



Side Event 5

Climate change: What kind of knowledge, what type of adaptation for what type of West African artisanal fisher folk

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Abstract

Senegalese artisanal fishermen have always been able to deal with variable weather and changing climate by adapting their knowledge, which is passed on from one generation to the next. The analysis of their perceived and realized threats on climate change and their associated adaptation strategies, revealed that they are based on a mixture of magic-religious (animism and Islamism) considerations and empirical knowledge. Such considerations and knowledge lead to (1) divination sessions to address *e.g.* the lack of rain and too high winds, (2) taboos and prohibitions to preserve *e.g.* the resource, but also and especially (3) appraisal modes of climatic parameters including swell, winds, and the moon cycles. The observation of these parameters allows fishermen to know the sea state and to adapt their behavior to it. However, an analysis per age group shows that most of the young fishermen tend to ignore or disbelieve the magic-religious considerations and move towards empirical considerations gained through the use of electronic marine equipment (*e.g.* sounder, GPS) and national weather forecast. However, the limited traditional knowledge of young fisher folk on atmospheric and marine climate parameters compared to older fishermen might be an important gap in developing adaptation strategies. This is also true for neglecting new scientific findings by part of older fisher folk. We underline the importance to consider the three main types of knowledge for developing adaptation strategies for the artisanal fisheries sector in West Africa.

Keywords: Local knowledge, typology knowledge, adaptation, small scale fisheries, Senegal.



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Extended book of Abstract

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