



The Importance of Interplay Between Leadership and Social Capital in Shaping Outcomes of Rights-Based Fisheries Governance

BEATRICE CRONA^{a,b}, STEFAN GELCICH^c and ÖRJAN BODIN^{b,*}

^a *The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden*

^b *Stockholm Resilience Center, Stockholm University, Sweden*

^c *Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile*

Summary. — As concerns about anthropogenically driven marine resource decline continue, rights-based approaches to fisheries governance have gained attention. Territorial User Rights (TURF) is one example increasingly promoted to enhancing sustainability of small-scale fisheries. Despite rising global interest empirical inquiry into the factors contributing to TURF outcomes remains limited and focus has centered on the ecological and fisheries outcomes, largely neglecting documentation of social consequences and social determinants of success.

This paper aims to move the theoretical and empirical work on the role of social capital and leadership in natural resource governance (particularly fisheries) forward by deepening the discussion around the conceptualization and operationalization of social capital. We also extend empirical work on TURF performance by examining multiple social and ecological outcomes. We put forth four theoretically informed propositions about the relationship between key explanatory variables and outcomes. Using empirical data from six Chilean Territorial User Rights areas we provide an early assessment of the validity of these propositions using a case comparative approach, and test their usefulness in operationalizing and analyzing such multifaceted data.

Findings show that social capital may not be a useful predictor of success, while the presence of engaged leadership and agreement among members around sanctions appears more closely linked to performance across all social and ecological outcome variables. A key finding is that the use of social capital as a broad term encompassing multiple pro-social variables may not be a fruitful way forward for improving our understanding of the determinants of success in resource management. Instead results indicate that leadership interacts with specific aspects of what is generally referred to as social capital to affect outcomes. To allow theoretical refinement and hypotheses testing regarding determinants of governance outcomes we suggest the social processes measured under the broad umbrella of social capital should be kept separate.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As concerns about anthropogenically driven declines of marine resources and biodiversity continue to increase, rights-based fisheries approaches to governance have gained attention. Territorial User Rights for Fisheries (TURFs) is one example which is increasingly being promoted as enhancing the sustainability of small-scale fisheries (Gaines, Lester, Grorud-Colvert, Costello, & Pollnac, 2010). The theoretical underpinning of this approach is that the devolution or strengthening of fishers' user rights should align incentives for sustainable use of marine resources and encourage stewardship behavior (Castilla, 1994). Fisheries agencies, NGOs, and philanthropic foundations have been increasingly supporting initiatives to implement TURFs in small-scale fisheries across the globe. To date much focus has remained on the ecological fisheries outcomes largely neglecting the documentation of social outcomes also arising from TURFs. Furthermore, understanding both the multiplicity of outcomes from TURFs and the determinants of success is becoming increasingly important to inform implementation, adaptation, and management processes as this governance approach spreads around the world.

Chile is at the forefront of establishing rights-based approaches for small-scale fisheries management. In 1991, a national TURFs policy was established creating the possibility of assigning collective exclusive access rights to artisanal fisher organizations for the sustainable harvesting of benthic resources as part of a co-management governance structure

(Castilla *et al.*, 1998). In 2010, over 700 TURFs were decreed to fisher organizations throughout mainland Chile (Gelcich *et al.*, 2010) covering an area in excess of 1,100 km² and spanning a wide geographical range. Yet empirical inquiry into the various factors contributing to TURF outcomes remains limited (Marin, Gelcich, Castilla, & Berkes, 2012; Schumann, 2007; SUBPESCA, 2004). Recent studies have examined the role of social capital in some aspects of TURF performance and of fisheries management in general (Bodin & Crona, 2008; Stefan Gelcich, Edwards-Jones, Kaiser, & Castilla, 2006; Gutierrez, Hilborn, & Defeo, 2011; Marin *et al.*, 2012; Schumann, 2010). The main reason for this focus on a purely social phenomenon is the assumption that groups of resource users who enjoy a certain amount of social cohesion, trust, and agreement around management goals are more likely to be able to adjust and deal with the task of making collective decisions to manage a common and highly dynamic resource (Folke, Hahn, Olsson, & Norberg, 2005; Ostrom, 1990). Social capital, often conceptualized as encompassing many of these pro-social elements, has been seen as a means by which the factors that may directly affect the natural resource in focus (such as global environmental change, changing market dynamics, natural disasters) are better dealt with by the co-management system. However, the concept of social capital has been fraught with controversy (see e.g. Narayan & Cassidy, 2001; Woolcock, 2001) and the lack of empirical

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work examining causal connections between social capital and fisheries outcomes stems in part from the lack of consensus around a clear definition and empirical operationalization of social capital in this context. Furthermore, the notion that social capital alone can account for collective action outcomes has been challenged. Instead it is increasingly viewed as a latent asset which can be activated to produce a common good through active and engaged leadership (e.g. Bodin & Crona, 2008; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2011; Krishna, 2002; Newman & Dale, 2005).

This paper has two aims. First, to move the theoretical and empirical work on the role of social capital and leadership in natural resource governance (particularly fisheries) forward, by deepening the discussion around the conceptualization and operationalization of social capital in a natural resource governance context. Much of the work on social capital – the elements that comprise it and how these should be captured – has been conducted in the context of civic engagement and economic development (e.g. Krishna, 2002; Narayan & Cassidy, 2001; Onyx & Bullen, 2000). However, social capital capable of promoting sustainable resource governance outcomes may differ in its constituents from the more general social capital required for civic engagement. For example, procedures to monitor and sanction non-compliance is not traditionally included in the aforementioned work, suggesting that a more critical look at the components of relevance for defining social capital in a resource governance setting is needed.

Second, the paper introduces an assessment of both social and ecological TURF outcomes (increased biomass of economically important species, satisfaction with TURF management, and degree of internal collaboration among users in individual TURFs). Our contribution is the development of a framework which combines a multidimensional understanding of social capital tailored for resource governance with a multidimensional assessment of TURF outcomes. We put forth four theoretically informed propositions about the relationship between the key explanatory variables explored here and TURF outcomes. Using empirical data from six TURF areas along the Central coast of Chile, we provide an early assessment of the validity of these propositions using a case comparative approach, as well as testing their usefulness in operationalizing and analyzing this type of multifaceted data. While we use specific TURFs in Chile as working example, our hope is to provide an overriding framework which can inform stakeholders wishing to understand issues of social capital and leadership for the development and performance of rights-based approaches to fisheries in other regions or across other resource sectors.

2. SOCIAL CAPITAL, LEADERSHIP, AND THEIR ROLE IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Recent studies have shown a positive relationship between leadership, social capital, and sustainable fisheries outcomes (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2011). While such studies are interesting and important for bringing previously neglected variables to the fore in discussions about what contributes to successful fisheries governance, the low resolution and lack of specificity does not provide us with an enhanced understanding of how management outcomes are linked with the multiple social phenomena equated with social capital.

To achieve this one needs to first unpack the multitude of social processes that underlie the much broader concept of social capital. Confusion has abounded around what should be included under this broad concept because sources (primarily

various types of social interactions in social networks) and consequences (e.g. trust, tolerance, and cooperation) of social capital have often been confounded (Woolcock, 2001). Thus, it is not uncommon to see social capital used as a catch-all term for a multitude of social phenomena (processes, norms, and behaviors etc.) that are considered desirable and pro-social in one way or another. We argue that social processes have to be examined and selected based on their theoretically postulated contribution to specific outcomes of a particular governance situation. Finally, the processes that can be empirically or theoretically hypothesized to contribute to governance outcomes have to be operationalized in a theoretically informed, transparent, and replicable way. In the following section we put forth a set of theoretically grounded propositions designed to facilitate the teasing out of a causal relationship between social capital, leadership, and resource governance outcomes.

The movement in the scholarly debate on social capital over the last decade has tended toward an emerging consensus that it comprises the norms and networks that facilitate collective action. In other words, focusing on what it *is*, rather than what it *does*, and operationalizing it as a sociological variable, primarily captured through social relations (Aldrich, 2012; Bodin & Crona, 2008; Foley & Edwards, 1999; Marín, Bodin, Gelcich, & Crona, 2015; Portes, 1998). We follow this approach by conceptualizing and measuring social capital as social relations among the fishermen in individual TURFs (Figure 1). Furthermore, we assume that the pattern of these relationships to some extent define the “relational infrastructure” of the TURFs, and therefore influence (constrain) social processes in a more general sense. These types of typically strong within-group relations are often referred to as “bonding social capital” and can be distinguished from the often weaker social ties associated with “bridging” and “linking” social capital that links groups horizontally and vertically, respectively (Woolcock, 2001). We show how bonding social capital is operationalized using a Social Network Analysis (SNA) approach below. However, before we delve into operationalization it is important to note that our aim to understand the factors contributing to collective action in a resource management context forces us to look beyond social capital as the sole explanatory variable. As noted above, the notion that social capital alone can account for collective action has been challenged (Bodin & Crona, 2008; Krishna, 2002; Newman & Dale, 2005). Instead scholars argue that social capital can be conceived of almost as a latent resource, which can be activated by ‘leaders’ who have the skills to use it to produce specific outcomes (cf. Krishna, 2002). In the case of TURFs such outcomes include better managed marine ecosystems, increasing stocks of economically important species, and satisfaction with management among TURF members, among other things.

Building on this perception of the dual contribution of social capital (defined as social networks and certain norms) and agency, Bodin and Crona (2008) developed a theoretical framework to guide their study of fisheries governance in East Africa. Social capital was measured through social relations (networks) and the existence of procedures to monitor compliance and solve conflicts (norms) while agency was assessed by identifying influential actors and their perception and knowledge, and their ability to utilize resources of different kinds for the benefit of the community. We build on this framework but extend it in three important ways. First, Bodin and Crona (2008) used a number of network characteristics to measure social capital, partly to examine the usefulness of this approach. This was suitable to explore a novel approach using

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