in tourism, which is 24% of employment in the town, and tourism contributes £24 million GVA to the local economy¹³. Tourism also brings problems, particularly traffic congestion in the summer months. ‘Whitby fish’ are a significant draw for tourists many of whom come to eat in one of the fish restaurants or fish and chip shops.

Quality of life is viewed as high with a low crime rate and a good mix of people from different socio-economic classes. There is a ‘lifestyle mindset’ where people come to Whitby to enjoy life rather than to make a lot of money and to a certain extent the entrepreneurial spirit was seen as lacking by some interviewees. People have a strong sense of identity and perceive Whitby as being ‘unique’ with its links to the maritime past. There is a strong sense that the town is a fishing community among those inside and outside of the industry. Among the fishing community the sense of belonging to a long tradition is very strong with many of the currently active fishermen having descended through generations of fishing families. Levels of support and trust in the town are high, not just among the fishing community but also more widely. Families support each other in hard times and the fishing community is well integrated and involved in the wider community.

4.6 Whitehaven, Cumbria

Whitehaven is a historic port of ten thousand people on the Cumbrian coast. In the past it was a centre for heavy industry – coal, steel and chemical manufacturing but

¹³ Beatty, C., S. Fothergill, T. Gore and I. Wilson (2010) The seaside tourist industry in England and Wales. Pp. 68, (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research).

is now most influenced by nuclear power generation. In response to the industrial decline, the town has been through a prolonged period of renewal and re-orientation, the most obvious product of this process is the renovated harbour side. The residents are very proud of the built heritage of the town, with the harbour being the centre of the town's tourism industry and many of its community events.

Fishing in the town has declined sharply over the last 20 years, with only 15 under-10m boats remaining employing an estimated 40 people. Because of its location, it is a convenient harbour for many larger boats, particularly from Northern Ireland, to land their catch and this helps create a supportive infrastructure for the smaller vessels. Although traditionally a mixed fishery, it has become focused on prawns, as this is the most available species. The fishermen report problems of market access particularly because of the remote location of the town. Although a small group of fishermen, they have become increasingly organised to pursue their own interests and develop the facilities available to them, in this they are working closely with the harbour authorities. One of the central draws to the town is a festival generally organised in and around the harbour, which to date the fishermen have not been involved with. Residents of Whitehaven have a strong sense of its heritage, the value of its community and the potential the town has to develop tourism as a source of income further.

5 – Stage 1 Findings

Our findings are based on interviews with a wide range of people (see above), across the 6 case study towns. By comparing these interviews with the quantitative data collected, our observations and the contrasts between case studies we have drawn out the common themes in the evidence collected. The quotes used represent repeated points and themes; we have transcribed them as authentically as possible. At times the quotes come from only one case study but where a finding is specific to a community we have indicated that. Overall, we are making a series of general findings.

5.1 Survivors

Of those who we interviewed those who make their living directly from inshore fishing are predominantly older men, generally in their late 50s who have often spent their entire career in fishing. They are 'survivors' in a number of senses, not least because they have remained in fishing despite its decline. Their ability to survive these changes in the industry reflects a combination of their life stage; a shared culture and the opportunities open to them. Most of those fishermen we interviewed were either skippers or co-owners of the boats they worked on. Many of them admit that they had earned a relatively good living earlier in their careers and so are able to continue fishing because of that, whilst others have adjusted their expectations of what they can earn from fishing.

You get hooked on it (fishing)...if the money was there people would do it, but you can't teach someone to be a fisherman in a classroom, if fishermen go you will lose that knowledge and never get it back (W1¹⁴, fisherman).

The inshore sector as currently constituted appears to favour older men, who have had chance to gather resources to finance their boats but who are not looking to re-invest before retirement. They are less likely to face the demands of dependent children who tend to require a regular income rather than the intermittent or seasonal income that often typifies the income of the self-employed. Older men are also advantaged as they will have had opportunity to develop the most job knowledge and skills, not only at sea but also on land, meaning that they are the most 'competitive group' in the industry.

The reverse side of this is that succession into the industry appears very low; although some young, dynamic entrepreneurial fishermen do exist; young people in general are not choosing to enter the industry as they traditionally have done. Interviewees explained this was because the work is hard and dangerous, the conditions poor and, by contemporary standards, the financial return for this falls short. Not surprisingly therefore fishermen themselves do not always encourage their sons to enter the industry. For those familiar with the industry and its

¹⁴ - Each anonymous interviewee has been given the initial of the case study (W=Whitby, Wh=Whitehaven), a number and in some cases the date of the interview.

complexities, the burdens of regulation clearly do not help, and for new entrants influenced more by the negative portrayal of fishing in the media and the often disapproving perceptions of wider society, fishing is not the first choice of career. A counter narrative to that impression is that some fishermen view the reality TV shows – *Trawlermen* and *Deadliest Catch* as portraying aspects of the industry positively. They observed that dangerous occupations, such as the Army, do not struggle to recruit young men, but the package of risk and reward has to be balanced.

Although rarely possessing many educational qualifications those we interviewed were obviously able to adapt to a demanding regulatory environment, modern electronics and communications at sea and on land, and also are often eloquent in describing their situation. Generally they had found a niche or an opportunity to ensure that their catch could reach the market. Often these niches did not represent opportunity for the greatest profit but a route that was relatively stable, familiar to them and allowed them to focus on what they considered fishing to be about. This can be seen in the exporting of species caught in English waters but not generally eaten locally to the continental markets. More profit might be generated if a market could be established in the England, but the effort of doing this is beyond the traditional role of a fisherman and is uncertain. The established supply chains for the species taking it to the continent strip it of its story or provenance so it reaches a lower price than it might otherwise do but it is certain to be sold. It is the distribution of these opportunities that is one of the major influences on the impacts of inshore fishing on the rest of the community.

Part of what the fishermen bring to their businesses and way of life is a deep knowledge of not just the skills and methods of fishing but also of who is involved in fishing. It can be said that fishermen have a lot of ‘know how’ - tacit knowledge. They are also knowledgeable about those working in policy and regulation either locally or often nationally. Fishermen have made generally considerable investment in ‘know who’, knowing not just those in the catching sector but those involved in the management of the fisheries through to national policy levels. As one woman

involved in catching sector observed the dominance of men made that 'know who' easier, as it was a network of men who were familiar with one another and a shared culture of working.

The area of disagreements tended to be over 'know why' about the way in which they saw 'their' fisheries managed. These tensions appear to be about the knowledge that fishermen have about 'their' specific fishing grounds and what they see as generalised models used by marine scientists. This disagreement was not just over stock levels but the age distribution and so sustainability of the population.

There are Cod dying of old age out there (P2).

Others pointed to examples of where scientists have revised or reversed their earlier opinions after accompanying fishermen to the specific grounds that they have been fishing. Questions were raised about the methodology of the surveys used to estimate stock levels and the role of a science, which they held to be often inaccurate, in policy making. These disagreements were expressed in terms that ranged from the highly informal through to those couched in the vocabulary of ecological science.

5.2 Male occupational culture

Women clearly play their role in the industry, either in terms of assisting with running the business and dealing with administration or through providing emotional support and holding together a household and a family which has to endure unconventional work life patterns and pressures. Those women we did interview were clear about the gender divisions in the industry:

There is a clear gender divide as in nearly all fishing businesses. (N1 12/2/10)

This had not prevented women taking senior roles in the industry but often they felt isolated:

I don't know any other wives involved in the industry directly (N2 13/2/10).

In part this was because as one woman explained:

There isn't a strong network of women involved in fishing. There is a stigma attached to it as it is so male dominated, but women do have a big supportive role (N2 12/2/10).

The research team quickly found that the terminology of discussing gender is contested, as one woman in Whitby working in the industry said:

A fisher (fissure) is a crack in a rock (W1).

Or as one fisherman said in Padstow:

Fisher is that the politically correct term for us then? (P1).

In some cases we came across examples where the wives and families of fishermen were actually more proactive in supporting community events and initiatives than the fishermen themselves. This again reflects a common gender division, with women acting as 'social connectors' within families and linking men into wider society, whilst men are focused on their occupational identity.

We encountered no women who went to sea, and as such we saw a sector typified by a working class male occupational culture. This was a feature of their communities that some interviewees recognised:

It's a working class community, if you are doing a working class job you would get accepted quickly (W2)

We interviewed fishermen not only engaged in a physically demanding job but also in everyday social routines and roles that are the domain of men. To have persisted in the face of the decline of the industry and to continue to fish is the affirmation of this identity, not only for the fishermen themselves but also for the rest of the community. Although these communities are coastal they also often have an ex-industrial heritage – Whitehaven, Amble and Cornwall as a whole – so reinforcing that identity. Even those areas without the legacy of heavy industry had a tradition of working class men finding a role through fishing, an industry that requires a relatively modest capital investment to enter. Unlike many of the studies in the literature we found no dominant pattern of fishing families, rather a diverse pattern of entering fishing as a young man with no family background, starting later in life sometimes after working part-time in fishing as well as through family ties.

It was clear in discussing fishing with fishermen that they found certain rewards because it focused on 'male' concerns and they enjoyed the association with other men. The focus on technicalities and on technical competence is an essential part of the performance of this masculine culture. This competence extends to a knowledge of the regulations around fishing, and includes being able to demonstrate what the fishermen argue is the perversity or failings of the rules. Fishermen would talk of the "crack" of being at sea together, the joking and ribbing that constituted many of the exchanges between the fishermen we observed was all part of the constant re-creation of the culture.

In communities increasingly dominated by the service sector, fishing remains the locally available link to traditional male roles. No interviewees talked of excluding women, most said quite the opposite, but they did not want the fundamentals of the job to change. By providing male working class employment, inshore fishing plays an important role in shaping the rest of the community.

5.3 Nature of the employment and family life

In discussion, most fishermen stressed how fishing, although it might only offer a part-time income, is a full time identity in that they need to be available to go to sea on the basis of the weather and tides. This limits their opportunity to take on other work and although this does happen through the necessity to supplement income, it is difficult to sustain an operational boat. It also makes it difficult, many of them argue, to engage in land-based meetings, whether related to policy or business. To this degree fishermen can often seem an elusive group.

It is important to acknowledge that compared with deep sea fishing, the inshore sector does offer fishermen a more conventional work-life pattern in that they are not usually at sea for days at a time, enabling potentially more involvement in community matters and fewer pressures on family life. This conventionality is

relative as most people are constantly aware of the risk and rigours of working at sea, as one interviewee reflected on her husband and son's work:

As a fishing family you can get use to it and learn to respect the sea and the dangers of fishing then become norm[al] (N4 12/2/10).

Another informant reflected on how gender roles had changed and how their partner being at sea put particular pressures on the family:

Years ago [women] used to do all the nets and do all sorts, they used to come in and gut the fish and help land the boats but that's all stopped now, the wives don't usually get involved in fishing as such, they've got to look after the family while their other half's at sea. It's a lonely life for them, it's a special sort of relationship I suppose, it's not an easy way of life (N6).

5.4 Nature of the business

Inshore fishermen are heavily dependent on the natural systems of the area immediately around their homeport for their business opportunities. Although we use the blanket term 'fishing', this covers a wide range of strategies regarding species sought, the gear used and the patterns of market opportunity. The fishermen focused on the importance of natural limitations to their ability to run a business and the restrictions it placed on their ability to hunt or gather fish.

For example, those fishermen who worked an area with shellfish found particular business opportunities those dependent on prawns or finned fish did not have. The turn to lobsters and crabs was in part driven by the status of these species within the regulatory environment and a ready, high value market for them. At the same time many fishermen recognised that they were on a treadmill, as ever more shellfish are needed to maintain a living, particularly for those supplying depressed continental markets. For many this was a symptom of a precarious position:

The under 10 metre fleet is hanging by a thread on lobster and crab, there's nothing else to turn to (W3 – Whitby).

One highly experienced skipper who sold directly to the hospitality trade said that he was proud to "even pay tax" on his business but he did so by keeping his overheads very low. His business model was premised on only employing himself, keeping his overheads low and only servicing high value markets. Other fishermen reported that they were finding it hard to keep their businesses going. As we noted above many of

these enterprises had been capitalised at an early stage of the principal's life and they were generally not looking to re-invest before their retirement. This means that large parts of the inshore sector, unless new people enter, are vulnerable in the short to medium term.

My son fishes with me but he will pack it in when I retire – it's too much like hard work for too little money – he only does it to help out his Dad (W4 – Whitby)

We describe many of these businesses as being in 'survival mode' in that, as discussed above, older men are advantaged and a particular mode of business operation appears to be in place. This is to minimise risks and maximise the returns to the business operator with the aim to survive in the short term. With the lowered expectations of the returns from the business it makes them very robust. It also means that as a group they are unlikely to embrace any opportunity that is deemed to be 'risky' and the tendency to focus on immediate problems lowers willingness to innovate.

5.5 Economic linkages

Its not just the regeneration of a fishing port anymore, it's the regeneration of a fishing community with no economic hinterland. You've got a port with a flat area which is the harbour, everything else is on the hill and the only industry down here is fishing. So that's upstream or downstream from the catching sector so the fishing represents 482 jobs in this ward.... (N1 Newlyn]

Economic linkages are amongst the most obvious channels of influence with the rest of the community, yet often the routes to market obscure this relationship.

Upstream services for the inshore fishermen include the provision of gear, electronic equipment, boats, fuel and ice. As the industry has grown smaller the business opportunities for those upstream have declined. For example, Newlyn still has a cluster of these services, but as a hub of the fishing industry in the UK it is unusual and even here the scale of the supporting industries has declined. Two of our case studies (Padstow and Whitehaven) have boat-building facilities currently without tenants. There was considerable concern that the technical services needed to support a fishing industry were dwindling.

The business strategies of individual fishermen outlined above have implications for the rest of the supply chain, with empty boat repair yards, electronics suppliers offering limited support and equipment becoming hard to source:

It's really hard to get nets because there are so few of us – it needs good quality monofilament – now we have to look to Taiwan and Japan (W2 – Whitby). The 'downstream' industries that process, sell, retail and cook the catch are the most tangible connection between the inshore fishermen and the rest of the community. In some cases the relationship was very direct; for example in Padstow some fish went directly from the quay into the town's restaurants. In others the linkage was far less direct; where fish are sold primarily as commodities into the international market. Where the domestic market for some species is very limited, for example spider crabs from the South West or hake from the North East or where the provenance of fish is less important as with prawns or langoustines from English waters, the majority are sold into the continental market. The economic efficiency of this system means that very little of the retail value of the fish is realised locally. Amble and Whitehaven have large fish processing factories, which only process a small amount of fish caught in British waters.

Because of the marginal economic impact of inshore fishing on the majority of the communities, talk of dependency was very limited. Newlyn is obviously heavily dependent on fishing, but equally, as many other ports in Cornwall have demonstrated, there could be what the fishing industry would consider a very painful transition to tourism. Generally economic dependency is not at the community level, in part because of the decline of fishing, but at that of families and individuals.

5.6 Place making

Interviewees were proud to live where they did and spoke highly of their town's virtues as a community and the physical beauty of where they lived. Discussions commonly revolved around what made their place unique and the good fortune of living in a community that was supportive. The way in which that support was organised and expressed varied widely with voluntary groups, not-for-profit

organisations, charities, a range of agencies and authorities as well private enterprises of various sizes playing a role. In Whitehaven, for example, the patronage of the nuclear power industry was important to the cultural life of the town but this was realised through not-for-profit organisations and in Amble, a development trust plays a central role. This complex array of local actors reinforces the distinctiveness of a place. The degree and type of support offered by the communities varied widely, but almost all of the interviewees felt that the infrastructure of a community was around them.

In some places you have to be born in the community to be a 'local', with fishermen often playing a particular role in that:

Those in fishing are the locals; the true locals call themselves 'cod-heads'... (W5 – Whitby)

Many people who have lived in these communities for a long time felt that they were part of the community but not in quite the manner that 'true' locals were:

I'm not an outsider but I'm stitched on – only lived here 12 years (W4 – Whitby)

What made each community distinctive was in part linked to the history and tradition of the town, which featured fishing and the relationship with the sea.

Whitby people working here tend to come from fishing families, it provides a lot of social cohesion, gives people an identity (W3 – Whitby).

Therefore fishermen played a central role in enacting the link between the present and that heritage, the sea and the land. The rhythms of fishing and the presence of fishermen are part of how the community re-makes on a regular basis its sense of place. This can be through traditional festivals such as in Padstow, or the emerging one in Whitehaven, but these build to make each community consider itself distinct.

At times this can be posed as a question of local or rural values compared to supposed metropolitan ones, which are generally described as being from 'London'.

it was on the radio the other day, and they said it doesn't matter whether you were born Cornish or not, its whether you believe yourself to be Cornish, and I suppose that means adopting the values...if you bring London values and you try to enforce them then you'll never fit in. It's the pace of life and the way you treat other people, don't get too excited about things, it'll happen! (N2 – Newlyn)

'London' therefore takes on the double burden as being the location from which the widely resented regulation of fishing is enacted and also the symbol of a

metropolitan culture different to the local one. Many of the interviewees would have disagreed that being a 'local' is a set of values, but there is a correspondence between the belief in a particular place's virtues and the community sharing a set of values or norms.

Another way of asserting the uniqueness of your community and building a sense of cohesion is local rivalry. As one interviewee said, after commenting on the polarisation of the Whitby community: "The only thing that unites Whitby is opposition to Scarborough" (W4 – Whitby). The use of Padstow as an example of a route that they would not like Newlyn to follow was frequent from interviewees there:

for instance like Padstow, where it becomes a bit celebrity and then [fishing] slides down and takes a back row. And round here, because it is a working fishing port it has that slightly grubby air, which is no bad thing, a working place. If you could click your fingers and go to Padstow from here, both fishing ports on paper but you would think, what's happening here? Everything's upmarket, I mean a bag of chips costs you ten quid, [if you] buy it from Rick Stein's fish and chip shop, which is no bad thing, its brought a lot of prosperity to the area, but it's different to this. Padstow was originally a busy fish port, it had a railway line to take them straight up to London...now its just there's a lot of hobby fishermen (N1 – Newlyn).

Here the speaker bundles local rivalry, the decline of fishing, class differences and the influence of 'London' into a package, Padstow might be wealthier but Newlyn remains the centre for 'real' fishermen. This loyalty to the hometown as a primary source of identity was important in most of the case studies and coloured willingness to emulate local rivals/examples. The reverse of this is that more distant examples carry less local rivalry, so Cornish fishermen looked on Northumbrian conservation measures favourably, whilst Devonian merchants were considered better than local ones – in the north of England.

5.7 Tourism economies

For many of the case study communities, tourism has become the major source of income, and the most obvious route for improving their economic lot (see section 2.2 above). As discussed in the case study portrait, Padstow has a major tourism economy for a small town but other communities were aware of its importance:

The Whitby brand, its more powerful than any other brand on the east side... it's got national recognition partly because of fish and chips but also because of the maritime heritage, fishing is part of that heritage so we should hang on to it (W6 - Whitby)

Into this mix fishing plays an important role in adding character and activity to the harbour side, as well as acting as an 'icon' of the traditions of the area. From this perspective, fishing is an asset that not only provides a physical product but also adds distinctiveness and character to the community in presenting itself as a resort.

A fisherman from a small fishing cove explained his experience of working directly with visitors:

Fishing does attract [tourists] because they walk down the hill and some of them, most of them, are probably overwhelmed that there is actually fishing boats working, you see them going in an out with the tractor, the men walking round and the lorry comin' with the crabs going on it, and I take them for boat trips in the summer and I always ask them, I sort of do my own survey in my head. And they always say to me you just don't know what you've got, don't ever change it, don't ever let it be changed and of course that's what we're up against all the time. Not those sort of people changing it but fighting the government to keep it going as it is (N7 – Newlyn).

This is not uniform as certainly many in Newlyn thought the harbour ill-suited to tourism:

Newlyn is a walk through or drive through place, where people have a look and maybe get some fish and chips for an afternoon, but it isn't a tourist destination (N1 Newlyn 12/2/10).

Others were not sure that fishing contributed to the tourist economy that they were engaged with, as one Whitby accommodation owner commented:

Tourism in the area is not affected by the fishing industry; the decline has not had any bad impacts (W6 – Whitby)

One relative of a local fisherman in Padstow felt that the trajectory of the town's economy meant that fishing was no longer a necessary underpinning.

Many fishermen, together with those who are involved in running the harbour side, report the draw of fishing and its equipment for visitors to their communities.

Tourists like to see the fish being landed and the fish market (W10 –Whitby).

Inshore fishing has a particularly important role because it is possible for people to gain access to the vessels without the dangers posed by the equipment for larger vessels. Inshore vessels are also more attractive and easier to valorise for tourism than the more commercial boats.

5.9 Emblematic role of fishing

For most people interviewed fishing was 'emblematic' of their community - it helped define what made their communities distinct or unique. They defined their town or village as a fishing or port town, and as part of that they view fishing and people using the sea as central to the function and character of the place. Whilst recreational users may be part of that process, fishermen, as the living emblems of local traditions, play an important role. We found widely that local people not directly connected to fishing, with very little knowledge of the realities or complexities of the industry, were very supportive of it and valued it on a number of levels. Therefore for visitors and locals, fishermen and fishing play a key role in defining the community. For local people, fishermen enact and create something that is essential to their shared sense of community, even if in some cases we found that, despite the strength of this shared identity, the fishing community was fairly isolated from the rest of the community.

5.10 Bonding and competition

As we have noted above, many small communities demonstrate high levels of bonding capital, what one of our interviewees described as 'clickyness' [cliqueyness].

Newlyn is a cliky area, if the face don't fit there is little support in the community.
(N2 Newlyn 12/2/10)

Many of our case study areas demonstrated high levels of bonding social capital, for example in Padstow, the description of how to be a local was 'to be born' there. Certainly we were able to quickly identify local leaders in the community and they were able to act as gatekeepers for us to gain access to the rest of the fishermen, suggesting individuals with high levels of bridging social capital (see appendix 1). In many instances the fishermen also provided the informal meeting places – e.g. the quayside in Amble – and the informal social structures that build social capital.

This indicates two apparently paradoxical aspects of social capital and fishermen; first - their competitive solidarity with one another, and second - the support they

gain from non-fishing local people. First, for those outside fishing the interactions between fishermen are paradoxical as whilst they are busy competing with one another at the same time they are a tight group. We term this 'competitive solidarity' as within their own groups fishermen are often pitched against one another as they seek fish, a better price or the status of being a successful fishermen. With inshore fishing, support and cohesion can arise in the interests of safety; for example, it is not uncommon for inshore boats to go out 'in company' or for them to assist one another when landing in difficult conditions.

Outside of their own group, partly because they feel they have been stigmatised, they also demonstrate a tight solidarity with one another. This can be seen in how inshore fishermen defend the interests of the wider fishing industry in the face of a lack of understanding by the general public, or champion the interests of the larger vessels. Several fishermen pointed out individuals in their harbour who 'broke the rules', not just the regulations but also the local norms of competition and conservation. Their motivations were ascribed to 'greed' and a personal cussedness but they were reluctant to name them because they felt the industry had already been negatively described.

The second aspect of this paradox is that they can be socially abrasive and yet respected by many of those who work with them or are in the community. In part this is a kind of 'defensive localism' whereby communities will rally to support a group that is felt to be under threat – for example saving 'our' fishermen and their families¹⁵. Fishermen were often seen to embody those values that 'authentically' express aspects of the local area. Often it stretched beyond this as in different case studies, two interviewees expressed similar sentiments:

It isn't always easy to sympathise with them, but we need to find a way to deal [with] and protect fishermen at the bottom and bring the industry together to move forward (N1 12/2/10).

Part of this understanding is underpinned by a differentiation between inshore and deepwater boats but also an insight into the motivations of fishermen, with

¹⁵ Winter, D.M. (2003) Embeddedness, the new food economy and defensive localism. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19(1) pp. 23-32

sympathy towards the local and smaller inshore fishermen. This support of fishermen is part of the development of a local identity and in the case of these interviewees' regular, informal contacts that have allowed them to gain insight into fishermen's situation.

5.11 Overview stage 1 findings

The impacts of inshore fishing are very obvious in some communities and subtle in others but it is consistently highly valued by local residents, as well as fishermen and their families, in making a place distinctive. To untangle the web of mutually reinforcing processes that are behind the different trajectories of the case study towns we will start with the physical products of fishing moving through to the less tangible but possibly more important social and cultural impacts.

For the fishermen the operation of their businesses is dependent on access to fish and getting those to a market place that allows them to sustain themselves, their crew and boat. We have characterised their mode of operation that of 'survival' as most of them are looking to maintain themselves rather than maximise profit or re-invest in their businesses. To that end they are likely to be risk averse in how they take their produce to market, particularly when their catch is limited by species and without an obvious local demand. In these circumstances the economic impacts on the local community are the employment provided by these businesses, and the value of the catch as spent by the fishermen and their families.

The second element of the physical aspects of inshore fishing is the boats, vessels and harbour side equipment associated with fishing. Our research found that this employed very few people directly but was widely recognised within the community and beyond to provide an important aesthetic component of the town and in turn its sense of uniqueness. Inshore fishing was distinct in this as it is of relatively small scale that allows it to be used with other users of the harbour present, and is more picturesque than the larger vessels. Many communities use this imagery as well as the ambience it creates in their tourism offer, a central part of many coastal

communities economy. Although using this imagery in the tourism 'offer' the efficiency, profitability and sustainability of the fishing sector is not generally directly connected to the visitor economy. Generally tourism trades off the presence of inshore fishing and not its activities. A few areas have established an economic synergy by selling the catch locally, and in this they have achieved a closer link between fishing and the wider community. Even where this is available it is often dependent on the species caught, so supply chains to distant markets operate alongside highly localised ones.

Fishing as a male occupation plays an important role in many communities, as it is a link with a group of occupations that are now largely absent from coastal areas. In those areas with a tradition of heavy industry or mining fishing remains the occupation that links with a tradition of men working physically in close contact with both nature and technologies. This working class male occupational culture plays an important role in defining the identity of fishermen and their activities within the community. Even in communities where the fishing industry has declined and plays a minor economic role most local people see fishing as part of the identity of the town. The qualities of endurance, competence and tradition that the fishermen strive to embody for themselves and others are considered important in the wider community. One of the common complaints was this form of employment was dwindling for younger men, representing a loss to those individuals and the community more widely.

Because the linkage between inshore fishing and the wider community has become based on social and cultural factors discussion of economic dependency needs to be reconsidered. As fishing has declined over many years few communities are dependent on the income derived from the physical products of fishing and the employment it creates. Rather the dependency is at the level of households who have either part or the entirety of their income drawn from fishing. Even in communities such as Newlyn in which fishing is the predominant industry there are significant other enterprises and commuting has diversified the sources of income to the town. Rather what we suggest is that communities are 'reliant' on fishing, in

that they require aspects of its operation – fish, earnings or the image of fishing – but also trust and believe broadly in it. Also whereas dependency is often associated with connotations of passivity, communities demonstrate a far more active engagement in the future of fishing.

This activism around fishing is represented at one level by the fishermen themselves who are noticeably more effective and influential in their communities where they are organised collectively. In Rye this is expressed around self-imposed limitations on fishing, in Newlyn by a multitude of projects to improve the status of fish in the food chain and in Padstow close connection to the tourism trade. This can also be reflected in the contestation of the regulations around fishing, which serves to demonstrate the competence of the fishermen in his occupational culture but also a point around which fishermen can unite even whilst competing with one another commercially. It could be that the investment made by fishermen in their occupational and place based identity has come at the cost of adjusting to wider developments. Lack of trust in the policy making process may have diverted their focus from developments in the supply chain such as local marketing or standards that provide access to wider markets. This at times reinforces the impression that fishermen can be insular and abrasive, although this does not prevent them from being held in high esteem by their neighbours.

At the level of the individual fisherman or boat inshore fishing can be highly differentiated, which confounds generalisations. Working out of the same harbour can be a fisherman using a boat of low capacity, using traditional gear and selling a single species into local markets, alongside boats of high technical capacity, using the latest equipment and selling into a global market place. The former by selling into the tourist trade via a local restaurant and hotel may have contributed directly to the local economy whilst the route for the latter boat is solely through the earnings they receive for their catch. Beyond their households the importance of fishing is through the creation of a harbour side sold, through images initially, to visitors as part of the tourism package the town offers. Yet for many local people fishing, the ambience it creates and the fishermen themselves signify what makes their community unique.

6. Stage 2 – Policy Scenarios

The second stage of the project involved presenting a set of scenarios to stakeholders drawn from five of the regions of England (see section 3 above). These scenarios were based in part on those in the SAIF Advisory Group's proposition paper from January 2010 and modified by our experience in the field; indeed one of the scenarios (c) was entirely based on our research. The purpose of the scenario analysis was to help us explore how different policy options might impact on the wider community (project aims b, d and e).

During stage 1 of the project it became clear that a wider range of people have a legitimate interest in the fortunes of inshore fishing than are typically involved in the fisheries policy process. Often commercial fishing is treated as an industry that is distinct from the wider food chain. Once we encountered projects and businesses that clearly integrated fishing into those wider processes of community development through food, the range of stakeholders expanded quickly. The linkages to tourism suggested another group of stakeholders who are reliant, in part, on fishing to create the harbour side that is central to the localities tourism offer. Finally, we identified those in the fish processing chain, who might not normally deal with the domestic catch but who are stakeholders in the broader fishing industry. We recruited such stakeholders through our fieldwork contacts, further research and the CCRI database. In total 41 people took part in the workshops representing a wide range of interests from fishermen's organisations through to community development trusts, fish processors and exporters, Sea Fisheries Committees, food development and promotion organisations, national and regional tourism agencies and those involved in various aspects of the hospitality trade.

We faced twin challenges in these groups. Because of its complexity and unfamiliarity to those outside the fishing industry, a discussion of policy is problematic. Alongside this is the difficulty of explicitly identifying the social benefits of fishing, as this was both a novel question for most participants and one

where complexity confounded any easy answers. Many of those inside the fishing industry were sceptical about this process or indeed whether the SAIF project would ultimately have influence on wider policy. They also suggested that they, or their organisations, were excluded from policy discussions and that this was their only chance to be heard. These perspectives inevitably coloured the discussions in the stakeholder groups, as people who work in the same region, or even at times in the same locality, met for the first time.

In order to focus the discussion in each group, we limited it to about three hours and began with a summary of the draft findings of our research to that date. It was important to demonstrate our independence and to reassure those who had taken part in, or knew of, the first stage that we were proceeding as we had promised. It also orientated many of those not familiar with fishing regarding how the industry interacts with the wider community and outlined the parameters of the discussion.

Scepticism about the scenarios, which started as soon as they were presented, tended to 'frame' the discussion, particularly scenario A. The scepticism came from those in the fishing industry and it started from a common assertion that 'Europe' was going to define inshore as under 12 metres. One well informed participant observed that "ITQs"¹⁶would be imposed from Europe in the end, whilst several participants from within the inshore sector hoped for at least an apology for the 'wrongs' of previous policy and doubted the capacity of policy to improve matters. These opening gambits in part set the tone of the discussion, signalled the range of possibilities that people were aware of, and limited those that would be discussed.

We then introduced the three scenarios. Two versions of the scenarios were used; the italics indicate text that was added for the final three groups.

6.1 Scenario A - Re-structuring the fishing industry

This scenario comprised;

¹⁶ Individual Tradable Quotas (ITQ).

- Changing the size of the inshore fleet (through changing the definition from ‘under-10m’) and re-distributing quota.
- *More efficient boats move into the sector, inshore sector those remaining?*¹⁷
- Organised at Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA¹⁸)/(regional) level.
- Opportunities to set management arrangements in ways to maximise efficiency
- Goal – to help smaller boats operate more flexibly and profitably.

Generally the fishermen and their representatives were more enthusiastic about this scenario than any other group. This enthusiasm came with an important caveat, namely that they argued for ‘re-allocation’ of quota rather than a re-distribution of it. By this we understand their argument to be that a total re-negotiation needs to take place at a European level, with the importance of England’s fishing industry recognised. Confusingly ‘re-allocation’ is often used to describe re-dividing the UK’s existing allocation of quota.

Several of the stakeholders also noted the use of the words ‘efficiency’ and ‘profitably’. They wanted to point out that their goal in fishing was to maintain themselves and their crew, which they thought was generally quite different from profit maximisation. This distinction had implications for the term ‘efficiency’, a term that they often related to ways of fishing that maximised catch at the expense of the long-term viability of the stock.

The question of changing the definition of the ‘inshore boats’ (i.e. changing the definition from under 10m in length to some other parameter) produced a regionally informed discussion. It was noted that in some areas there are traditional, open boats that lack the capacity to stay at sea for long periods or in poor weather but are none the less longer than 10 metres. Conversely most people were aware of very capable boats under 10 metres in length, this often being linked to the type of gear

¹⁷ There were two iterations of the scenarios; the lines in italics were only presented at the later workshops (Hull, Truro and London).

¹⁸ Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities

used and to technical measures used to manage what was caught in the area. The suggestion was that length alone was not an adequate metric of capability. As well as these technical measures, some fishermen suggested social definitions of 'inshore' fishing that were not about technical capacity but related to being based in, and accountable to, a local community. Such accountability might include being owned and crewed by family members, returning to the home port every day and fishing only local waters or grounds.

Representatives of the inshore sector in all of the meetings were concerned that this scenario would be divisive within the fishing industry, as it could be seen to punish the deep water fleet:

We haven't been pushing to take away the deep sea quota as it's not their fault, so they shouldn't be punished (N1 – 02/03/10).

But also for instrumental reasons, as the larger part of the industry benefited the inshore sector:

Without them [deep sea fleet] it will damage the infrastructure, they are needed for the inshore boats to make money (N1 – 02/03/10).

Others pointed to the legal hurdles to such a process of redistribution:

You certainly can't do discriminatory things; there will be a high resistance (C1 – 03/03/10)

And that any such moves would require considerable compensation to those impacted:

You can't take out effort without paying for it (C1 – 03/03/10).

The problems caused by previous policy, from this perspective, would be difficult to undo:

The UK fleet is so unbalanced in the Common Fisheries Policy, this would be very hard to correct (C1 – 03/03/10).

Scenario A addressed the established fishing community in terms that it was conversant with. All those representing fishermen looked to a more profound process than a national redistribution or 're-allocation' of quota. Rather they appeared to be arguing that a re-negotiation of the entire Common Fisheries Policy should take place, whereby national entitlements would be 're-allocated'¹⁹.

¹⁹ This relates to the argument that the UK government is content to negotiate away England's opportunity to gain fish quotas in return for gains in other areas of EU activity. Scottish fishermen are

Solidarity between fishermen was seen not only as being through a shared identity but also instrumental because the fleets are interdependent. The inshore fishermen did not want to be responsible for, or be seen to be responsible for, losses to the deep water fleet. Quite which boats constituted the inshore sector was discussed in the context of regional variations, although most saw a combination of engine size and boat length as being important, with enforcement needed to control “rule breakers”. Schemes that appeared to generate the possibilities of “slipper skippers”, who gain an income through ownership of quota that they sell or lease, were raised only to be quickly dismissed, on the basis that the fishermen wanted policies that encouraged active fishing.

6.2 Scenario B - Separate Fishing Zones.

This scenario comprised;

- All boats fishing within 6 nautical miles of the shore being licensed with no ‘industrial’ vessels allowed or licensed in this zone.
- Restrictions on when they can fish, for how long, and/or the type and amount of equipment that they would be allowed to use.
- Management at a regional level *by a group made of fishers and their representatives working directly with national fishery managers.*
- Goal – to provide smaller vessels with a flexible opportunity to fish, maximizing income and sustainability.

That quota is not part of this scenario was quickly outweighed in most regions by the criterion of 6 nautical miles. After discussion it was apparent that this limit was recognised as the geographical scope of many regulations and therefore offered a ‘legally’ protected zone, where greater autonomy could be exercised. For participants from all regions, apart from the South East, even small boats were seen to travel more than six miles and for them to be restricted so close to shore would imply the loss of access to many grounds and waters that were important to the inshore fleet. In the North East this was clearly viewed as unacceptable:

generally praised for being able to pressure their politicians more effectively than their English counterparts.

You won't get people willing to trade that opportunity – big or small boats. I regularly go to 10 miles in a 7.3 m boat (N1 02/03/2010).

Yet the same person was able to concede that “75% of the year I spend within 6 miles”. The anxiety was around being contained within an area, unable to take up seasonal or quota opportunities.

The idea of an exclusive zone was not necessarily unattractive but rather it was the extent of that area. In the South West it was suggested that ‘industrial’ vessels should be kept outside of 12 miles from the coast, which also found favour in the North West:

6 nautical miles is possibly too limiting so 12 miles would be far more practical (C4 03/03/10).

Although again in the discussion, solidarity for those who would find themselves excluded was raised, “Who subsidises the losers of scenario B?”(C1 03/03/10).

Many saw pragmatism in the suggestion - “6 nautical miles is crucial as only this is in our control without going to the EU” (C4 03/03/10). An exclusive zone appeared to be an acceptable idea if it could extend far enough.

This caveat was reinforced by an anxiety that it was within this area that many of the new conservation zones are located, producing a fear that fishermen would be corralled within an area that they could not actively fish, leading this to be generally the least popular scenario. In the South East this was perceived differently as the six mile zone is the area they view as being their traditional waters and is an essential feature of the environmental claims made about their fishing.

It also drew forward a discussion about the mechanisms for controlling effort. In the South East it was argued that local regulation of gear, especially mesh size, would be sufficient. Another view at this stage from the Hull discussion was that it might provide a framework for fishermen to be rewarded “as custodians of the sea”, whereby their work in protecting the marine environment could be recognised in a direct analogy to the role of farmers in agri-environmental schemes. This was tied to taking visitors out on fishing boats to educate them about fishing, to overcome

the 'stigma' they felt fishing currently carried and to engage with scientists in collecting more accurate data about the fisheries.

For those already involved in the catching of fish, the present Sea Fisheries Committees and the new IFCA's provided a model of organisation that they were comfortable with:

IFCA's haven't been anywhere near as contentious as Defra; IFCA's have developed more organically (N1 – 02/03/10)

The speaker saw 'Defra' as being associated with top-down impositions rather than the dialogue he saw in IFCA's. In Hull this discussion developed to re-imagine IFCA's, beyond the scope of the proposals at the time, as a "one-stop shop" (see below). Generally, the regional level IFCA was seen as a model, although in the South West there was some disquiet about the fact that the body was trying to cover too large an area. Those outside the fishing industry often questioned this as they saw considerable opportunities to build on the county level initiatives and branding that was taking place with other foods.

The question of boundaries arose at this time, for example the borders of Wales and Scotland prompted questions about the clash between natural areas and administrative boundaries. Generally, devolution from the national level was regarded as desirable, based on what was broadly seen as the successful model of the Sea Fisheries Committees, whereby arrangements could be made to create bespoke local arrangements. It was also viewed as attractive as arrangements could be discussed and debated in a way that would be owned by the stakeholders. In most regions the members of the Sea Fisheries Committees were obviously close to, and trusted by, the fishermen and their representatives; hence the attraction of building from that base.

6.3 Scenario C - Marketing the Catch.

This scenario comprised:

- All under 10 metre boats allocated a number of days at sea or individual quotas.
- County level arrangements for management and monitoring systems.
- All of the catch landed being marketed through a county level marketing co-operative.
- *Marketing group to maximize diversity of income through licensing anglers, payments for data collection and chartering.*
- Goal – to provide fishermen with a better income by securing a higher return.

For those outside the catching sector of the fishing industry, including stakeholders from tourism and food promotion, this was the most attractive scenario, although it raised important points of discussion for the fishermen present.

Regulating the effort at sea by an annually allocated number of days was attractive to many fishermen and their representatives if it were to be calculated in terms of hours actually at sea and if they knew this allocation in advance. Using 'hours' rather than 'days' would allow greater flexibility and could be used to empower smaller inshore vessels, which tend to work extensively rather than intensively. Knowing in advance was important to allow a business to be planned, with days held over for times when the market was favourable or a particular species was present.

As noted above, there had been considerable discussion of the level at which the management should be organised but the question of a marketing co-operative stimulated debate. For many stakeholders outside the catching sector, fish auction markets appeared to be anachronistic, providing a poor return to fishermen and not providing the security in the supply chain that many retailers seek. As an alternative to harbour side auctions electronic auctions were mooted, possibly in combination with better integration into the supply chains of the multiple retailers or processors.

Landing all of the catch seemed to be generally accepted as an answer to the problem of discards, as food should not be wasted at sea. There was a suggestion that fish without a market be used for non-food purposes, but generally this was seen as an opportunity to take the catch, in all of its diversity, into the food chain. In some areas this was seen as a way of linking with ideas for co-operatives or intermediary bodies that had been discussed previously. Both scenarios B and C particularly raised the issue of how the inshore sector could link to these potentially important processes.

The discussion in Hull saw the participants re-imagine IFCA's as bodies that could take on the role of marketing and regulating fishing within their area as a "one stop shop". In the North East the discussion took a different direction, as participants who were involved in food promotion and rural development saw opportunities in marketing fish locally. This would need to be presaged by education:

There's a whole education needed for the public to drive it (N3 – 02/03/2010). But "From a food point of view, scenario C is plausible" (N3 – 02/03/2010) and it could be included in activities already underway in the region. The representative of the fishermen acknowledged that "It's not hard to get the buyer" (N1 – 02/03/10) and that with a realistic and flexible quota it could develop. This was in part based, they reported, on an aborted attempt to supply a national retailer that foundered on lack of access to sufficient quota. Another participant who worked in community development had an organisational vehicle in mind:

this could be possible through community interest companies but they need the initial cash to buy additional quota (N2 -02/03/10).

The distance between those experienced in these matters and the other participants became apparent when the discussion moved to branding premium quality shellfish for tourists. Those involved in tourism and food promotion saw such branding starting with wealthy consumers as a central plank of creating a local brand, whilst the fishermen had not considered addressing such a well-heeled group of consumers.

The discussion took a different direction in the North West, where one of the fishermen's representatives described both the problem and the solution:

the main problem at the moment is that the catch prices are [at] stalemate; they have not increased for 15 years. Someone needs to promote fish to increase profitability. The food industry could be the only way in (C1 – 03/02/2010).

Several participants thought that the multiple retailers would not be interested in fish that the inshore sector could offer, as imported fish dominates. However, one participant who works in the food supply chain responded:

Supermarkets do understand the complexity and are willing to market seasonal catch (C7 – 03/02/2010).

This had a caveat in that the fish would have to conform to industry standards of traceability aimed at the integrity of the food chain rather than necessarily just the sustainability of the catch otherwise the fish would not be able to enter the food chain²⁰:

Retailers are interested in local produce, but there is no opportunity to offer this in a secure supply chain (C7 – 03/02/2010).

Such a development would require investment but might also open routes into the local hospitality industry, particularly in the Lake District. The fishermen's representative responded to this:

We are willing to cooperate, if it is going to work, it will work here (C1 - 03/02/2010).

Another participant, experienced in community development, could see a route for the funding for that investment.

If we can prove that there is a market for it, we can access tourism money (C3 - 03/02/2010).

Any discussion of the marketing of fish brought up the question of certification by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The experience of the stakeholders ranged from the South East and South West where there are MSC fisheries through to those outside of the system and unsure if it would provide any return. This discussion of the marketing of fish also raised questions about the organisation and development of fishing through European funding with many questions, particularly in the East of England, about the role of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and its potential.

²⁰ Awareness of British Retail Consortium Standards (BRC) and the SALSA (Safe and Local Supplier Approval) schemes appeared to be very low.

7. Stage 2 - Findings

7.1 Developing arguments

In the discussion above, there is a trajectory to the arguments made across the scenarios that in part ties to the different paradigms being discussed, but also to the dynamics of the encounter. The fishermen and their representatives set out their claims to expertise over policy early in the discussions, in part defining 'the problem' to be discussed. Other participants were content to allow this scene setting to take place before making their own contributions and eventually beginning to contest aspects of 'the problem' with the fishermen. This came to its fullest development with scenario C, where the fishermen had already displayed their technical expertise but the other participants were confident to discuss and debate aspects about which they were knowledgeable. Often the discussion of what would benefit the rest of the community was tied up with a package of other considerations that were grouped together.

7.2 Working from different paradigms

Although not explicit, there was a clash of paradigms that relates directly to our discussion of integrated rural development in the literature review (see appendix 1). Implicitly the fishermen and their representatives were used to debating fishing policy as a *sectoral process*, only concerned with the industry and measures within it. Therefore they were comfortable discussing quota allocation, or in the case of scenario B, an exclusive zone. It is also part of the occupational culture of fishing to demonstrate competence in technical matters. Those participants from outside of the catching sector were more familiar with models of integrated rural development, with partnership arrangements and developing a territory, therefore scenario C was appealing.

As the meetings developed, participants were prepared to discuss different policy options. In the East of England meeting, the re-imagined IFCA became a body that could integrate with a wider set of regional initiatives. In the North East the

possibilities of local marketing developed, as did access to the food chain in the North West or tourism in the South East. This tendency was most pronounced when the participants included those with the position or authority to talk of these options. Rather than talking of abstract possibilities it became a discussion of practical actions that through the right policy regime might be realised. Whether the policy would be targeted at developing the sector or at a territory became an implicit fulcrum of the discussion.

7.3 Government and governance

The fishermen felt frequently that they had not been listened to and had at times been excluded from the policy making process. One fisherman who had been involved in many negotiations said that: “Fish is almost a taboo subject”(C2- Carlisle meeting 3/3/10), expressing his frustration at what he perceived to be a failure to discuss catching fish. Others felt that the whole industry had been ignored and underinvested in and that solutions needed to be developed from below rather than imposed from above:

In theory all these scenarios are possible but not practical. They need to grow organically and have a huge cash injection but there is nobody willing to take it all on. (N1- 2/3/10)

Others were even more scathing, naming public officials who they said had targets for the size that they wanted to reduce the fleet to, and that the SAIF process was “too little, too late”. One opinion was that fishermen are “up against the imposition of legislation” and that generally policy was a “catalogue of errors that goes on and on...”(L1 – 10/03/10). For some of the fishermen, representing themselves and other fishermen, some of these criticisms carried an emotional charge – they wanted “an apology” about the wrongs that they felt policy had inflicted on their industry.

The viewpoint expressed by many fishermen was that they wanted to return to an industry that allowed them to keep fishing and that was not sufficiently possible at present. One non-fisherman observed:

I know a lot of fishermen who are on benefits just to keep their heads afloat (N2, 2/3/10).

Fishermen and others argued that in many ways, regarding conservation and regulation:

Inshore fishermen seem to be taking the heat for the deep sea system (N1, 2/3/10).

The engagement of those who are outside of fishing resulted in a lot of discussion of 'discards'. One person not involved in fishing said:

We wouldn't see dead lambs at the side of the road from farmers, so why is fish allowed to be discarded? - maybe it should be made more public (N2 – 2/3/10).

The fishermen resisted this idea because they thought that it would show their industry in a poor light. One person, at the Hull meeting, who worked with Defra in other areas of policy, was surprised at the lack of "working in partnership" which they felt characterised other areas of conservation management.

7.4 Capacity to engage – fishermen and other stakeholders

As noted above, we faced the twin phenomena of fishermen's frequent lack of trust in Defra and, amongst other stakeholders, a lack of knowledge of fisheries policy. One of the contrasts that became apparent in the stakeholder groups was a grip on the imagination that the status of existing policy has for those at the catching end of the fishing industry. Because of their perception of a constant effort to overcome regulatory hurdles to fish, this grip generally displaces concern about the market and other wider considerations.

Several fishermen had stories about high-value deals done with retailers, or marketing initiatives in place only for that effort to be undermined by inflexible regulations. The point of these stories was to place the emphasis back onto the centrality of policy in determining access to fish. In three of the stakeholder meetings (Newcastle, Carlisle and Hull) people representing aspects of the food industry challenged some of the perceptions of the catching sector. These challenges ranged from what one person saw as the archaic use of harbour side auctions to the belief that multiple retailers were governed solely by the continuity and uniformity of supply, arguing that there is room for seasonal and locality foods within the supermarkets. A third person presented the challenge of branding the catch and targeting a premium market explicitly for high-end tourists as a means of

developing a broader brand for regional seafood products. All of the challengers were in a position to substantiate their arguments and also questioned the fishermen's focus on regulation.

Understandably, it is hard for fishermen in these circumstances to imagine scenarios beyond the current policy regime. But those people outside the current policy structure generally embraced solutions that were more orientated towards the market, and wider local development issues. In part this was because they had first-hand knowledge of a market or a supply chain so could challenge commonly held perceptions of how it operated. They were also accustomed to working in an environment in which access to the resource was unquestioned and therefore struggled to imagine the restrictions the fishermen described to them. The fishermen and their representatives often had very little direct knowledge of the retailers or consumers of fish, in some instances regarding it as not being part of their role.

7.5 Maximising opportunities means linking to tourism

Many of those who worked in community and rural development argued that the only route whereby fishing might have any role in influencing the development of their area was through tourism. At the London meeting there was a discussion of how tourism has become a lynchpin of the economies of many coastal towns, with those blighted by closed or declining hotels particularly affected and in danger of a more general economic collapse. As fishing is seen by many as an 'icon' of the English coastline, it could and should play an important role in keeping a vibrant visitor economy. It was also challenged that although tourism jobs can be seasonal and low wage in nature, many of them are not and provide an important source of employment for local people.

In Hull and Carlisle there was a discussion of how European funding targeted at rural development excludes fishing, which several contributors thought was supposed to have its own funding to which they appeared to have no access. This problem was

attributed to Defra, although the Marine Management Organisation manages the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) grant scheme, including the Axis 4 programme facilitating community development projects²¹. This, from the perspective of the discussants, left the burden of development linked to fishing to be placed on tourism, because it was an active industry in the area that could draw in other funds and support mechanisms. With several programmes already in place, several contributors (in Newcastle and Carlisle) were able to report that local and regional initiatives were challenging preconceptions in the local hospitality industry about local food being more expensive, and that consumers demand continuity of supply and uniformity of products, as well as supplying recipes for local produce. Although falling within the remit of improving tourism economies, several of the participants working in food promotion noted how “food is cohesive”; it can serve to bring elements of the community and economy together. One participant at the London group argued for a food initiative that had a “holistic approach”.

7.6 Working around policy

One of the clear attractions for many who favoured scenario C, and in the South East scenario B, was that it actually gave a high degree of control back to the community, in that the marketing of fish became an activity that a wider group of people could take part in. One of the attractions for those involved in the fishing industry was that it also created a clear distance from the centralised policy regime:

It is down to the xxxxx [Fishermen’s organisation] to do something about the situation and work with retailers (C2 - Carlisle meeting 3/3/10)

Once in discussion it became clear that just as bad examples resonated through the network of fishermen, positive examples could as well:

Co-ops are very successful in Maryport (C1, Carlisle meeting 3/3/10).

Participants in the South East made it clear that they had accredited fisheries and community interest companies which were struggling because of a lack of fish to catch or process.

²¹ http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/grants/eff_axis4.htm

8. National Tourism Interviews

The final element of our data collection was interviews with tourism managers, who have a strategic overview of a region or large area, to discover their plans and thinking with regard to inshore fishing. In part this reflects the remit of the project but also the importance placed on tourism by respondents in both phases of the research. Seven interviews were conducted in the second and third weeks of March 2010, using a semi-structured interview format (see appendix 3).

There was wide agreement on the importance of food in the tourism offer of an area and the potential of fishing to play a role in that:

[The] Provenance of food is so very important - local food in B&Bs, local fish in restaurants; this is what people want (NT4).

Food and drink tourism is also likely to become a more important sector (NT5). Awareness of the most well known example of that synergy between fishing, the hospitality industry and tourism was high:

Look at Rick Stein in Padstow. We don't have that, but if we could it would be great (NT4).

There was a regional difference in how fishing was viewed, with an interviewee in the South West being very clear:

It is a major part of the economy (NT6).

Whilst the perspective in the North West of England was very different:

Fishing is a minor part of the economy...tourism is very important (NT 5).

Another interviewee introduced a more nuanced position, arguing that:

[Fishing]...purely as a contributor to the economy, no [it is not important/significant]. However, as a part of the...tourism industry...its intangible contribution...is important but is difficult to quantify (NT 7).

The contributor from the South West went further, seeing the contribution as being around heritage, "There is a huge heritage associated with the industry" (NT6), part of which, they said, was the influence it has on the infrastructure of an area:

People like going to see fishing ports...[they are] very much an 'added value' part of the tourism industry (NT6).

The interviewee from the North West certainly encapsulated a perspective that contributors to the Carlisle focus group identified as being a focus on tourism in the Lake District. Whilst those contributors in the South West were confident in the role that fishing played in the total tourism offer in the region.

Stakeholders located where there was not a strong existing integration between fishing and tourism saw a number of problems, including issues with establishing contact and mutual understanding:

It is a missed opportunity perhaps [integration between fishing and tourism], but there could be problems with incorporating them (NT7).

[There is a] lack of contact between the two sectors. Perhaps there is no real interest in the fishing industry, although I suspect that fishermen do not want to engage with the tourism industry (NT7).

We [tourism] are the 'candy floss' industry – whereas the fishing [industry] is the last of [the?] hunter gatherers (NT7).

Although this was couched in a number of premises, other interviewees identified more pragmatic problems:

Agriculture is still subsidised. Fishing isn't – and therefore it is hard to get things to work as there isn't as much support (NT4).

Another interviewee was able to report a way in which fishing had become integrated with their tourism offer:

when we have festivals this does happen [integration with tourism sector] as some fishermen get involved with presentations/exhibitions/demonstrations (NT 3).

Our findings suggest that the South West, a peninsula with a major tourism and food economy, is the most integrated in terms of bringing fishing and tourism together. The other respondents' answers also reflect the priorities for their region, which may be to focus landward – as in the North West. The other findings confirm many of the discussions in the stakeholder groups that while there is a widespread perception of the benefits of linking tourism with fishing, the mechanisms to achieve this are currently under developed. Obvious examples, such as Padstow, capture attention but do not provide an immediate pathway for emulation. Land based foods have benefited in the last decade from consistent and concerted efforts to develop branding, provenance and local distribution, which as one interviewee noted is not present in the fishing industry.

9. Stakeholder Conclusions

For local communities, we need bits of all scenarios (C3- Carlisle meeting 3/3/10).

Really we need bits of all scenarios - take quota rebalancing from A, zoning fisheries from B and regional management and marketing is key from C (C4 - Carlisle meeting 3/3/10).

At times the stakeholder discussions became in themselves a form of the very community development discussion that the participants highlighted as being important to the future of inshore fishing in their area. All participants stressed the importance of fishing to their area but because of the limited physical impacts of fishing on their localities, it became difficult to discuss the wider social impacts of fishing policy. The central role of policy in regulating the scope and extent of fishing became very clear. Yet these discussions did indicate, sometimes indirectly, routes through which management options might be re-imagined.

First, although there was a considerable resistance to, and disquiet about, aspects of existing policy, there was a willingness to discuss alternatives that developed through the discussion. There was challenge to the fishermen's focus on the centrality of policy and a wider discussion of the possibilities of using food as the fulcrum for change; the shift in paradigm from sectoral to territorial discussions. The frankness of some of these discussions was possible because nobody involved was historically responsible for the existing policies and there was very little discussion of the disputes around the science of fisheries management – the 'know why'. It also benefited from the long tradition of local agreements, generally to match local stock and ecological requirements, around the Sea Fisheries Committees. This form of debate implicitly empowered the fishermen and their representatives as the social and cultural importance of fishing was recognised, giving them a higher status in the discussion but in turn they were being asked to take on a role in the food chain and the responsibilities that it entails. This suggests that 'local' management and agreements may have considerable potential to play a major role in future policy.

Second, generally there was a widespread inability to identify any distinct social benefits tied to most of the options in the policy scenarios. For most participants this was because there was not a direct linkage between the fortunes of the inshore

fishing sector and their local area. Therefore measures to improve the performance and profitability of inshore fishing, whilst important to the fishermen, was not of significant importance to the wider community unless it was integrated with the rest of the economy. The processors, particularly those supplying the domestic market, are highly reliant on imported fish so domestic inshore fish could play a role in higher value, smaller volume outlets, including the hospitality trade. For those working in tourism, they make indirect use of the infrastructure and appearance of fishing, so the technical management has little direct impact on their businesses unless it ties to the physical product.

Third, within these discussions, those outside of fishing or the catching sector were very aware of the requirements of the multiple retailers' supply chains and third party certification that are more demanding in their requirements than those of the commodity markets. Several warned that without adequate investment in quality assurance schemes, domestic inshore fish could be excluded from these supply chains in the near future. Those looking to the various visitor economies looked to the sense of place and ambience created by fishing that could only be realised as financial return through a physical product with the appropriate provenance. Generally this was seen as fish delivered through the local hospitality industry, but there were a limited range of alternatives based on 'experiences'.

Fourth, as discussion of the potential role of IFCA as intermediary bodies, community interest companies or certification bodies and the absence of LEADER²² style groups made apparent, there was an awareness of a lack of intermediary bodies to carry out the role of developing the inshore fishing sector. The sharp contrast the tourism stakeholders made between agriculture and fishing was apparent, with the former being able to work with other actors because of the investment made in it. Many of the discussions considered ways to create such an intermediary body, as a vehicle for co-ordination and to engage with a wider range

²² LEADER - Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale (European Union initiative for rural development). No one mentioned the FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Groups) groups under the EFF directly.

of funding sources. These unspecified agencies would not be involved in the work of representing fishing in policy circles, or devolved administration of quota but with a broader remit.

It would be possible to see the discussions of the policy scenarios as very bleak – a marginal economic sector, regulated in a way that many do not understand or disagree with profoundly, and a societal asset often detached from its host community, whereby people could not identify direct social benefits. Yet, the emergent tone and options from these discussions was unstintingly positive, because potential ways forward were identified and even the groundwork for agreement established. Certainly some of this optimism was based on the possibility of changes in policy, some investment being obtained and a diminishment in controversy between the stakeholders. Yet many stakeholders were able to identify ways in which they could shape the future of their locality through inshore fishing.

10. Conclusions

Many of the people we interviewed during the course of this research were surprised that we did not ask about the environment or wildlife or the controversies about fishing in the press. Few people had ever asked them detailed questions about their lives and that of the community before. We have sought to redress that balance in some way through the process of this research and in doing so have found an industry that is held as an emblem by local people of their community and its uniqueness.

Our conclusions are set out here first in general terms; we then consider the county of Cornwall as an example of how fishing can be part of a broader based process of community development. We then reflect on what we have observed in our research and how that relates to the SAIF advisory group's proposition paper, the final document produced by the group and how long term options could be developed. As the example of Cornwall suggests, there is not a simple route to maximise the impacts of inshore fishing divorced from its locality, but there is a suite of well-tried options to consider.

What exists at present is an inshore fishing industry characterised by people finding a way to combine the opportunities open to them that are an admixture of local ecological factors, the regulations and the markets available for the catch. In some instances where there are local consumers, the 'right' species are caught locally and the infrastructure exists, the catch is able to become an engine for generating and keeping money in the local community by being sold into the local tourism industry. More often, fishermen have sought to earn a living by selling into Europe's commodity markets. The difference between these two strategies illustrates the variation in impacts that fishing has in the locality. Selling into the commodity markets often represents the most convenient and low risk strategy for fishermen and offers the best immediate returns, so securing their household. In other areas they are able to optimise the social benefits of their catch as well as securing their income through selling fish with a provenance, but in order to do so they have required considerable support and encouragement from those outside the catching sector.

In our initial thinking about this project we separated the 'tangible' – the physical products of fishing – from the 'intangible' – the cultural and social impacts of fishing. We met the constant paradox that whilst many people not directly involved in fishing pointed to its importance in their area but only in terms of its presence not the profitability or sustainability of its operations. Fishing and the ambience it creates plays a central role in the major industry of most coastal communities – tourism. All of those working in tourism recognise the iconic role that inshore fishing plays in the tourism offer of different localities, but finding a mechanism to reward this directly is difficult. This leaves tourism in the unfortunate position that while it is the most important industry in most coastal communities, the appeal of fishing is dependent on policy decisions over which those who manage tourism have little knowledge of or control.

It is not therefore surprising that when discussing the possible impacts of policy on the local community, most people favoured a scenario where local control was

increased and the ‘burden’ of regulation lessened. Most of all they wanted to be able to use a valuable asset to develop their community in ways that reflected their aspirations and needs. Ideally, fishing in the future could become part of the broader menu of community development options, with fish becoming part of an integrated strategy of rural development through maximising the social and economic returns from food.

10.1 Policy options

Broadly, our suggestion is that ‘the Defra family’ could, in partnership with other public sector and commercial bodies, begin a process of community development to create local intermediary bodies, which would build up the social return of fishing to match its cultural importance. To achieve that goal we advocate placing fishing within a wider policy context, including the recognition of it being an integral aspect of the food industry, which would also place it in a different commercial context. These new intermediary bodies need to be genuinely owned by the local communities, and be backed by a policy that views diversity as an opportunity. In this way a more integrated fishing policy could become a means to enable a more complex discussion between communities, fishermen, citizens and consumers about how the triple goals of environmental sustainability, social well being and economic viability may be realised. This would be a challenging process for many of those involved, which we believe if embedded in a community would be more successful as it could draw on resources of trust and reciprocity unavailable in larger scale arrangements.

Inshore fishing is a localised and often very specific sector that is deeply embedded in the social and cultural history of the area in which it is practised. This in part reflects the ecology of an area, which species are available and the pattern of tides or winds. But because it is tied to these resources in a way that is increasingly unusual in our society, it also provides a cultural and social emblem of a community’s relationship with the natural systems with which it is interwoven. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this means that most people see the answers to the problems the sector faces as being a return to some form of ‘local’ control. The

most striking examples of success are when fishing is integrated with other assets in the community to create a circle of mutual benefit. Because of these specificities, the importance of local ownership and the attentiveness to what makes communities unique; policy options need to be tailored to those localities.

10.2 Cornwall – fishing, tourism and local development

Our suggestions on the role that fishing could play in the wider rural economy are captured well by references to some preceding texts on local food development in Cornwall.

The fishing industry in Cornwall, particularly the inshore fishing industry, is widely seen as a highly innovative sector with a number of experiments that suggest the sector could be more environmentally sustainable and economically robust. It continues to support or has supported the Duchy Quota Company, an MSC mackerel fishery, a lobster hatchery, a line caught tuna fishery, a handline fishermen's association, a fisheries resource centre and a producer organization, as well as some of the most prestigious seafood restaurants in the UK. Although not all of these initiatives are relevant to the inshore sector, they point to an energy and search for new business models in the county that influences the inshore sector²³.

This situation has not arisen, in our analysis, by fishing working in isolation, rather it is a question of it being integrated with, and influenced by, the development of the wider food sector within Cornwall. The University of Exeter estimates that the food industry is worth more than £1billion annually to the county²⁴. At the same time seaside tourism alone was estimated to be worth £250 million to the county in 2008, supporting approximately 17,000 year round jobs²⁵. Within this local context, fishing has a strategic importance to the county as a centre for food production and a

²³ Trewin, C. (2006) *Cornish fishing and seafood*, (Penzance: Alison Hodge)

²⁴ Lobley, M., M. Reed, R. Metcalf and J. Stephens (2006) *A study of food production, distribution and processing in Cornwall and the isles of Scilly*. (Exeter: Exeter University)

²⁵ Beatty, C., S. Fothergill, T. Gore and I. Wilson (2010) *The seaside tourist industry in England and Wales*. Pp. 68, (Sheffield: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research)

tourism destination. Because Cornwall has received Objective One²⁶ status recently, reflecting the relative poor economic performance in the past, it has had the opportunity to reflect and develop a strategy and to invest in response to that plan.

Therefore, more widely, Cornwall has become a place where the relationship between community development, tourism, and the food industry in its widest sense is a paradigm that has become widely diffused. This has also meant that a number of synergies have been able to develop as people have seen experiments in another sector and realised how it could be replicated in their industry. This is not to deny the highly innovative work undertaken by many of those in the fishing and hospitality industries, but to observe that it happened within a context in which experimentation is fostered and the food industry, of which inshore fishing is a central part, is seen as vital to local prosperity.

Our research examples demonstrate that there can be synergies within this broad strategy. Padstow has specialized as a gastronomic destination and sources some but not all of its fish from its own harbour. Much of the fish it needs to fill the shortfall comes from Newlyn and is sold as 'Cornish' fish. In this way, although each town has its own trajectory and strategy for its development, they reinforce one another. Certainly fish is sold as a commodity from Cornwall, often being exported to Spain, but this is only one of a number of routes to the market place. The brand by Seafood Cornwall, often in association with product tracing, means that Cornish produce is recognized and used within the high-end hospitality trade far beyond the county. In terms of the organizations taking these initiatives, the local authorities provide support but they span the interests of stakeholders, with a focus on local needs and accountability, with private companies and the public sector making sustained strategic investment.

10.3 Measures to improve social benefits

²⁶ Objective One status relates to the EU structural funds, it acts to promote the development of areas that have a GDP of 75% or less of the EU average. The programme ran from 2000-2006 in Cornwall see http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/objective1/index_en.htm and <http://www.objectiveone.com/>

We have observed a common set of processes and opportunities that most of the communities we studied were either fully engaged with or were preparing to engage with. These are briefly:

1. Greater integration of fishing with tourism, particularly through festivals and events.
2. Local food branding to add value to fish caught locally and to boost the value kept in the community.
3. Third party accreditations to gain access to more markets and receive a greater return for that fish.

These are far from easy, as underpinning each one will require a considerable and concerted effort to achieve it within limited budgets and resources. They are generally aimed at re-valourising and re-connecting fishing to the rest of the community. They do so by making relatively low risk investments into the cultural and social 'offer' of fishing. Yet they are also mutually reinforcing, as sales can start around 'localness', then other values added through branding, and third party certification can also add value for catches that are not sold locally at premium prices. It also begins a process whereby the catching sector moves away from thinking that the primary quality of fish is 'freshness' onto other factors such as provenance and ecological sustainability. One of the most well documented sectors where the contribution of food businesses to the local economy has been studied is in certified organic production. Comparisons between fishing businesses and land based enterprises can only be analogous but a 2005 study by Exeter University found that organic farm businesses selling directly to the consumer earned £4,983 per hectare, compared to non-organic businesses selling directly to the consumer which earned £3,249 per hectare, as compared to an average of all farms in the survey without direct sales of £1,654 per hectare (Lobley, Reed and Butler 2005:120). Provenance, certification and keeping a larger part of the retail value of the product can make considerable impacts on the income of a business. Further research has demonstrated that many of the benefits of this activity appear to be captured in the locality around such businesses and that the concentration of such businesses in an area can amplify those effects (Lobley et al 2009).

Changing the scope of inshore fishing will require some fishermen to reconsider their businesses, from its goal of being the catching of fish through to the locus on being how to market it. The ends of this process should be to marry an increasing degree of responsibility on fishermen around these new aspects of their enterprise to securing of their economic return and an increased social status.

10.4 The SAIF proposition paper

The SAIF proposition paper was published mid-way through our research period, with only a few people in the catching sector and some in fisheries management who we interviewed being aware of its contents during our fieldwork. In part this is a question of timing as the paper was published during our fieldwork, with the policy engagement happening during and after the second phase of our research. As we noted above, the social implications of policy instruments are very difficult for lay people to engage with, but based on our observations where there was general agreement we have noted the areas of correspondence with the SAIF document (see table 5 below). This suggests to us a willingness to consider areas of change, and a belief that less contention over policy options would considerably improve the fortunes of the sector.

Table 5 - Areas of agreement and SAIF document compared

Area of general agreement	Section of SAIF proposition document
Devolved management of fishing (quota, technical measures, by-laws) to government regional or sub-regional level.	3.5 Use existing marine management structures where possible. 3.7 Include local management, utilising local knowledge, expertise and experience. 4.4.1 A localised management structure...
Re-allocation/re-distribution of quota to benefit the inshore fleet.	4.2 Step 2right balance between the fleet segments and available fishing opportunities...
A re-definition of the inshore fleet on the basis of vessel length, engine capability and capacity perhaps related to regional definitions.	Fleet 4.1.1 composition
An exclusive zone for inshore vessels, with the proviso that they have access beyond that zone.	Option 2: wholly differentiate inshore fisheries from those off-shore
Management of effort on the basis of an annual allotment of hours at sea.	4.4.6 'menu' of management options

As we have noted, associating particular management measures with generalised social benefits is confounded by the economic marginality of inshore fishing, the role of local ecological factors and the importance of fishing as a cultural emblem that means its presence, rather than form of operation, is important. Management options were also seen as limited in the discussions because they were 'mid-level' or national level. Many participants saw policy change as needing to be at the EU level, the top level of government, and that the main areas of dynamism, as well as their opportunity for effective influence, were at a local level or lowest level. It would therefore seem that the most immediate way of improving the social benefits of

inshore fishing would be a management structure that enabled the local management of stocks.

As many in the second stage of the project argued, much of the fish eaten in the UK is not affected by the CFP policies because it is imported from outside the EU. However, its sustainability is underwritten by third party certification and this form of accreditation is becoming obligatory for the supply chains of some of the multiple retailers. This suggests to us a strategic opportunity to reconfigure the relationship between the inshore sector, Defra, local communities and the consumers of fish; as part of any devolution of powers to local bodies should be a requirement to achieve third party accreditation of the sustainability of the fisheries. The aim of this requirement is to ensure that consumers are given the opportunity to access domestic fish on the same terms as imported fish, with potentially a much lower carbon footprint for local fish. The debates about sustainability and stock levels are increasingly shifting towards the market, where rewards for high standards are available. Simultaneously this would change the relationship between fishermen and Defra. Finally, it would offer the opportunity for fishermen to overcome the stigma of being 'rule breakers' and take on the role of being custodians of the marine environment.

There was a constant, but marginal, thread of discussion throughout the research that pointed to a model of inshore fishing that was more restricted but in being so could offer greater local benefits. Several fishermen talked of territorial restrictions on who could use 'their' fishing grounds, arguing that they should have priority as they had an interest in maintaining them. Others argued that they would adopt third party certification if the link between it and better prices could be established. There was a willingness to discuss radical reforms, when tied to local management and demonstrable benefits.

The SAIF Advisory Group recommendations were published in August 2010²⁷. The Advisory Group recommended a range of changes to current policy that in part relate to providing inshore fishermen with a greater opportunity to gain access to fish through changes to the quota system and their representation within the industry. They look to greater local management of fish stocks through the new IFCA bodies and call for those bodies to have responsibility for the area of up to 12 nautical miles from the shore. Alongside this they recommend a range of measures to enable fishermen to “catch less and earn more”, such as third party certification and greater ‘education’ of the multiple retailers and the food service companies. The government response²⁸ ranged through acceptance for a number of ideas like greater regional management, to caution about others (for example, pilot projects for IFCAs with expanded responsibilities). It viewed the Advisory Group as an important step in re-building trust and committed to continue ‘virtual’ meetings of the group.

Many of the suggestions that we offer for consideration below show an obvious sympathy with these broad goals. Our observation of the SAIF recommendations are that they are predominantly focused on reform of the catching sector, its integration with a more balanced quota system within the fishing industry and a modernisation of linkages to the food chain. The difference in our suggestions, which is partly one of emphasis, is that we look to develop the role of inshore fishing by working in synergy with tourism, private businesses and local communities to improve the ‘social return’ from fishing. To do so we suggest that fish is placed within the food chain in parity with other products and that reform of the catching sector can only be a partial answer.

10.5 Beyond the SAIF advisory group proposition paper

The SAIF advisory group paper in its last section (4.5) sets out a broader range of ambitions and in that spirit we suggest five long term options that mix community

²⁷ Although before the publication of this report the Advisory group was provided with a draft report of the initial findings

²⁸ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/fisheries/documents/policy/saif-recommendations.pdf>

development with lessons from other parts of the food industry which could offer the inshore sector a range of new opportunities.

10.5.1 Collective Action and FLAG groups

Throughout the research it has been apparent that success has often been built on the collective efforts of fishermen working in their communities, pooling their expertise and efforts. We argued above there is an urgent need for intermediary bodies in order to develop the possibilities of inshore fishing, not only to discuss policy but to bring stakeholders together to act on creating change in the branding, marketing, distribution and consumption of fish. The form of these bodies – co-operatives, not-for-profit companies, charities, and whether they are time limited or long term – would seem to be less important to us than their activities. The central aspect is that the community they serve feels that it ‘owns’ the organisation and in turn it is accountable to that community. Certainly during our research it appeared that many people felt this way about the proposed IFCA for their area, but there may be an issue that they are not localised enough.

In part it would also appear that these goals fall within the remit of the European Fisheries Fund Axis 4 provisions, which are looking to set up six Fisheries Local Action Groups in England²⁹. Their land based counterparts – LEADER³⁰ groups – have met with considerable success in addressing the development of rural areas. These groups work to create sustainable change from the ‘bottom up’ and look to include as many people as possible in the local community within their activities. These groups may fulfil many of the goals and aspirations that have been identified in this research. Given that there will only be 6 groups throughout England they may play an important role but will be unlikely to be sufficient in themselves to address all of the needs and aspirations expressed during our research.

²⁹ http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/grants/eff_axis4.htm

³⁰ LEADER - Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale (European Union initiative for rural development)

Private sector sponsored initiatives may have an important role in fostering new ways of creating networks and forms of collective organisation that may foster the aspirations for greater local control of fisheries and their products. In attempting to bring the inshore sector into the broader food chain, we are explicitly seeking to involve the local tourism businesses working together and multiple retailers in order to a degree to re-localise the supply of fish³¹. In order for that to be achieved inshore fishermen will have to make their businesses compliant with standards such as those of the British Retail Consortium. Multiple retailers have demonstrated a willingness to invest in developing links to producers and their collective efforts to raise quality in other food products, forming 'producer clubs'. A closer connection to the multiple retailers mediated by collective bodies may offer such opportunities to inshore fishermen³². Local tourism businesses may not be large enough alone but in co-operation in an area may be able to play an important role in fostering local branding, local quality marks and security of supply.

10.5.2 Brands

Although it has become something of a stock response that all goods and services ought to be branded, and certainly poor use of branding can be counter-productive, branding recognises that a product can have more associated with it than price alone. Currently outside of the major processors the branding is based on geographic provenance that is often quite broadly drawn – e.g. Scottish or Cornish fish. There are a few specific relationships between species and a specific place (e.g. Cromer Crabs) and some links being established with gear typed used (e.g. line-caught). It would appear that there is considerable opportunity for local areas to establish more of these brands, whereby products can be distinguished in the general marketplace. These brands can provide a story that integrates various

³¹ The UK is a net importer of fish exporting fish such as Mackerel, Herring and Salmon whilst importing for example Cod, Tuna, Haddock and Prawns from countries as far away as China. In 2009 720,000 tonnes of fish were imported and 479,000 imported, a crude trade gap that suggest opportunities for domestic fish. Marine management organisation (2010) UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2009. Pp. 120 in C. Irwin and B. Thomas eds., (Newport: marine management organisation and Office of National Statistics)

³² Local aquaculture is already beginning to gain traction in this area see - <http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/environmentandcountryside/2010/100514waitrose/;jsessionid=wkykMWnJnmXVhyXvfB4CywQ8DLcbKBnCJvJTThs044KjhsGJn3VJl-42672990?lang=en>

aspects of the local area, generating and keeping income in the area. Examples of this are the wine routes of Tuscany that link vineyards, restaurants and hotels throughout the region.

Within the hierarchy of brands and supply chains, traditionally the 'carriage trade' to restaurants and exclusive retailers has defined the highest prices and standards of quality. As we have argued, this continues to play an important role in the inshore sector but alongside this form of trade, new areas of high value food have been created. Of particular relevance to the inshore fishing sector would be fish that, alongside stock conservation, could also be traded 'ethically' and/or be 'low carbon'. Although these designations started as niche interventions they have become increasingly mainstream, often being delivered through not-for-profit or charitable foundations. Fairtrade has spread from coffee and tea through to cocoa, sugar, flowers and fruit, including adoption by major multinational companies. It could offer some fishermen - particularly those generating wider social and environmental benefits - a new market. Although only an emerging market, low carbon food products are developing rapidly. It would seem to be an immediate area of advantage to inshore boats fishing relatively closer to shore if they could demonstrate low carbon status and one that the deep water fleet would potentially struggle to emulate.

All of these branding exercises would involve investment but as many other communities marginalised in the global food industry have shown, it provides new ways to connect with consumers. At first these may be 'ethical' consumers but as Fairtrade beverages and confectionary have shown a combination of provenance, quality and ethical status can propel products to consumers far beyond that initial category.

10.5.3 Making markets

Frequently in the literature about fishing and in our research people approached markets as if they were akin to ecosystems. Rather we view markets as human made artefacts and are clear that powerful actors can create new markets. We regularly eat produce that would have been unfamiliar a decade ago either from another culture or a species or variety we previously did not consume – a pertinent example being the river cobbler. Given the ambitious goals of strategy documents such as Food 2030³³ plentiful species caught sustainably in domestic waters fulfil health, economic, environmental and social goals. Therefore creating a market for neglected domestic species and viewing this within the strategic policy goals of food security could provide a unifying focus for all of those involved with fish and fishing.

10.5.4 New entrants

Young people are obviously reluctant to enter fishing but as with agriculture there may be a role for mature new entrants. The capital barriers to setting up an inshore fishing business are relatively low and if training needs are addressed it could be an attractive option for a range of people looking for a new career. Although fishing is physically demanding it may be attractive to those with a background in working outdoors or looking for an opportunity to do so. The advantage of mature entrants is that they may bring previous business experience and new perspectives to the inshore fishing.

10.5.5 Working against stigma

The literature review (appendix 1) and our research make clear that fishermen feel that they attract a degree of stigma compared to other groups. In part this can help explain their unwillingness to contemplate sanctions or divisions within their industry. Although we believe that local management arrangements would contribute significantly to improving their status we argue that two other measures can be taken.

³³ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/pdf/food2030strategy.pdf>

Partners in science – fishermen and/or their groups could play a greater role in collecting scientific data. So rather than the impression that science is done on or around them, they are included as stakeholders and lay experts. Throughout the research fishermen were able to see themselves as having a broader role through taking children out for education trips, working alongside scientists to conduct more accurate surveys of their areas or taking part in species restoration projects. Others suggested that just as farmers receive payments for environmental work they could too, in return for their role in preserving the marine environment. There would appear to be opportunities for involving fishermen in more than the practical management of fishing grounds but also in scientific data collection and analysis. Given the role of ‘amateurs’ in scientific fields as diverse as ornithology to astronomy, projects involving fishermen would appear to have potential to be fruitful.

Enablers of other people’s welfare – some fishermen feel that their businesses are divorced from the local economy and as such they are responsible only for, and to, themselves. Those fishermen who run businesses that contribute to the wider economy demonstrated great pride in that role – either through underpinning someone else’s business or simply running a business profitable enough to pay tax. Fostering models of business that encourage the integration of fishing businesses into the local community will foster that pride and combat isolation.

Legibility – one of the aims behind all of these suggestions is to make inshore fishing more open to those not familiar with it, more easily ‘read’. Not only is fishing regulated in a complex way and so carrying a heavy regulatory burden, as recognised in the SAIF advisory group recommendations, it is also contentious. To a degree this reflects the occupational culture of fishermen, which prizes autonomy and within which boisterous debate is a part of sociability, but it has to be recognised that this has a cost. Contention and complexity act as barriers to the wider community becoming involved; lowering them will let other people take part.

10.6 Concluding comments

Often the headlines about the fishing industry suggest that everything in fishing is difficult, in no small part because at times it appears that there is no agreement about anything - apart from the importance of fishing. Discussions with fishermen can reflect anger about the outcomes of policy measures, whilst conservationists can demand ever more restrictive measures to protect stocks. Public debate is often highly polarised and expressed in dramatic terms. We do not believe that society is faced with such stark choices.

As our research has demonstrated, there are significant areas where agreement could be forged, particularly around local management, although there remain areas that are likely to prove more difficult, particularly those around conservation. We would agree with Symes and Phillipson that:

It is, however, important to remember that sustainable development is a three legged stool embodying environmental, economic and social sustainability: dangers arise when one of these legs is weakened by neglect. (Symes & Phillipson 2009:1)

Social measures may have been neglected, as they argue, in EU policy making but we have seen many local communities eager to take fuller control of fisheries and to revive the 'social leg' of sustainability. These measures cannot be solely local because lines of accountability need to be maintained and the needs of wider social groups addressed, as well as wider environmental and economic issues, but an increased degree of autonomy could be given to those who depend on these resources for their livelihoods.

Inshore fishing is highly valued by the communities in which it is embedded and there are routes through which the catch can be given value to allow it to initiate virtuous circles that build up the businesses of the fishermen and the community around them. Our research suggests that what are presently isolated experiments could be replicated and adapted to benefit more people. This is not necessarily an easy proposition but this research suggests that there are mechanisms and processes that could help achieve these goals. Certainly the goal of a sustainable

fishery that helps the wider community prosper is closer than the contention and public rhetoric would suggest.