



## The Environmental and Social Impacts of Fishery

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### Abstract

ecosystems and coastal livelihoods.

**Keywords:** Environment; Marine resources; Ecosystem disruption; Coastal communities

### Introduction

The world's oceans, teeming with biodiversity, provide sustenance for millions of people and support thriving economies. However, the delicate balance between economic interests and environmental sustainability is often disrupted by fishery subsidies. This article delves into the nuanced environmental and social impacts of fishery subsidies, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies that safeguard both marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of coastal communities [1].

### Environmental impacts

**Overfishing and Depletion:** Among the most immediate and critical consequences of certain fishery subsidies is the exacerbation of overfishing. Capacity-enhancing subsidies, such as those supporting the construction of new vessels or providing fuel subsidies, contribute to the over-exploitation of fish stocks. This overcapacity places immense pressure on ecosystems, leading to the depletion of vital marine resources [2].

**Ecosystem Disruption:** Resource-altering subsidies, intended to increase fish stock availability, often result in harmful fishing practices that disrupt marine ecosystems. Techniques like bottom trawling, encouraged by certain subsidies, cause collateral damage to non-target species and destroy habitats, triggering a cascade effect that weakens the overall resilience of marine environments [3].

**Climate Change Impact:** Fishery subsidies that support long-distance fishing operations contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions. The environmental footprint of fishing fleets, especially those subsidized for extended travel in search of fish plays a role in exacerbating climate change, further stressing marine ecosystems.

### Social impacts

**Social Inequity:** The distribution of fishery subsidies is often skewed, favoring larger industrial fleets over small-scale and artisanal fishers. This perpetuates social inequalities within the fishing industry, impacting the well-being of smaller communities reliant on traditional fishing practices. As subsidies disproportionately benefit larger players, smaller fishers face increased competition and economic challenges.

**Livelihoods and Food Security:** Unsustainable fishing practices,

driven by certain subsidies, jeopardize the livelihoods of coastal communities dependent on fishing. Small-scale fishers, in particular, face economic hardships as overfishing depletes stocks and reduces catch sizes. This is not only impacts income but also threatens food security in regions where fish are a primary source of nutrition [4].

**Community Resilience:** Income support and rural development subsidies aim to support fishing communities during lean seasons or promote alternative livelihoods. However, the effectiveness of these subsidies in building community resilience depends on proper implementation and consideration of the unique needs of each community. Inadequate planning can lead to dependency on subsidies, hindering long-term sustainable development.

**Global Initiatives and the Road Ahead:** Acknowledging the multifaceted impacts of fishery subsidies, global initiatives, particularly within the World Trade Organization (WTO), are actively seeking solutions. Negotiations aim to establish binding rules that eliminate harmful subsidies while considering the social and economic needs of developing countries. Striking a balance between economic interests and environmental conservation remains a complex challenge, but the ongoing efforts underscore the global commitment to creating a sustainable future for fisheries [5].

### Discussion

The environmental and social impacts of fishery subsidies intertwine to create a complex tapestry of challenges that require careful consideration and global collaboration. Understanding and

addressing these impacts is crucial for the sustainable management of fisheries, the preservation of marine ecosystems, and the well-being of coastal communities.

### **Environmental impacts**

Over fishing and Depletion: Capacity-enhancing subsidies contribute significantly to over fishing, pushing fish stocks beyond sustainable limits. The resulting depletion of marine resources not