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The Common Fishery Policy vs fishermen's good practices.

Bottom-up strategies for a sustainable fishery: the case of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal.

This developing project will involve more authors. At this stage, the co-authors of the next and extended version of this paper are Dr. Marco Greco¹, Mr. Juan Ramon Carreño² and Prof. Agustin Santana Talavera³

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Regulating the working of European fisheries, the Common Fishery Policy - CFP - constitutes one of the most effective areas of EU direct ruling. Yet, nowadays, European fisheries and particularly small-scale ones experience a dramatic scenario where, alongside the decline and collapse of several fish stocks, the numerous incoherencies of the CFP accelerate the breakdown of this economic sector. Based on the evidences collected during the investigation I conducted in the local small-scale fishing port of Gran Tarajal, on the Spanish island of Fuerteventura, this project aims at demonstrating the validity of a local ecosystem-based governance of European fisheries where fishermen play a pivotal role to design effective policies for a sustainable fishery. Indeed, the good fishing practices developed and implemented by the members of the local fishermen association prove how local knowledge and capabilities are indispensable to correctly manage complex ecosystems. In the small Spanish town fishermen set limits and regulate fishing activities independently from - and often in contrast with - EU regulations, to preserve the good health of local fish stocks and seawaters while turning professional fishing into a profitable activity. Thus, starting from a brief overview of the state of the arts of European small-scale fisheries, I will introduce the case of the fishermen association of Gran Tarajal to demonstrate as, in order to safeguard the future of European seas and fisheries, the CFP must be turned today into a space for decentralized and participated European policymaking.

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“Yo esta política no la entiendo. No, no es que no la entiendo solamente yo: no la entiende nadie [...] Es una política rara: pan para hoy, hambre para mañana”⁴

Even though the sea constitute a relatively marginal concern within the broader environmentalist discourse(s), nowadays the oceans are possibly the most endangered ecosystems on Earth. Besides pollutions, decades of overfishing constitute a major threat for this complex environment and its living resources. In order to satisfy the increasing demands of global markets, since the 1950s industrial fishery expanded and developed bringing several fish stocks to collapse, irreversibly modifying seas' biodiversity and fishes' food chains (Iudicello et al., 1999). Starting in the first decades of the century, the intense mechanization of fishery that accelerated from the 1950s led to an unprecedented overexploitation of oceans' living resources. This extremely efficient although scarcely selective fishery begun targeting with exceptional intensity those species that the market demanded the most, while killing an enormous amount of undesired species – bycatches - compromising the stability of marine ecosystems (Lewison et al., 2004). Once this fishery made of big vessels capable to navigate for consecutive weeks and months emptied the traditional fishing grounds, it went overexploiting new unexploited areas and the open sea. This race to exhaust the industry's raw material reached its climax with the codfish crisis of Newfoundland and Labrador of 1992 (Bavington, 2001). Public awareness over the conditions of the oceans' fish stocks and the dangers and damages produced by industrial fishery spread worldwide when the fishing communities of these two North American coastal regions relying almost entirely on the fishing and processing of cod, experienced one of the greatest fish stock collapse ever recorded. After decades of overfishing and despite the evident decrease of catches, overfishing continued to deplete local cod. A situation that soon obliged authorities to proclaim a total ban on cod fishing in the attempt of restoring the stocks: a goal that is far to be reached after more than 20 years of complete prohibition (Kurlansky, 1998).

In an almost paradoxical fashion then, the very working of industrial fishery generates the conditions for this industry to collapse together with fish stocks. However, since decades and possibly with increased apprehension following the Newfoundland and Labrador's events, regional, national as well as international institutions design and implement fishery regulations that concentrate on conservation policies for a sustainable fishery. European member states are not an exception as the EU has its own fishery policy since decades. Elaborated over a time span of more

⁴ “I cannot understand this policy: actually, no one can understand it [...] It is a strange policy of the ‘feast today, famine tomorrow’”. Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 16th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

than 50 years of European history, the Common Fishery Policy – CFP - includes today more than 700 sets of norms (Lutchman et al., 2009). Although it officially substituted national fishery policies only starting from the early 1980s (Lequesne, 2004), the goal of establishing a European coordinated policy in the area of fishery appeared already in 1957 within the broader frame of the Common Agricultural Policy – CAP. At that stage, fish was included among the agricultural goods whose production and market the EU began to regulate (Karagiannakos, 1995). Therefore, despite the CFP exists only since 1983, a European regulation of fishery appeared long before. Yet, since the introduction of the CFP, this complex normative frame passed through four main reforms – including the last one of 2014 – with a gradual shift away from the initial emphasis on structural and market policies towards a major focus on the health of European seas.

Nevertheless, as I will describe in the first part of this paper the top-down nature of the CFP combined with the complexity characterizing European fisheries operating in so many diverse seas, led to complete disaster. Several experts and stakeholders point at this policy as one of EU's major failures producing the simultaneous disappearance of European small fishing communities and the collapse of several fish stocks (Cooper, 1999; Daw and Gray, 2005). Fishermen on their sides, lament their absolute marginalization and denounce the several inconsistencies of the policy. However, the last versions of the CFP suggest that a major turn in the policymaking process is taking place – at least on paper - to involve an increasing number of stakeholders. Indeed, as I will demonstrate in the second – and core - part of this piece, it is amongst fishermen themselves that both the primary interest and necessary skills to effectively preserve both the future of European fisheries and fish stocks, reside. I will describe how a small but representative Spanish fishermen association in Gran Tarajal – on the island of Fuerteventura - was able not only to stop the depletion of local fish stocks, but also to turn local small-scale professional fishery into an economically sustainable activity. By discussing some of the data I collected during a three-months-long field study, I will then use the next pages to give space to local fishermen's voices, to provide first a detailed analysis of the most ground level and empirical outcomes of the CFP and, second, a viable alternative to grant a future for European fisheries.

The CFP: a constantly changing set of rules.

The European policy on fisheries works at the multiple levels of the very activity of fishing, the commercialization of the catches, fishermen's living standard and the conservation of fishing resources, managing fishery inside as well as outside the seawaters (Holden, 1994). However, over more than 50 years this complex policy frame fluctuated between opposite programmatic directions, generating dramatic contradictions and the impossibility for fishermen to implement any plan on the long-term. As part of the CAP, in the late 1950s European norms on fishery aimed at two main objectives. On the one hand, Communitarian institutions promoted the technological development and renewal of the existing fleet combined with the increasing rationalization of the use of, and the access to, marine resources, in order to increase the productivity of European fisheries. On the other hand, in line with the CAP main programmatic positions European intervention aimed at maintaining the market prices of catches stable in order to ensure simultaneously reasonable living standards for fishing communities and fair prices and availability of supplies for consumers. In other words, initially Communitarian provisions on fishery tended to improve the fishing capacity of the European fleet, while subsidizing the fishing industry's products alternatively to enter or to remain outside the market.

Later, since the first appearance of a European policy on fishery as an independent set of norms in 1983, this complex policy frame passed through four main reforms. In practice, through the years EU direct competences on fishing activities progressively extended with the focus of the policy substantially shifting towards conservation policies to counter-balance the rapid decrease of European fish stocks (Karagiannakos, 1995). From this angle, the principle of the total allowable catches – TACs – introduced with the first version of the CFP in 1983, surely constituted a substantial innovation for European fisheries. Initially set on a yearly basis to develop later into multi-annual plans, this complex system of quotas was designed to limit and regulate national catches of determined fish species, on the basis of scientific data over the state of commercial fish stocks (Franchino and Rahming, 2003; Mansfield, 2002). In 1992, the first reform of the CFP led to the introduction of the key concept of 'fishing effort'. Concentrating on the relation within national fleets' productivity on the one side and the available fishing opportunities on the other, this index combines several vessels' technical parameters – such as the engine power, the length of the hull and the main fishing gear - to limit and then regulate the time each fishing vessel is entitled to spend at sea can. Later, in 2002, the third version of the CFP definitely prioritized the development of effective conservation policies to protect European marine ecosystems (Lutchman *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, this reform led also to an initial – and mostly formal rather than actual – regionalization of fishery governance through the creation of Regional Advisory Councils – RACs – to promote a

greater involvement of ground level stakeholders throughout the policymaking process (Gray and Hatchard, 2003). These two policy lines – conservation and regionalization – seem to cover a pivotal role also within the frame of the last reformed CFP that entered into force the 1st of January 2014. Clearly then the CFP constantly oscillated across diverse directions: actually, a very complex historical development that I summarized and simplified in the table below - table 1.

CFP REFORMS	REFORMS' PRIORITIES & (INNOVATIONS)	CFP AREAS OF INTERVENTION
1983	HARMONIZATION & STANDARDIZATION EU FISHERIES (TACs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing activity • Fish Market • Fishermen living standards • Conservation Policies • Relation with non-EU third countries
1992	FISHING FLEET EFFICIENCY (STRUCTURAL POLICIES)	
2002	CONSERVATIVE POLICIES & REGIONALIZATION (FISHING FLEET REDUCTION & RACs)	
2014	CONSERVATION POLICIES, FURTHER REGIONALIZATION & THE SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUE OF FISHERY	

Table 1: CFP reforms; their focus and the most significant innovation introduced; the main areas of policy intervention over the last 60 years of policy development

Thus, after decades of European financial support to optimize European fisheries' productivity and then their capability to catch fish, since the first version of the CFP of 1983, the priority became to limit the capability of that same fleet to catch fish. Similarly, from an initial exclusively top-down approach, we are now apparently moving toward a more bottom-up and regionalized policymaking design. These constant fluctuations in very diverse – if not opposite - directions can only produce uncertainty for European fisheries already struggling given the decreasing catches and the increasing operational costs.

There is however another key aspect of the CFP producing uncertainty: the distinction of European fisheries into the small and big scale fleets. On the one hand, small-scale fishery is indeed a labour-intensive fishery that uses “relatively small crafts (if any) and little capital and equipment per person-on-board. Most often family-owned, [it] may be commercial or for subsistence” (FAO, 2014). On the other hand, industrial fishery is “capital-intensive [and uses] relatively large vessels with a high degree of mechanization and that normally have [...] high production capacity” (FAO, 2014a). The European Parliament on its side, “recognises the importance of small-scale fisheries but does not provide a definition [of them]” (Macfadyen et al., 2011: 20). However, “Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 on the [European Fishery Fund] EFF specifically refers to vessels in ‘small-scale coastal fisheries’ being less than 12 meters long and not using towed gear” (Macfadyen et al., 2011:

14).⁵ Despite this indicative differentiation however, several of the changes, bans and limitations introduced by the CFP to reduce the environmental negative impact of industrial fisheries were extended also on small-scale ones, producing several adverse financial and environmental outcomes - as we will see in details along this paper. An almost paradoxical situation, considering that the small-scale fishing fleet counts on the 83% of European vessels but only the 10% of the total gross tonnage and about 35% of its engine power, employing more than half of the total employees of the catching sector, while fishing less than one third of the total European catches (Macfadyen et al., 2011).

⁵ Nevertheless, each vessels is included in one or the other category on the basis of a complex combination of several parameters including obviously the length of the vessels' hull, but also the vessels' engine power, the gear used to fish and the geographic area where the vessels work.

Designed in Brussels, implemented at the sea: the CFP and the changing lives of fishermen.

Several experts depict the CFP as a complete failure or even as “a lesson in how not to make a policy” (Cooper, 1999). Following my introductory overview, a few key aspects seems to be pivotal to understand what went wrong throughout more than half a century of policy implementation. Firstly, although industrial fisheries were overexploiting fish stocks since the middle of the last century, European authorities begun addressing the issue only across the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Secondly, given that norms and regulations transformed with irregular frequency and, at times, towards diametrically opposed directions, they produced very little outcomes. As if this was not enough, probably due to the lack of any clear definition European authorities putted small-scale and big-scale fisheries in the same basket producing the conditions for several European small-scale fishing communities to disappear. In a way, the Spanish fishing community of Gran Tarajal - an 8,000 people town of the Spanish island of Fuerteventura, part of the Canary Islands archipelago – and the local fishermen association do not constitute an exception. Thus, I will start now using the data collected on the field to show how, empirically, the CFP produces in fact several negative outcomes on the ground.

Indeed, the voices of the members of the fishermen association of Gran Tarajal as well as of other local stakeholders – from the island’s authority on fishery, to the gamekeeper – all point out unmistakably to both industrial fishery and the CFP as main concerns for local small-scale fishery. Elder fishermen spending their free time under the shadow of a canopy, just off the association’s main building and only few meters away from the docks and their vessels, told me:

Before [between 30 to 40 years ago] things here were completely different: there was so much fish and too little market to sell it that we fished just about 50 kg per day. Often, at the end of the days, we had to throw some of it away since we were not able to sell it and, at that time, there were only few fridges on the island. [...] From the 1970s however, almost every one of us embarked in one of those huge fishing vessels that started coming from mainland Spain. We used to go to fish to Africa as well as in North America remaining at sea for weeks and months: it was very good money. However, it has nothing to do with fishing. That is rather like working in a factory assembly line. [Indeed,] we fished all the fish that these and several other waters could give us.⁶

Although nowadays Casablanca in Morocco and Mindelo in the archipelago of Cabo Verde are the major fishing ports of the area,⁷ the Canary Islands – and in particular the port of Las Palmas, in the island of Gran Canaria – served for decades as the main hub for industrial fishing vessels to unload

⁶ Alvaro, 63 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 10th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

⁷ This was confirmed me by local experts from the University of la Laguna of Tenerife – one of the Canary islands – Professor Agustin Santana Talavera and Professor Jose Pascual Hernandez, when I met them in la Laguna the 24th of April of 2013. La Laguna, Spain.

their catches (Vidal, 2012; Carneiro, 2011). These “gigantic vessels”⁸ are mainly European, Chinese, Russian and Korean. Fuerteventura’s fishermen embarked on those Spanish vessels – indeed the biggest European industrial fishing fleet (Clover, 2004) - that used to come to the islands and ask for local workforce.

Here [in Gran Tarajal] big tuna fishing boats coming from mainland Spain used to anchor just few meters off the only dock that we had here at that time. Then, two or more of their sailors went on land with a small tender and they started asking for locals willing to work on board, promising very good salaries. [...] We all tried to get into one of those boats: [...] the time I was at sea for the longer period it was for 28 consecutive days. However, others remained at sea even for three months without seeing land.⁹

This new fishery coming to the islands was in fact a completely different fishery than the one locals were used to: it was a dramatically diverse occupation. Local small-scale and artisanal fishermen normally spending no more than one or a couple of consecutive days at sea, suddenly had to spend entire weeks away from their island and families, working below deck for entire days and nights.

That is a completely different job! [...] You do not need to understand anything about the sea to fish with one of those vessels. It is all mechanical and you are just one among many: you stay the whole day in the same position, doing the same thing over and over. [...] It was difficult to stay so many days and weeks away from the families, working with any sea conditions, at times risking our own lives. [...] As soon as I got enough money out of it, I quickly left it to return to the island and buy myself a boat.¹⁰

Several of the locals who went fishing on industrial vessels left this fishery as soon as they earned the sufficient amount of money to buy themselves a small boat to start fishing by their own. Nevertheless, soon local fishermen returned to their island begun to deal with the combined negative effects of the depredation perpetuated by industrial vessels - that were particularly active just off the coast of Gran Tarajal, in the rich Saharan fishing grounds dividing Fuerteventura from Western Sahara – and of the implementation of CFP’s provisions. In other words, the substantial decrease of catches was not the only issue in place for fishermen who tried to return to their small-scale fishery.

First, as a direct outcome of the CFP, since the early 1990s small-scale fishermen experienced an increasing bureaucratization of their once completely unregulated jobs. For decades, small-scale fishermen went fishing almost free of any official requirement. However, nowadays the situation changed dramatically. Juan, a local fishermen on his early 60s, pointed at his boat and told me:

⁸ Pedro, 53 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 4th of June of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

⁹ Juan, 59 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 10th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

¹⁰ Alvaro, 63 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 10th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

A small boat like mine must have documents of any kind with it. [...] Until 1992 or 1993 – I am not sure about the exact year – there were no documents at all. [...] There were no rules or limitations: the only thing you had to do was to put your boat in the water and go fish. Nowadays, I do not even know how many documents I must have always on board. [...] Tens of documents and countless modules.¹¹

During the months I spent in the island, passing my days at the local fishermen association, I heard many times this sort of complains. Despite the increasing bureaucratization of fishery begun at the national level in many European member states, the process certainly accelerated with the implementation of the CFP. At the same time however, plenty of fishermen complaining for this redundant complication of their daily job activity, also recognize and understand the utility of regulating fishery through certificates and permits. However, they keep feeling there is too much paperwork to deal with. Jorge, a 38 years old local fisherman recently incorporated to both the profession – until 2011 he worked in the tourist sector – and the association, presents this intense bureaucratization of fishery from his own perspective:

Gamekeepers and the coastguard can ask you any sort of document. The worst that can happen to you when everything is not fine [...] is that they seize your vessel. [...] Sometimes this situation tires you to the point that you want to give up with fishery. This aspect becomes even heavier to manage when you start with professional fishery, since you do not know how to move, which documents you really needs, which ones instead are unnecessary. [...] We always feel ourselves on the spot, almost criminalized as if we were thieves or smugglers. However, fishery is not different from other sectors of the local economy: if you look on land, you can see houses built everywhere. Those who built them had no permits at all, but they were other times and everyone could do everything he wanted without asking for permission. Nowadays, it is not like this anymore neither on land nor at the sea.¹²

However, this is not the only area of intense interaction between small-scale fishermen daily activities and the CFP norms, directives and regulations. Indeed, some of the limitations imposed through the CFP to tackle the damages produced by overfishing, extended to all fisheries with no distinction between small and big-scale ones. Certainly one of the first and most discussed of these measures is the TACs system. This complex regulating device consists of catch limits set periodically and “for most commercial fish stocks. [They are] based on scientific advice on the stock status from advisory bodies [and they] are shared between EU countries in the form of national quotas [...]” (EC, 2014). At a lower level then, each EU member state distribute national quotas to the diverse fisheries in the form of individual quotas for either vessels’ owners or fishing consortiums and cooperatives. Finally, those receiving these individual quotas are entitled use or sell them to other national stakeholders (Cataudella and Spagnolo, 2011). To show which are some of the most controversial local outcome of this policy set and designed at the European level, I will quote part of

¹¹ Juan, 61 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 12th of June of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

¹² Jorge, 38 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 6th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

what the Fuerteventura province's ministry of fishery Rita Diaz Hernandez¹³ told me concerning Bluefin tuna.

A recent example of the damages that the TACs system can produce on local fisheries regards Bluefin tuna. This is an island whose fisheries historically benefited of and organized around the passages of Bluefin tuna, between February and June and then again in September and October. [...] However, this year the central government assigned to the whole archipelago a maximum quota of 25 tons of tuna that can be fished by our fishermen: it sounds like a joke! It is too little quantity! The situation became even more paradoxical since when the ICCAT¹⁴ recognized a substantial increase of tuna's stocks. However, as for many other similar cases, we saw our requests not even heard. [...] Meanwhile big vessels from mainland Spain come here to fish their quota of tuna: this is madness.¹⁵

Although nowadays small-scale fishing vessels are equipped with technological devices enabling them to overexploit stocks, this fishery can catch infinitely less tuna compared to industrial vessels. As I have already underlined, several small-scale fishermen in Gran Tarajal had worked in big industrial tuna fishing vessels and they have clear in mind how much more tuna one of these boats can actually fish.

Ok, there is no point comparing industrial fishery and our way of fishing tuna. If I go fishing and I catch a big tuna, I am happy for the entire day: the biggest tuna I have ever seen weighted almost 600 kg. Now, when I went working on those commercial vessels, we did not returned on land unless we catches 50,000 kilogram of tuna.¹⁶

The point here is that although small-scale fishermen have no direct responsibility in the decline of the stocks of Bluefin tuna, in order to counterbalance the damages produced by industrial fisheries, also small vessels are forbidden to fish one of their most valuable catches: Bluefin tuna. Getting the whole picture of the actual working of the TACs, worsens such an already frustrating situation. Indeed, as fishermen are very much aware, once distributed individually at the national level, quotas go for the vast majority to big fishing enterprises who have the capitals to buy them. Small fishermen association will very hardly have the capitals to take the risk of investing them in quota.

This year the Canary Islands had a 25 tons quota of Bluefin tuna. This obviously does not make any sense since in the archipelago 600 vessels do tuna fishing. As for the Mediterranean, the EU_gave to Spain 700 tons of quota. However, you must consider that Spain has much less

¹³ http://www.cabildofuer.es/portal/p_46_final_Distribuidor_3.jsp?seccion=s_fdes_d4_v1.jsp&codbusqueda=199&language=es&codResi=1&codMenuPN=1&codMenuSN=4&codMenu=217&layout=p_46_final_Distribuidor_3.jsp

¹⁴ The ICCAT is the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna. "Responsible for the conservation of tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas [...] the organization was established at a Conference of Plenipotentiaries, which prepared and adopted the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1966" (ICCAT, 2007).

¹⁵ Rita Diaz Hernandez, Fuerteventura Province's Ministry of Fishery, interviewed by the author the 28th of May of 2013. Puerto del Rosario, Spain.

¹⁶ José, 59 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 12th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

tuna fishing vessels in the Mediterranean and, secondly, that in the Mediterranean tunas are much smaller on average – around 200 kilograms - than they are here. Thirdly, and most importantly, here tuna passes without eggs.¹⁷

Yet, quotas and intense bureaucratization are not the only innovations brought in by the CFP that severely – and negatively – affect the condition of European small-scale fisheries. Structural policies constitute indeed another area of major concern. In particular, fishermen see the subsidies that the European Commission distribute for the dismantling of fishing vessels and the professional fishing licences' withdraws – aiming at the reduction of the European fishing fleet - as a major danger for survival. In fact, this system of subsidies is designed to financially assist those fishermen willing to stop fishing, to scrap their vessel and to withdraw their professional fishing licences. This system works to make more attractive for fishermen to opt for the subsidies than to sell their vessels and/or professional fishing licenses to other fishermen. Thus, these subsidies combines with the cap for professional fishing licenses, making of CFP provisions simultaneously the main obstacles for newcomers to access professional fishery and the central incentive for elder fishermen to abandon fishery. To give a very practical example I draw again upon fishermen's voices. What follows is what Francisco told me while serving me in the restaurant of the fishermen association.

I was a fisherman as well: last year I decided to give up with fishery when the government announced that there were new subsidies to dismantle fishing vessels and withdraw the professional fishing license. I did not wanted to do it but given my age - I am on my 60s - I decided to step out. [...] Do you want to know what convinced me? Well, of course it was the money! Last year [2012] they paid most than in any other time.¹⁸

If we look at the same dynamic from the eyes of a recently incorporated fisherman, other significant ground level outcomes of these European subsidies come to the surface.

I was very lucky to buy my boat three years ago. Indeed, on the one hand the EU pays crazy prices to dismantle existing vessels while not allowing to issue any new fishing license. [...] At the same time, to become fisherman you must practice for at least three years on board. Then, my question is how can I practice if there are no new vessels available? [...] Moreover, if you are lucky and you find a spot on any existing vessel, once you want to buy your own boat and become a captain, if you find any vessel on sale you end out paying it much more than the market prices. This is because the EU is somehow competing with you to 'buy' that same vessel for unreasonable prices in order to dismantle it! [...] I paid my vessels [Fuerte Marejada, a 7 meters long boat] 38,000€ that, according to everyone else here, is 10,000€ more than the market price for it.¹⁹

Looking on a more superficial level, the reduction of the European fishing fleet sounds as a policy success, in terms of limiting “fishing capacity and vessel usage” (EC, 2014a) and preserve fish stocks.

¹⁷ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 2nd of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

¹⁸ Francisco, 58 years old, retired fisherman and actual waiter of the Gran Tarajal fishermen association. Interviewed by the author the 29th of April 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

¹⁹ Jorge, 38 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 6th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

However, a closer look reveals as to keep potential professional fishermen away from small-scale fishery actually increases the dangers for fish stocks while generating unpredictable economic, social and cultural effects for European coastal communities.

A European small-scale fishery at stake.

It is clear as the CFP interferes with the working of European fisheries at several levels. We have also noticed that conservation policies designed to limit the impact of industrial fishery, tend to compromise the economic sustainability of small-scale fishery as well. Yet, the analysis of the most empirical outcomes that the implementation of the CFP produces on the ground, tells us that this complex Communitarian normative frame also jeopardizes the very effects of those conservation policies it promotes.

Indeed, in Gran Tarajal as well as in many other European coastal communities, the progressive abandonment of professional fishery meant a shift of local labour force toward the tourist sector (Festing, 1977). Alvaro, a local fisherman on his 60s, describes what he sees as the main transformation in Gran Tarajal over the last 30 years: “today this is nothing else than a dormitory town. Nowadays the majority of locals works in the hotels of the South of the island. Before it was the other way around and people from outside used to come here to get some job”.²⁰ In Fuerteventura mass tourism developed since the late 1980s, with most of urbanizations concentrating in the south of the island, not too far from Gran Tarajal (Rodríguez and Santana, 2008). The sector kept booming for more than two decades drawing potential labour force from all other local economic sectors – including fishery. Jobs in the construction and tourist services sectors paid better and certainly they constituted a more comfortable and profitable option than to work on a fishing vessels (Santana, 2005). However, the recent economic crisis turned the situation upside down, with the local tourist and its related construction sectors collapsing. Several people left the island where a population “that almost triplicated in few more than fifteen years, now dropped down of one third in less than 5 years [...] between 2008 and 2013”.²¹ Others remained on the island. Several former fishermen tried to start fishing again. However, many found the door of professional fishing essentially shut. As we had seen indeed, existing professional fishing licenses tend to be withdrawn, and authorities do not issue new ones for the archipelago. In this situation, for potential fishermen it becomes almost impossible to start.

²⁰ Alvaro, 63 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 10th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

²¹ Professor Jose Pascual Hernandez, Professor of Anthropology of the University of la Laguna of Tenerife. Interviewed by the author the 24th of April of 2013. La Laguna, Spain.

Here there are a few new vessels: you can easily understand how difficult it is to find someone needing some help on board. Generally, crews already exist from years. [...] I started as a sailor on the small vessel you see down there. It was a proper fluke! That year [2011] I had just lost my job in one of the hotels of the south of the island. One night what I was in a party on the beach [...] I met an old friend who told me that he was looking for someone to help him with the tuna: schools were passing by the island. [...] This is how I started working with him. I was very lucky also because he later decided to retire so that I was able to buy his boat once I already had accumulated enough practice to get the license as captain.²²

Only timing and luck allowed Jorge to become a professional fisherman first, and a captain later. Many others in the island do not have the same chance. Yet, in need of an income to survive, they go fishing anyway with their recreational fishing license. In fact, while imposing a cap on professional fishing licenses, authorities issued several recreational fishing licenses – something that happens in numerous European coastal communities whose local economy turned from fishery to tourism. The situation in the island is well explained by the president of the fishermen association of Gran Tarajal:

Now, in the Canary Islands, operate more than 60.000 leisure fishing boats with a recreational fishing licence: we all know that they fish more than they are allowed to, besides the fact that they illegally sell their catches. On the contrary, at the most there are 1.000 professional fishing licences in the archipelago.²³

According to CFP and national provisions, this non-professional fishery has precise limitations: in particular, recreational fishermen can catch a maximum of 5kg for each person on board and their catches must not enter the market. However, the reality tells a diametrically opposite story. In Gran Tarajal the gamekeeper described what really happens concerning recreational fishery:

[...] Here in Gran Tarajal there are almost no violations perpetuated by professional fishermen. On the other hand, plenty of cases regard the recreational fishery sector. [...] They use to fish when and where they are not allowed to; they fish forbidden species or too small fishes. [...] The most we can do to contrast them is to fine them and seize their vessels for a while. [Nevertheless,] this situation is getting progressively out of control since during the last 2 years the crisis made everyone coming back to fishery.²⁴

Illegal activities perpetuated by recreational fisheries are frequent to the point that, according to many, they invalidate most of the efforts that professional fishermen put in place to conserve local fishing stocks. However, this is not the only aspect related to the booming of recreational fishery, that worries local professional fishermen (Hilborn et al., 2005). Indeed, possibly the primary concern of professional fishermen in Gran Tarajal regards the recreational fishermen constant selling of catches into the local market – mainly restaurants and private individuals. In such a way then these catches directly compete with professional fishermen's ones, and they do it for much cheaper prices

²² Jorge, 38 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 6th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

²³ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 16th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

²⁴ Antonio, gamekeeper of the Fuerteventura's provincial authority. Interviewed by the author the 27th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

since no taxes or contributions must be paid for illegal commercial transactions. Moreover, operational costs for recreational fishermen are much lower than they are for their professional fellows.

Here the problem is that there are too many fishermen that go fishing with no licence. Better: they only have the licence for recreational fishery. [...] Anyway, they fish like us if not more than us. I want to tell you something more: many of them were professional fishermen before. We used to work together. What they did was to dismantle their vessels and give up their licences in order to get the European subsidies. [...] With that money, they bought themselves a new vessel and a licence for recreational fishery, and they keep going fishing. Then they sell their catches although it is illegal. [...] They normally go to restaurants or privates: they know already who wants their fish. [...] They are becoming our main competitor here in the island but of course, they can make much lower prices [...] since they have much less expenses than we have, with all the taxes that we have to pay.²⁵

We can see how CFP provisions and subsidies tend to make convenient for fishermen to go for illegal fishing, at the main – if not the only – costs of the seawaters where professional small-scale fishermen operate and the market into which they sell their catches. Those entitled to control, on the other hand, can do little against these illegal practices.

We do not have enough resources to enforce an effective control over recreational fishermen who use to sell their catches in the island. They are countless, and it results very hard to control the movements of their vessels or the time they spent at sea and where they go: they do not have to carry on board all the documents and identification systems professional fishermen must have on their boats. [...] Moreover, once we catch them, there is not too much we can do. [...] Since recreational fishermen can go fishing at any time with no regulation or limitation, it is right to assume that they make much more money than professional fishermen do.²⁶

In other words, looking at the most ground level impacts of the CFP it seems as if conservation policies led actually to unregulated overexploitation of fish stocks, while severely affecting the economies of local small-scale fisheries unable to compete profitably with recreational fishery.

This, helps endangering the economic sustainability of professional small-scale fishery producing the conditions for its disappearance.

There has been a time when we ran the risk of missing one generation of fishermen. It was some 15 to 20 years ago when there was a lot of work on land. [...] However, now with the crisis there is a return to fishery and the primary sector of the local economy. We must always keep alive this sector! Farming, herding and fishing. When you have a period of crisis, where else people can go? [...] In times of crisis, a good policy for an island in the middle of the Ocean must allow people to profit from the sea, although it is clearly much better if this happens between certain rules and regulations. [...] To make a long story short however, there has been a time when we seriously risked missing one generation of fishermen simply because all

²⁵ Juan, 61 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 12th of June of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

²⁶ Rita Diaz Hernandez, Fuerteventura Province's Ministry of Fishery, interviewed by the author the 28th of May of 2013. Puerto del Rosario, Spain.

norms and economic incentives worked to make fishermen and potential fishermen to go or stay away from professional fishery, even though we do not necessarily practice a non-sustainable fishery. [...] A few years ago, the risk of losing all the knowledge we accumulated over decades was quite serious and threatening at the same time.²⁷

To lose small-scale fishery in coastal communities does not constitute exclusively an economic loss. Indeed, it is rather a core socio-cultural asset and a main constituent of local identity being lost (Allison and Ellis, 2001; McGoodwin, 2001). To eradicate fishery from small coastal communities that for centuries lived of the sea, would have unpredictable and profound socio-cultural consequences as well.

Clearly then, by looking at the CFP from the ground-level of those whose lives are affected by it, we find further confirmations of the several failures and paradoxes of this complex policy frame. On the one hand, the core objective of the CFP is to preserve the marine living resources and with it the future of sustainable fisheries. However, a close look at the reality of European small-scale fisheries exposes the inconsistencies of EU conservation policies themselves: indeed, those who have not contributed to the depletion of fish stocks – small-scale fisheries – and that represent possibly the only version of a sustainable fishery, are now the ones whose survival the CFP endangers the most.²⁸ Nonetheless, as we will see now, the experience of the fishermen association of Gran Tarajal demonstrates that other managements of small-scale fisheries are possible, so far that fishermen voices and demands are taken at the centre of the debate both locally as well as in Brussels. After all, whom better than fishermen knows the seawaters they use to work on? Moreover, whom more than fishermen should care about the future of the fish they catch? Thus, the concluding section of this paper is going to present the experience of Gran Tarajal's local fishermen association to demonstrate the validity of, as well as the necessity for, a bottom-up decentralized management of fisheries taking into account the diversity characterizing the European countless marine ecosystems: what I called a local ecosystem-based approach to the management of fishery.

Please, let us fish: we know how to do it better than you do!

Gran Tarajal's fishery is not exclusively representative of the situation experienced by many others European small-scale fisheries. The case of the small Spanish fishermen association can in fact serve as a source of inspiration to think about an effective management of EU fisheries pursuing the protection of maritime ecosystems while guaranteeing economic sustainability for small fishing

²⁷ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 5th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

²⁸ Between 2000 and 2010, the Spanish small-scale fishing fleet decreased of the 40% while the big-scale one declined of only the 25% over the same period.

communities. The several good practices implemented by local fishermen prove how it is only by empowering fishermen that effective policies for a sustainable fishery can be successfully designed and implemented. After all, it is not too difficult to agree over the fact that the ‘practical, behaviour-oriented corpuses of local knowledge, which focus on the most important species and their habitats, are of immediate value to fisheries planning, monitoring and management, and the enforcement of regulations’ (Ruddle, 2000: 288). Thus, mirroring the bottom-up inclusive policymaking approach that this work supports, as well as similarly to how the rest of the paper developed, I will bring fishermen’s voices again at the centre. I will use their first-hand suggestions and impressions to provide an organizational model that, tracing the main features of the association of Gran Tarajal, will be easily transferable to other similar European small-scale fishermen associations. I will then start quoting part of one of the several interviews I had with the president of the association:

I am the president of this fishermen association since August 1993: we have elections every 4 years. Soon, I will be in charge from 20 years. Actually, there are more or less 40 vessels’ owners associated and we set fishing rules ourselves. Actually, we prohibited the use of trawlers, longlines and we heavily reduced the use of fishing pots. [...] The main concern for us are European policies on professional fishery. Indeed, although everyone knows that industrial fisheries are the only ones overexploiting the sea, CFP provisions damage much less them that it does with us [small-scale fishermen]. Our decision of setting up our own fishing regulations demonstrates primarily that we are the firsts interested in keeping our sea alive and, secondly, that we are the ones knowing better this sea. No one imposed us to regulate ourselves this way: but we did it anyway! It is an investment to grant ourselves a future.²⁹

In Gran Tarajal fishery is regulated through a set of norms and limitations that local fishermen designed and implemented by themselves: when overlapping with existing EU norms, fishermen’s standards tend to be more restrictive than European impositions. Besides the prohibiting of fishing gears whose use the CFP instead authorizes, another interesting case regards the catches’ minimum sizes. In fact, Communitarian norms impose minimum sizes for fish species to enter the market so that fishermen must measure them – increasing bureaucratization – before selling them, to secure they match these minimum standards (EC, 2014b). Fishermen in Gran Tarajal set their own – smaller - minimum sizes. Hugo, a local fisherman, explained me that they are the one knowing “when one of our fishes must be fished or not. We have met several time, negotiated over it, and finally we decided to establish our own minimum sizes instead of those that the authorities imposed us”.³⁰ The ministry for fishery of the provincial authority explains:

Fuerteventura’s fishermen associations [...] and especially the one of Gran Tarjal, have been pioneers regarding the protection of marine resources [...] They spontaneously introduced seasonal fishing bans for the first time in this island, despite the fact that they were not

²⁹ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 5th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

³⁰ Hugo, 45 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 09th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

compensated in any form. [...] They did it anyway! [...] Besides, they only use lines: a very selective fishing gears with low environmental impact [...].³¹

In terms of environmental policies, fishermen in Gran Tarjal seem to be positioned at the forefront. However, these adjustments are not so easy to implement. Indeed, to prohibit the use of a certain fishing gear correspond to a dramatic change for fishermen daily activity. Several fishermen – and especially small-scale fishermen - learnt how to fish from their relatives, often from their fathers and/or grandfathers, and they have been using one or more gears for decades. To shift to another fishery, is not such an easy step:

It was very difficult, because a fisherman who used to fish in a certain way for all his life, got used to certain rituals and techniques that suddenly he had to abandon. You go fishing at other times of the day and night. You go fishing on new fishing grounds that suits that specific fishing gear you use. [...] Initially, many discovered that they were able to work only in a certain specific way, catching only determined fish species: they were just thinking that it was impossible to modify what they had been doing all their lives.³²

However, to understand how in Gran Tarjal these profound transformations were undertaken to reach today's environmental and economic sustainability, I move back to the words of Juan Ramon Roger Carreño – the president of the fishermen association. What follows is then his personal account of how he initiated the association.

Legally speaking, the association already existed from many years: anyway, it really began to operate in 1993, when I took charge of it. At that time there was none of the facilities we have now: since then we have created all the infrastructures you can see [from the dry-dock to the icemaker machine]. This became possible thanks to a dramatic transformation that I promoted and that certainly constitute the pillar of this association: in fact, we have ensured that gradually all our catches were sold exclusively through and by the association. Before each associated sold his own catches to fish-buyers at a much lower prices than the one we can get today. [...] It was not easy for me to convince the others that it was better for the all of us to stay unite and stop selling fish individually. [...] Luckily, as soon as the firsts started to associate, immediately the others realized that it was advantageous for everyone. [Indeed,] before buyers made the price: today, we make it and we reinvest the greater profits for our own use. Today fishermen do not have to worry for anything more than discharge their catches at the association once they come back to land the employees of the association will take care of them. Before the association begun working as it does today, once you finished fishing you had to worry about selling your catches.³³

What the association's president promoted since the very beginning of his career at the head of Gran Tarjal's fishermen association, was to shift the overall approach to small-scale fishery. Fishermen did not had to act and operate anymore as individuals competing within the same

³¹ Rita Díaz Hernandez, Fuerteventura Province's Ministry of Fishery, interviewed by the author the 28th of May of 2013. Puerto del Rosario, Spain.

³² Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarjal. Interviewed by the author the 5th of May of 2013. Gran Tarjal, Spain.

³³ Ibid.

market: this was clearly dividing fishermen for the major profit of fish buyers and at the expenses of local fish stocks. Over 20 years, this idea of sharing the channel to commercialize the catches seems to have spilled over several areas of local fishermen's daily activity, quickly taking away Gran Tarajal's fishery from a competitive and deprived condition, to a situation of internal cooperation and relative – as well as sustainable - abundance.

- Sharing to compete –

The financial fabric of the local fishermen association is really simple: local fishermen let their catches to the association and from there they reach the market. Each fish species has a fixed price depending on the period of the year and the market's demand. Selling their catches to the association, each fisherman renounce to a small percentage of the profits relative to his own catches and equal for all the members. This share of the overall profit is then reinvested by the association to provide fishermen with administrative assistance, facilities and equipment. The association sells catches through its own fish shop and the association's restaurant, while the major part of them goes to one of the main chain of supermarkets in the island. In this way, over the last two decades the association provided fishermen with many facilities that help reducing fishing operational costs. The most important of these facilities certainly are the ice machine, a refrigerator truck to transport the catches, a gantry crane to take vessels in and out the water, individual rooms to store fishing equipment. Moreover, the association has an office with two full-time employees assisting fishermen with any bureaucratic issue they have to deal with. To rely on these facilities makes fishermen lives much simpler, creating the conditions for local fishery to become economically sustainable. In turn, the economic sustainability of fishery produces the right conditions for fishermen to implement effective and more restrictive conservation policies that, in the long term, will made local fishery even more profitable.

In [April] we decided to establish a cap for individual catches: a maximum of 200 kg of fish that each of us can catch per day. [...] This is not a good period to sell fish, since the market's demand is quite low. Thus, in order to do not sell fish at a lower price than the usual, we prefer to leave it into the water so that we will fish it later when prices will increase. [...] In the past, it was not at all like this: [...] when everyone sold his own fish independently, the feeling was that although prices were low in a certain period, we had to fish anyway; otherwise, someone else of us would have done it.³⁴

Nowadays, although there is no obligation for fishermen to become members of the association, there are no fishermen that are not registered. The mechanism, also in this case, is very simple: "if you want to fish professionally without becoming one of our member you can do it: it is your own

³⁴ Pedro, 53 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 4th of June of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

free choice. However, non-members will have to pay for the services we provide our members with".³⁵ Today, the organization of the association is not questioned by any of the fishermen that were so hard to convince just about twenty years ago. This is the case also of those fishermen that, going to fish most frequently than the other members, land much more catches and thus contribute with a bigger share to the association's annual turnover. Again, the individual advantages generated by the working of the association seem to overcome the burdens:

I use to fish every day I can: this because I am one of the 'old ones' who knows what real fishing is. Nowadays, I am almost the only one that goes fishing so frequently. [...] I know that, financially speaking, I am probably the one contributing the most to the association. However, I do not personally care: do you have any idea of how it was to be a fishermen here before this association started to work? [...] It is still hard for me to think how easier the whole thing became. I do not have to bother myself anymore with selling the fish. [...] I do not pay to get my boat out of the water for the periodic maintenance. [...] I do not buy even the ice anymore, nor I have to sail half of the island in order to get to Puerto del Rosario where the only icemaker of the island was available! Can you believe it?³⁶

Such an approach based on cooperation rather than competition, produces several advantages not limited to the financial or environmental dimensions of local fishing. In fact, the success of the local fishermen association affects also other sectors of local economy. Indeed, the local restaurant of the association constitute a tourist attraction while the economic dynamism of local fishermen help activating local economy.

Fishery is at the same time a very profitable and expensive job. [...] My point is that obviously we can make a lot of money with catches. However, we also have to invest a lot locally to buy the material that we need for the maintenance of the vessels. I am just coming back from the ironmonger shop back to the corner, and I spent more than 300€ for paints and other stuff. Moreover, with one of this boat you can sustain a family: I am the only one working in my family of three. It is up to me how much I earn! [...] If I need a certain amount of money, than I just have to get on board and go fishing: no one is stopping me. In this time of crisis, people try to get two or three jobs to cover all the expanses they have. But I do not have to look for any other jobs: I just have to go fishing!³⁷

Clearly, several benefits derive from the adoption of this organizational model for fishermen associations. Good results in Gran Tarajal are visible to the extent that nowadays many local youths try to become fishermen. It is important now to underline one last – but very important – advantage produced by reducing competition – and increasing interdependence - among local fishermen.

[...] Here we respect the rules. May be it is just because we know that authorities carry several controls. Anyway, we would not go for any illegal conduct here at the association. It is simply

³⁵ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 5th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

³⁶ Alvaro, 63 years old, local fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 10th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

³⁷ Jorge, 38 years old, fisherman. Interviewed by the author the 6th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

impossible, or at least very hard: in fact, here we work so closely to each other that it would be very difficult to go unnoticed doing anything unusual. [...]Try to think about it, even from a mere practical point of view: how can I come back here after I have done something the association prohibits? There is no way no one will spot you: there is too much closeness and interdependence among us. Think for instance to unauthorized species: the only way we have to sell our fish is through the association, right? Then, the association does not sell illegal catches. Thus, there is no way I can sell it unless I do it by myself. However, believe me, if I leave the association with a box of fish in the car, people here will spot me immediately.³⁸

Thus, intense interdependence and cooperation do not only favour the economic and environmental performances of the fishermen association. Indeed, they also create the conditions for effective – and completely unexpansive - controls to be in place.

From good practices, to good policies

Thus, the situation I presented outlines a profound detachment between the CFP on one side, and the ground level reality of fishery on the other. Under several points of view, it seems that the CFP designed to preserve the future of fish stocks and European fisheries actually contributes most to the progressive decline of both. Looking closer to the most empirical outcomes of this very complex policy frame, we realized as there are several areas for concern. The TACs system officially designed to limit the impact of industrial fisheries, resemble rather a progressive privatization and marketization of sea living resources (Mansfield, 2004; Heynen et al. 2007) favouring in the end industrial fishing firms over small-scale fishing communities – that have a very little if no responsibility at all for the collapse of fish stocks. On the other hand, we have also seen as subsidies distributed by the EU to reduce the European fishing fleet and with it the exploitation of the resources of the sea, actually generate the right conditions for illegal fishing to flourish. Besides the fact that the CFP does not really tackle the negative impacts that industrial fisheries have on European maritime environments, the Communitarian management of fisheries also generates several risks for the survival of small-scale fishing communities. Inshore fish stocks keep being overexploited by recreational fishermen while the economic sustainability of small-scale fisheries is increasingly at stake.

Within this picture, the case of the fishermen association in Gran Tarajal provides us with a sort of ‘third way’: a possible solution transferrable to other similar European – as well as non-European – realities. The key turning point for the small Spanish fishery is the direct selling of catches: major profits activate a series of ripple effects that, if well managed, create the conditions for small-scale

³⁸ Ibid.

fishery to perform both economically as well as environmentally. Today's situation in Gran Tarajal, if not for European restrictions, would allow new members to join:

They must issue more licences for professional fishing: small-scale, inshore and artisanal fisheries. Here there is room for others to join. [...] It is important to look for a balance when you design and implement policies: here many people are losing their jobs or cannot find a new one because of this mismanagement. [...] It is my firm belief that [...] we can grow to up to 100 vessels without necessarily jeopardize the effective conservation policies we implement [...] – not to mention that actually there are already more than 100 vessels operating for recreational fishery out of any control or limitation. [...] In this way, we would provide financial stability for hundreds of families. [...] Unfortunately, however, European politics today [...] seem to go against the grain. I would rather say that there has been no concrete policy for fishing so far. At least not [...] according to any long-term plan or strategy caring about the future of fisheries together with the conservation of fish species. Here the only valuable regulation is the one we have set ourselves. [...] It is clear that you cannot design any effective policy on fishery if you only listen at the interest of the industrial fishing firms that have their offices in Brussels. The right strategy is very simple to achieve: they just have to go to fishermen and listen what they have to say.³⁹

Juan Ramon Roger Carreño is undoubtedly a charismatic character and, as confirmed by many inside as well as outside the fishermen association, it is mainly because of his determination and commitment that today to become a professional fisherman remains a valuable option in Gran Tarajal. Clearly, however, that same charisma cannot be exported to the other countless European small-scale fishing communities threaten to disappear. However, the case of Gran Tarajal provides us with a viable organizational model that is instead easy to export elsewhere. Similarly to how economic incentives were distributed or generated through the CFP in order to address fishermen choices towards, for instance, the dismantling of vessels, the same incentives can be readdressed in order to incentivize the structuring of fishermen association duplicating the Gran Tarajal model. Fishermen must be definitely entitled of playing a pivotal role in the policy making process. The European governance of fishery, on the other side, must adapt to the huge diversity characterizing the thousands of different ecosystems with which local fisheries interact.

³⁹ Juan Ramon Roger Carreño, 52 years old, fisherman and President of the Fishermen Association of Gran Tarajal. Interviewed by the author the 5th of May of 2013. Gran Tarajal, Spain.

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