



Women and Social Cohesion in Fishing Communities

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Data from two projects:

- **WIF** - Women in English Fisheries (2010)
- **GIFS** – Geography of Inshore Fishing and Sustainability (2012-2014)



Women in English Fisheries (2010)



GIFS – Geography of Inshore Fishing and Sustainability

- **Interreg IVa ERDF (50:50) match funded project €4.6M (UoG lead partner €1,832,524)**
- **January 2012 to September 2014**
- **Six partners from four member states**

GIFS Partners

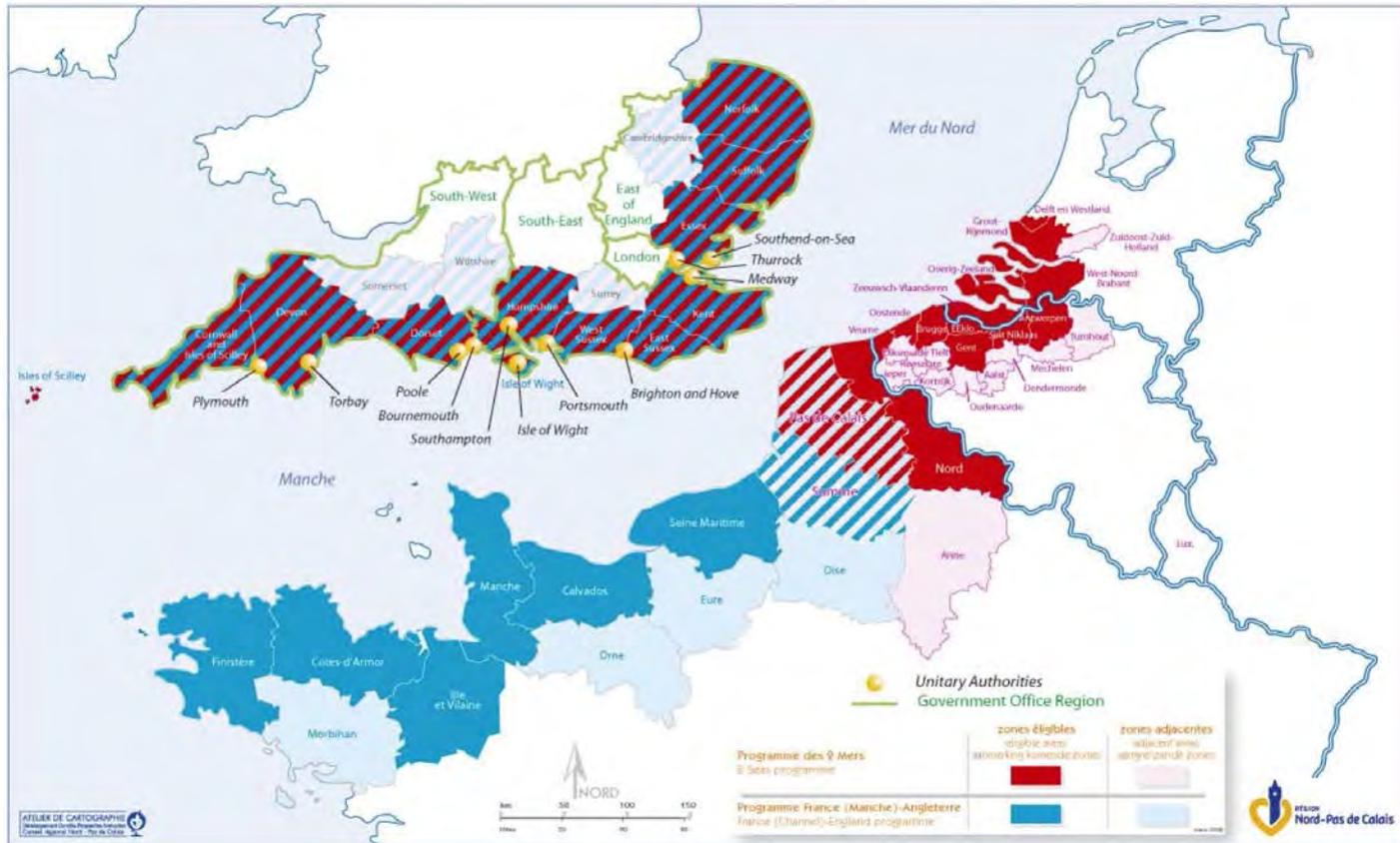


- 1** University of Greenwich
- 2** University of Brighton
- 3** Université de Brest
- 4** Agrocampus Ouest
- 5** Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee (VLIZ)
- 6** Gemeente Middelburg

Aim of GIFS

- To promote importance of inshore fishing for the development of sustainable coastal communities by exploring & sharing the socio-economic and cultural impacts of inshore fishing.
- To promote the incorporation of these (socio-economic) factors more explicitly into fisheries and maritime policy, coastal regeneration strategies and sustainable community development
- To produce a geography of inshore fishing & a regeneration case study that will help develop shared identities, experiences and best practices while bringing these issues to the attention of policy makers to help develop effective coastal management and fisheries policies

Where?



Main activities



Fishing places and community

- Community and place identity (UG, SoS)
- **Women and social cohesion in coastal communities (UG, GMI)**
- Fishing activity past and present (VLIZ)
- Cultural heritage, tradition and new economic support (Middelburg)

Why women?

- Worldwide, women play a wide range of roles in fisheries, making significant contributions to the industry across sectors from a variety of positions.
- However, the existing knowledge about women in today's European fisheries is **inadequate** and **fragmented**.
- We therefore need to know more, to **enrich our knowledge, to inform policy makers, to help empower women** hence to help build stronger community and society

Why Social cohesion?

- A term used in social policy, sociology, and political science, to describe the bonds or "glue" that bring people together in society
- A multi-faceted notion covering many different kinds of social phenomena.
- In Britain, and in EU, social cohesion has become an important theme in social policy in the 21stC.
- Social Cohesion high in public policy agenda (eg. OECD Development Centre Seminar Series on *Social Cohesion* 2010/11)
- Little study has been conducted on social cohesion in fishing communities esp. concerning women.



Objectives

- **Investigate**

- women's roles in sustaining fishing communities, their contribution to social cohesion, and the changes, challenges, and prospects

- **Contribute to**

- knowledge
- policy making

- **Promote women's participation in**

- fishing production
- development/ regeneration of fishing communities

Research Sites

- **The Netherlands**
 - Breskens
 - Arnemuiden
 - Urk
- **Belgium**
 - Oostduinkerke-Oostend
 - Nieuwpoort
- **France (TBC):**
 - Concarneau / Douarnenez
 - Boulogne
- **England (Four clusters):**
 - Norfolk/Essex/Suffolk Cluster;
 - Sussex/Kent Cluster;
 - Dorset/Devon Cluster;
 - Cornwall



Methodology

- **Qualitative & Cases study approach**
- **Primary data:**
 - Observation
 - Interviews

Women's Roles in Today's Fishing Communities: some preliminary observations

- **Continuity**
- **Changes**
- **Implications**

EC employment in fisheries by gender and sub-sectors

EC	Total Fisheries	Fishing	Processing	Aquaculture
Men	310,152	200,231	64,944	44,978
Women	111,165	8,641	82,158	20,386
Total	421,318	208,852	147,102	65,365

Source: this table has been reconstructed with data drawn on Table 5.1. EC Overview – employment by country and fisheries sub-sector (Salz *et al*, 2006:17), see Zhao *et al* (2013), ‘Women in English Fisheries:’, in Urquhart, Acott & Zhao, Springer.

UK employment in fisheries by gender and sub-sectors

UK	Total Fisheries	Fishing	Processing	Aquaculture
Men	24,637	11,774	9,999	2,864
Women	8,897	0	8,181	716
Total	33,534	11,774	18,180	3580

Source: this table has been reconstructed with data drawn on Table 5.1. EC Overview – employment by country and fisheries sub-sector (Salz et al, 2006:17), see Zhao et al (2013), ‘Women in English Fisheries:’, in Urquhart, Acott & Zhao, Springer.

Continuity

- Fisherwomen
- Wives/partners
 - Carers looking after the family & crew
 - Administrators re book-keeping, accountant ...
- Processors
- Traders



Changes : increased role in household economy

- While the traditional gender division of labour remains fundamentally unchanged, the roles of men and women are changing in fishing families and communities. There is evidence of a **re-negotiation of roles between men and women**. Increasingly, more women are **becoming the second and even first bread winners** while still acting as primary carers for the family

Some quotes:

- “Money became hard. So, I got a job in the processing factory in order to help my family. I have to make sure that the money made during the summer must be budgeted and managed to last all year round.” (fisherman’s wife)
- “My husband was a fisherman I began to help a few years ago. I made fish cakes and sold them on the market. I made about £200 a month in the first couple of years. Now I make about £500 a month, about half of what we need every month (wife of ex-fisherman)

Changes: foreign workers



Change: men are 'cooking' fish



Change: roles in new sectors



Changes: organising

England



Holland



Invisibility continues

- Contemporary images of women's these roles are missing in shops, discourse, memories, awareness
- “Do I have photograph of women in fisheries? Well, I don't, because I can't see them... Well, yes, now, I probably can see them, because our discussion today'. (Professional photographer, Netherlands, August 2012)

Implications?

- More independence for women
- Re-negotiation / re-division of roles between men and women in domestic and public spaces
- Automation and re-division of labour between men and women in production
- Migration of capital and labour (global v local)
- Women's network, solidarity, sustainability
- Role of technology in social network
- Image of fisheries: Homogeneity and *heterogeneity*
-
-

Conclusion?



Thank you for your attention



2 Mers Seas Zeeën
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FRANCE - ENGLAND - VLAANDEREN - NEDERLAND



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