

Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture: A Research Agenda for Equity and Robust Science

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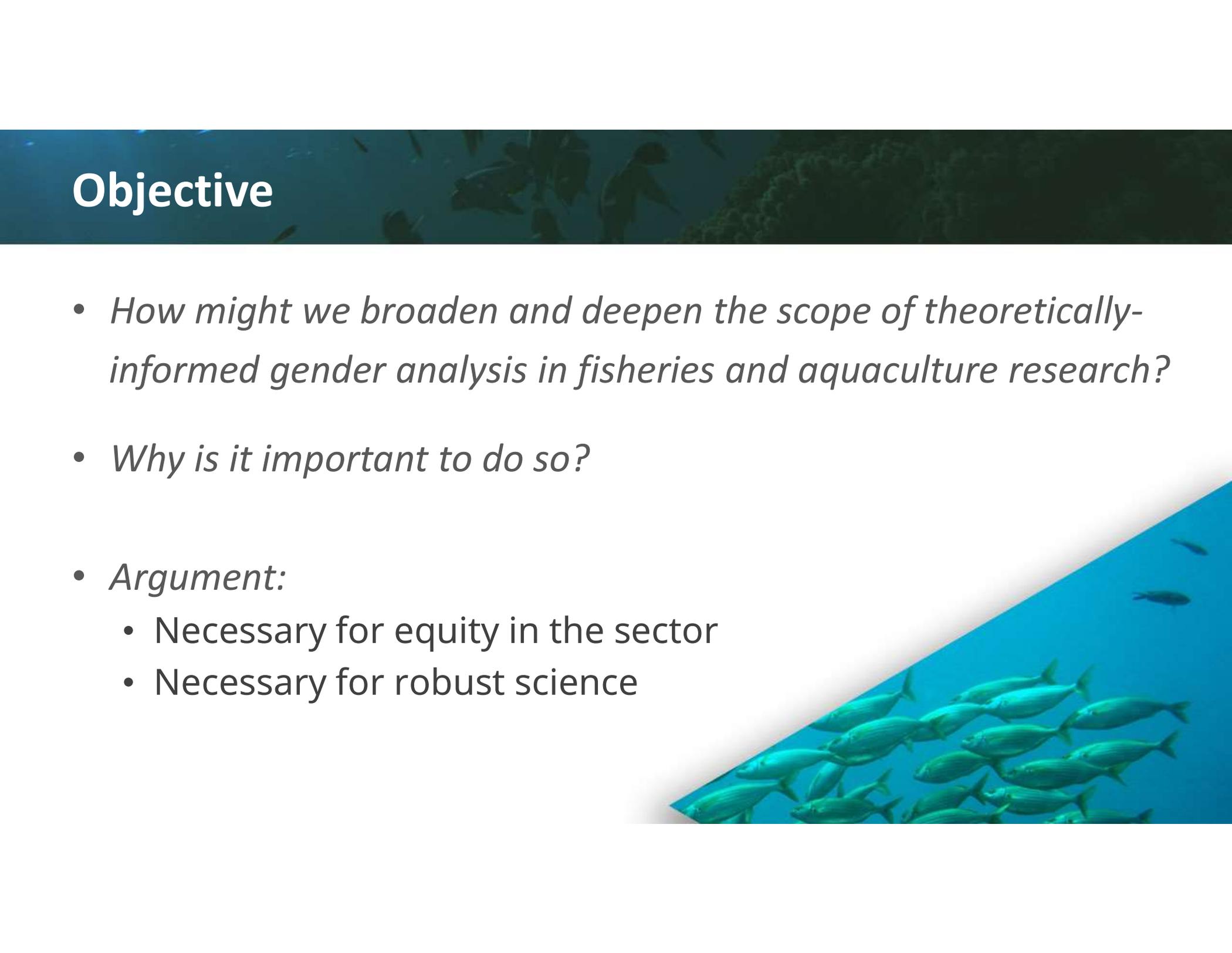


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Objective

The background of the slide is a composite image. The top portion shows a dark, deep-sea environment with silhouettes of fish and coral. The bottom right corner features a bright blue, shallow-water scene with a school of fish swimming towards the right.

- *How might we broaden and deepen the scope of theoretically-informed gender analysis in fisheries and aquaculture research?*
- *Why is it important to do so?*
- *Argument:*
 - Necessary for equity in the sector
 - Necessary for robust science

Overview

- *Summarize our knowledge – what has ~40 years of research on women and gender in fisheries and aquaculture taught us?*
- *Why is this important for fisheries/aquaculture science? How can sex and gender analysis improve science?*
- *What concepts and tools are required to further advance gender research in this field?*

Research on Women & Gender: What we know

- Women play an integral role in all aspects of fisheries and aquaculture and thus contribute significantly to household livelihoods that rely on these economies.*



Lessons:

- These roles vary in different contexts, but women are especially prominent in post-harvesting activities, such as processing and distribution.*



Lessons:

- *Yet, post-harvest activities generally have received less attention in research and development policy than fish production (harvesting).*
- *And women's involvement in the sector as a whole remains **invisible**.*
- *Women have been relatively **excluded** from national development policies and programs.*
- *The neglect of post-harvesting activities and the exclusion of women from research and policy have created **gender inequities** and **differential impacts** on men and women – often to women's detriment.*

We also know:

- *Fishery and aquaculture production systems and economies are deeply embedded in and governed by social-cultural systems and relations – in fact, can think of fishing and aquaculture economies as **social-cultural economies**.*
- *These economies are structured by social divisions of labor (gender, ethnicity, religion, caste, nativity, age, etc.), which differentially structure people's relationships to production systems and experiences of economic change.*
- *Even as biological systems, fisheries and aquaculture resources are influenced by sex differences (Tannenbaum, et al. 2019; Ellis et al. 2017)*
- *Failure to account for sex, gender and other social factors in research results in **weak science** and, often, **policy failure**.*

Sex & Gender Analysis Improves Science

- *Reproducibility*
- *Accuracy, Efficiency and Generalizability*
- *Better Social, Economic and Policy Analysis*
- *Opportunities for Discovery and Innovation*
- *Rethinking Research Priorities and Outcomes*
- *Revise Concepts and Theories (e.g., labor, work)*
- *Asking New Questions*

<https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu>



Concepts and Tools for Robust Gender Research

- *A theoretical approach required that*
 - Roots analyses of gender relations in broader economic, political-legal, social, and cultural-ideological processes;
 - Is multi-scalar and historical in perspective; and
 - Draws on both material and cultural understandings of economy and gender to understand how both are dialectically related.
- *A methodology that can reveal complex configurations of culture, economy, polity, and society*



Gender Analysis Frameworks

Gender Roles Framework:

- Focuses on describing women's and men's roles and their relative access to and control over resources;*
- Aims to anticipate the impacts of projects on both productive and reproductive roles;*
- Takes the household, rather than the breadth of institutions, as the unit of analysis;*
- Tends to assume that women are a homogeneous category; and*
- Tends to generate descriptive rather than theoretical research.*

Gender (Social) Relations Framework:

- Focuses on gendered power relations that perpetuate inequities;*
- Moves beyond the household to include the community, market, and state institutions;*
- Uncovers differences between women and men, divided by other aspects of such as class, race and ethnicity (intersectionality);*
- Aim is to understand the dynamics of gender relations in different institutional contexts to identify women's bargaining position and formulate strategies to improve this;*
- Often produces theoretically rich analyses.*

Patriarchy

- *Systemic societal structures that institutionalize male physical, social, economic, political, and cultural power over women*
 - Economy (relations of production/reproduction; property rights; access to resources)
 - The State (political-legal institutions)
 - Sexuality (unequal relations that constrain women's sexual freedom and orient them toward marriage as a means of control)
 - Culture/ideology (multiple discourses on femininity and masculinity)
 - Household/family (marriage-kin and residential systems, patterned behavior between intimates)

Patriarchy

How do gender ideologies and norms take shape in larger economic and cultural contexts?

In what ways do economic, political, and socio-cultural factors converge; in what ways do they contradict and counteract one another?

How do these convergences and contradictions shape men and women's work and life experiences within the fisheries and aquaculture sector?

How do patriarchal structures & ideologies shape commodity circuits and value chains?

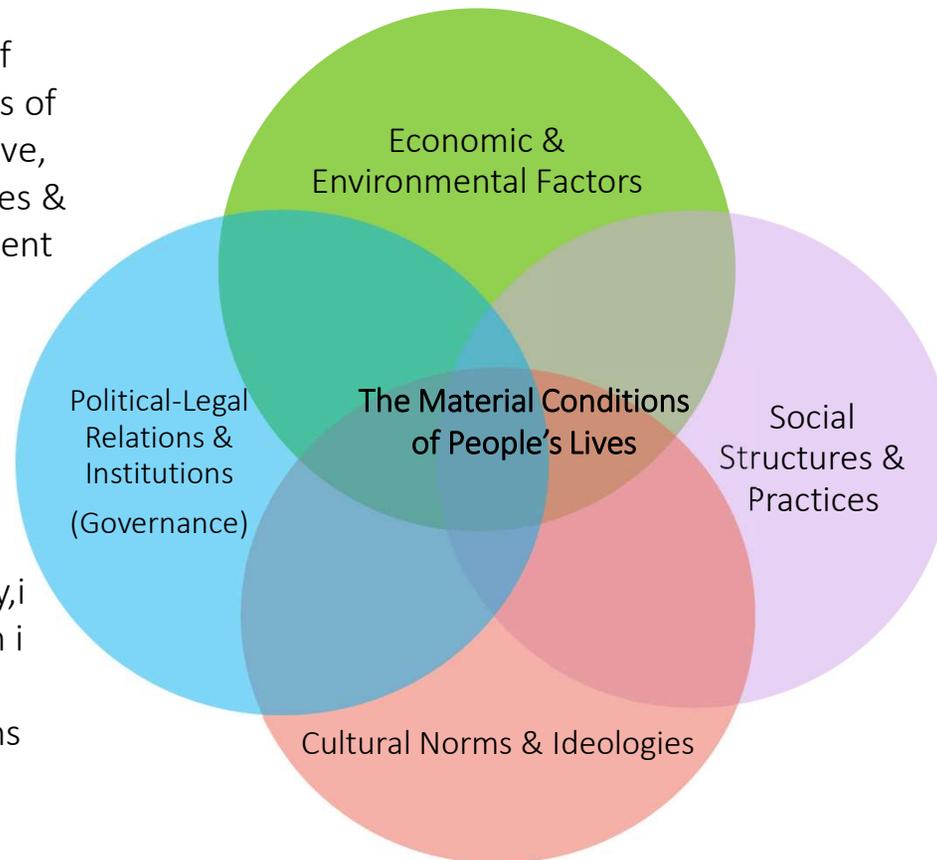
In what ways do women assert agency within patriarchal structures?

Materialist Feminist Framework

Economic/Environmental:

Resource base; organization of economy; livelihoods; divisions of labor – productive, reproductive, community; access to resources & education; mobility; employment markets; wages; other?

Political-Legal: Rights in property, inheritance, voting; participation in governance, household. decision-making; Power relations that structure access to rights and resources



Social: Kinship, descent, systems; marriage sexuality; household composition; family structure; social norms; social privilege

Cultural: identities; moral authority; ideologies & beliefs; constructions of power and authority; constructions of space (public/private) and social status – other examples?

Tools for Gender Analysis

Economic/Environmental Questions - What is the resource base? How is the economy/sector organized? What divisions of labor characterize the economy/sector (within household, local economy)? What economic activities underpin local livelihood strategies? What opportunities exist for engaging in these or expanding the scope of a available activities? In what spaces do economic activities occur, and who has access to those spaces?

Political-Legal-Institutional Questions - Who has access to resources/property? How are resource rights defined and operationalized? Who controls access to resources/property (within household, community, nation-state)? What legal institutions enforce these rights regimes? In what ways are local resource/property rights regimes gendered? In what ways do they support or constrain men and women's livelihood activities and efforts? What kind of strategies do women already employ to strengthen their positions?

Tools for Gender Analysis

Social Questions - *How is the community organized? How is the household organized? Who has power? What sort and how is it exercised? Is power challenged? In what ways? How are things changing in the community? What is the impact of economic change on households and individuals? How are issues concentrated in particular social classes or ethnic groups? What historical, economic, political or cultural factors account for that concentration? Why are some people's voices heard more than others? What can we do to hear a greater diversity of voices?*

Cultural Questions - *What are the prevailing norms/ideologies around gender (or race/ethnicity, caste, class, etc.)? What characteristics/behaviors/activities are associated with "feminine"? with "masculine"? What cultural factors shape women's mobility and access to economic resources and activities? E.g., How is space defined in terms of gender (e.g., private/public; masculine/feminine)? How is sexuality understood in a cultural sense, and how does this influence women's ability to move through social space and engage in particular economic activities?*

Tools for Gender Analysis

Historical Questions - *What are the origins of the situation? How has the situation changed over time? What factors have driven the change? (Who did what to cause the change?) What social structures were involved? Which individuals were involved? Who won/who lost over time and why?*

Geographic Scale Questions - *What important political economy trends have emerged at the regional, national and global levels and how have these impacted local communities and economies? In what ways are individuals and households linked to regional, national and global political economies? In what ways are local situations connected to larger-scale political economies? In what ways do local situations mediate meso- and macro-scale processes?*

Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations, or identities, such as ethnicity/race, class, caste and gender, as they create overlapping and interdependent systems of experience, discrimination or disadvantage.

Rather than isolate one identity category and privilege it over other points of marginalization, intersectional theory sheds light on the ways various vectors of identity impact one another to form unique subjectivities and experiences for different groups of people.

How does gender intersect other social identities (E.g., age, ethnicity/race, religion, caste, class) to create different experiences for different groups of men and women?

Ruptures and Gendered Adaptations

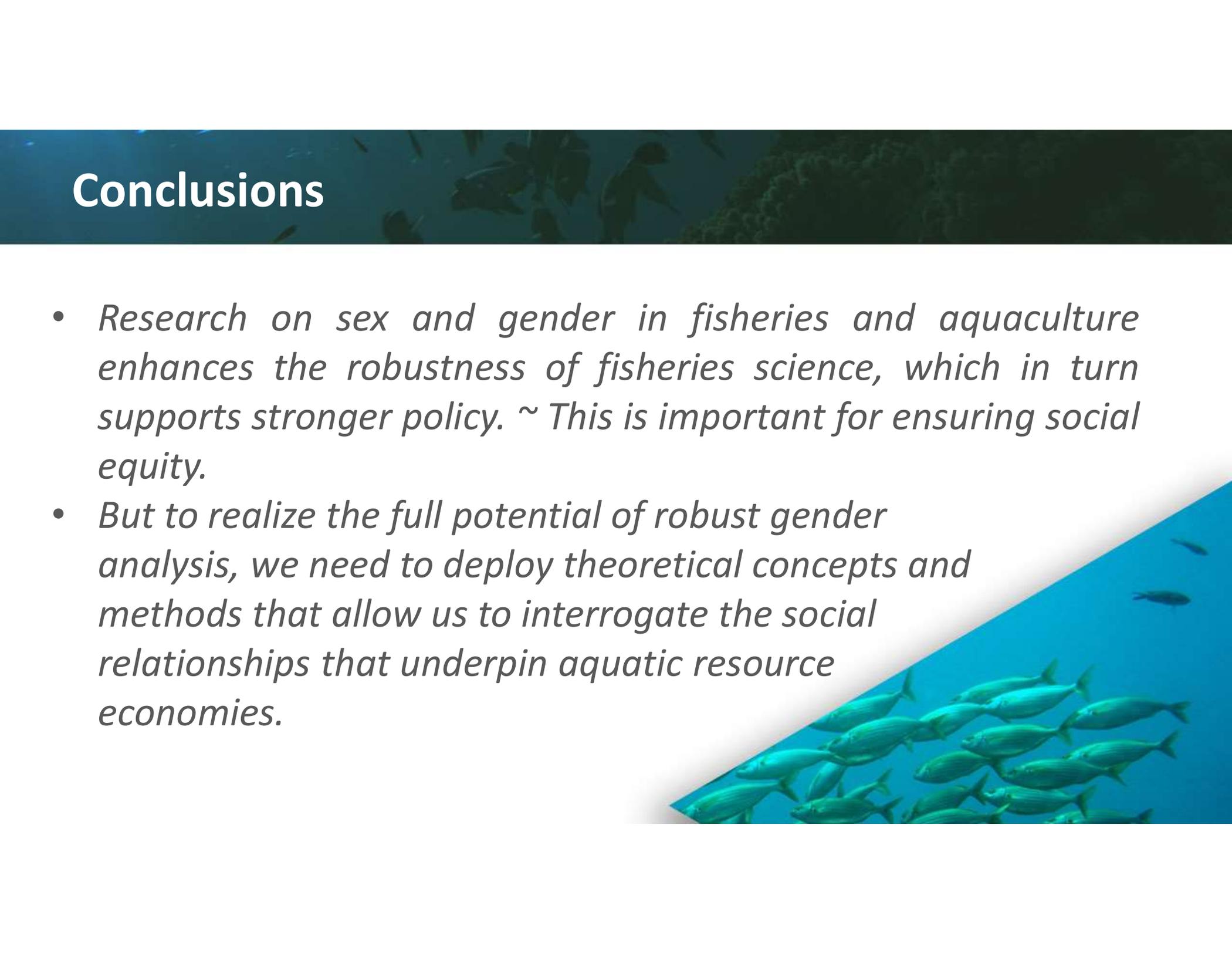
How do gender ideologies in different communities construct economic roles and access to resources? How do these then inform household livelihood strategies and the organization of local fish economies?

How do ruptures impact men and women differently as a result of gendered economies?

What are the implications of these impacts for adaptations? How are adaptations gendered?

How do ruptures and gendered adaptations rework gender norms, ideologies and relations within households and communities?

Conclusions

The background of the slide is a composite image of an underwater scene. The top half shows a dark, deep blue environment with silhouettes of fish and coral. The bottom right corner features a bright blue area with a school of fish swimming towards the left.

- *Research on sex and gender in fisheries and aquaculture enhances the robustness of fisheries science, which in turn supports stronger policy. ~ This is important for ensuring social equity.*
- *But to realize the full potential of robust gender analysis, we need to deploy theoretical concepts and methods that allow us to interrogate the social relationships that underpin aquatic resource economies.*

References

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THANK YOU

