Chapter 32
To Define or Not to Define; Implications for the Governability of Small-Scale Coastal Fisheries in the Netherlands

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Abstract This chapter discusses the need to define the small-scale coastal fisheries sector in the Netherlands. It shows that the fact that there is no clear definition of what small-scale fisheries is, affects its governability. This seems to go hand in hand with the lack of a clear perspective on what the problems and opportunities of the small-scale fisheries sector are. This is partly because many small-scale métiers ('metiers' is commonly used to describe a fishing activity, which can be characterized by a combination of the area that is fished, the gear that is used, and the species that is targeted (http://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/wordef/fishing-activity-metier)) are out of sight, as they are outside the bounds of data collected, or hidden in 'default rest categories' or because of lack of clear representation. We argue that the relative invisibility of the small-scale fishing sector in the Netherlands, its diversity, lack of representation, and the 'preference' for specialization of the governing system impacts on the governability of the small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands. In this chapter we apply the theory of interactive governance by describing the governing system and the system-to-be-governed as well as the governing interactions between them to analyze the challenges for small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands.

Keywords Definition • Governability • Small-Scale Fisheries

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Introduction

Small-scale fisheries have a long history in Europe. They make up a majority of the fleet in a number of countries, especially in southern Europe. About 80 % of the commercial fishing fleet in Europe is considered small-scale. In the European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform of 2009, it was mentioned that "fisheries with their large share of small- and medium-sized companies play an important role in the social fabric and cultural identity of many of Europe's coastal regions" (EC 2009).

The image of small-scale fisheries is that of a sector that adheres to values of social justice and ecological sustainability (Johnson 2006; Chuenpagdee 2011). Images play an important role in the governance of small-scale fisheries and fisheries governance in general (Kooiman et al. 2005) as the instruments which are applied in fisheries management are based on those images and values. The European Commission's image, for example, of the large scale fleet is one of efficiency and economic self-reliance, while for the small-scale fleet the focus is on "social objectives, and public funding to help the small-scale segment adapt to changing conditions in the wake of the CFP reform" (EC 2009).

Images come in many types: visions, knowledge, facts, judgments, presuppositions, hypotheses, convictions, ends and goals (Kooiman, et al. 2008). While images are not always made explicit (Kooiman et al. 2008), more transparency about underlying images would improve governance interactions. For effective fisheries governance it is important to bring images to the fore and discuss them openly with all parties involved in governing (Jentoft et al. 2010, 1315).

Another image of small-scale fisheries is that "many vessels are small-scale and have a limited environmental impact" (CFP reform 2009). This limited environmental impact is often attributed to the use of passive fishing gears, the type of gears predominantly used by European small-scale fisheries (*Ibid*). Other advantages which resonate to the image of small-scale fisheries are the good quality of fish caught, and the lower fuel cost per unit of production (Guyader et al. 2013).

Small-scale fisheries are often set off against large-scale fisheries. Some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) sketch a 'bad' image of large-scale fisheries as a contrast to small-scale fisheries, as was the case in for example the Greenpeace campaign in West Africa in 2012 and 2014 using words as 'plunder', 'greed' and 'monsterboats' when referring to large vessels.[1]

Small-scale fisheries are often ascribed an image of being socially just and environmentally friendly. This might lead to promoting small-scale fisheries as a category; or even making a fetish out of them (Johnson 2006). However it is also recognized that "small- scale fishing can be harmful to sensitive coastal habitats and

[1] http://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/Global/eu-unit/reports-briefings/2014/GP_monsterboats_report.pdf

that its aggregated impact can be significant with real consequences on the state of the stocks" (EC 2009). Hence, not all small-scale fisheries are a priori ecologically friendly, as this depends on the gear or technique used, the intensity of fishing (see for instance Kraan 2009 on the dominance of small-scale fisheries in Ghana) and the state of the targeted stock. Therefore, some influential NGOs have recently renamed environmentally friendly fishing methods as low impact fishing gear avoiding the scale-aspect (Guyader et al. 2013; Seas at Risk 2010).

Small-scale fisheries often encapsulate a huge variety of fisheries, in terms of technology (boat size, gear type), capital use, economic performance, market linkages, nature of activities, crew size, scale of operation and cultural views (Jentoft and Eide 2011, 2). There is no universal definition of what small-scale fisheries are and what they are not. This is also recognized in the *International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries* of the FAO (2013):

> The Guidelines recognize the great diversity of small-scale fisheries and that there is no single, agreed definition of the subsector. Accordingly, the Guidelines do not prescribe a standard definition of small-scale fisheries nor how the Guidelines should be applied in a national context. (…) To ensure transparency and accountability in the application of the Guidelines, it is important to ascertain which activities and operators are considered small-scale, and to identify vulnerable and marginalized groups needing greater attention. This should be undertaken at a regional, sub-regional or national level and according to the particular context in which they are to be applied. (article 2.4)

Hence, the concept of small-scale fisheries is mostly a relative concept; it is relative in the sense that it can be understood by what it is *not*; it is not industrial or not large-scale. The opposition between small-scale and large-scale or industrial fisheries is a basic way to categorize fisheries (Johnson 2006). The categories are however a simplification of changing diversity and complexity of fish capture. Second, this distinction between small-scale and large-scale is relative as the image of small and large gets meaning in its local context. For example, the small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands have a completely different linkage to the market as well as technology than the small-scale fisheries in for instance Ghana. Also the scale of the small-scale fisheries within Europe differs significantly. In the Netherlands, only 2.4 % of the vessels are below 12 m, while in Greece this percentage is 65. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that countries have divergent ways of categorizing small-scale fisheries.

This chapter gives an overview of the small-scale fisheries sector in the Netherlands. Small-scale fisheries haven't received much attention in the Netherlands so far, despite the number of vessels (see Fig. 32.1), and possible local social importance. Most attention is directed to the often more specialized, homogeneous, and better organized large-scale fishing sector. One of the challenges for the governing system is that a clear definition, and related to that, a clear perspective on what the problems and opportunities of the small-scale fisheries sector is, lacking. We argue in this chapter that such a definition could benefit small-scale fishers in terms of subsidies, market, and voice; and possibly improves the governability of the Dutch fishing sector as a whole.

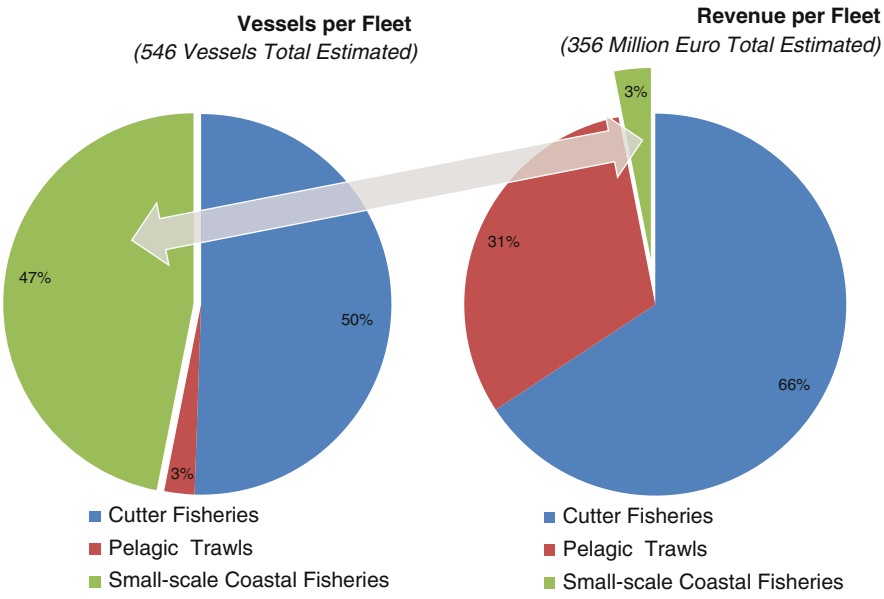

Fig. 32.1 The main marine fleet segments in the Netherlands, the number of boats, and revenue (based on AER, 2013) (Mussel and oyster vessels are considered as aquaculture according to the data collection, and therefore not included in the marine fleet)

An Overview of the Dutch Fishing Fleets

In this section we would like to give some preliminary insight into what we mean when discussing small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands. But before we can do that, it is important to say something about the data. The main data streams collected by the Dutch marine fisheries research institutes LEI and IMARES are framed according to the need of the Ministry, which focuses on the major marine sectors, namely the pelagic and demersal trawl fleets. The rest of the fishing fleets are taken together in a 'rest category' labeled 'remaining coastal fisheries'. Most of the fisheries in this category can be associated with what is seen as small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands, thus will be described in the 'small-scale coastal fleet' section. However it is not a perfect fit as some trawl fisheries are in fact 'small-scale' in the Dutch context whereas some 'remaining coastal' fisheries are arguably large-scale in the Dutch context. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the section on governability challenges.

The Dutch Marine Fishing Fleet

In 2013, the total Dutch marine fishing fleet consisted of 742 registered vessels, of which 546 were actively fishing. This active fleet was divided into 1) a long distance pelagic fleet (14 vessels), 2) a cutter fleet targeting flatfish (276 vessels), and 3) a rest

category of remaining coastal fisheries (256 active vessels) (AER 2013). Management measures for the stocks that are targeted by Dutch fisheries may vary from no quota (e.g. gurnard), but only a minimum landing size (e.g. sea-bass), to national quota (e.g. turbot or dab), to individual transferable quotas (e.g. sole or cod), to daily quotas (e.g. hand-picked oyster fishery).

The 'remaining coastal fishing fleet' is a rest category of a mix of fisheries that are not part of the first two fleets. In terms of number of vessels and number of fishers the 'remaining coastal fleet' is quite significant, however in terms of revenue it is of minor importance (see Fig. 32.1). In the next two sections we will describe the small-scale fleet, as the system-to-be-governed, in more detail.

The Small-Scale Coastal Fleet

Small-scale coastal fisheries (i.e. the LEI 'remaining coastal fishing fleet' category) consisted of 453 vessels in 2012, of which 256 were active and 197 inactive vessels (see Table 32.2). The inactive fleet mainly comprises of vessels, which are used to park quota. As will be later described, many fishers in the Netherlands have ITQs. In some cases fishers sell their vessel (by retirement without succession for instance) but keep their quota. The rule is that the ITQs need to be connected to a vessel which needs to sail at least 1 day in a year. Many fishers utilize a small vessel for this function. They are able to earn money by then leasing their quota to active fishers.

In Table 32.1 we show the métiers that can be generally seen as, or include, small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands. There is also a small-scale inland fleet; however in this chapter we will focus on the small-scale coastal fleet (Ministerie van Economische Zaken 2013).

Most of the active vessels are used for gill net fishing, shell fish fishing in the North Sea, fishing with passive gear for lobster and eel in the coastal and delta zone and smelt fishing with seines (see Table 32.2) (Van Oostenbrugge and Op De Weegh 2014). The vessels are mostly smaller than 12 m and relatively old (older than 20 years). The largest part of the small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands operates in the coastal zone and depends highly on the catch of sole, turbot, cod, mullet and sea bass (AER, 2013).

The total engine power amounted to almost 70,000 hp, of which 38,000 hp was actively used. The total yield of the small-scale coastal fisheries amounted to 11.5 million euro in 2012. The net income was 1.2 million euro. More or less two third of this net income originated from the gillnet fishery. In 2012, the gillnet fishery mainly landed sole (66 %). In the gillnet fishery, 60 % of the fishers work fulltime. On average the crew consists of 1–6 people and the crew costs form the largest part of the total costs. The majority of the vessels (85 %) are financed with family money (Van Oostenbrugge and Op De Weegh 2014). There is a large range of fishing effort within the small-scale coastal fisheries: from one to 192 days at sea. Yield per vessel varied from 64 to 500,000 euros.

The majority (78 %) of small-scale coastal fishers use passive gears, such as gillnets, seines, traps, hooks, lines, fyke nets, anchor nets, and baskets. Passive gears do

Table 32.1 Small-scale métiers in the Netherlands

	Characteristics	
Métier description	Gear	Target species
Shrimp fishery (<20 m vessel)	Bottom trawl/pulse	Shrimp
Gillnet fishery	Gillnet	Sole
	Gillnet	Cod
	Gillnet	Grey mullet/seabass
Shellfish picking	Rake	Cockles
Shellfish picking	Hand knife	Oysters/mussels
Hook and lines	Line with one or several hooks	Seabass/cod
Fyke nets and baskets	Fyke nets and baskets	Eel, flounder, smelt, crab
Recreational/angler fishery	Gillnet/seines/hook and lines, baskets, fyke nets, cages. Sports = with hook and line	Sprat, eel, mackerel, garfish, whiting
Pelagic nets (<300 hp)	Pelagic net, demersal bottom trawl	Smelt
Demersal trawl (<300 hp)	demersal trawl	Plaice, dab, flounder, shrimps
Anchor nets	Anchor nets	Smelt, shrimp, sprat
Razor clams	Airlift	Razor clams

This table was developed by the authors and cross-checked with a small-scale fisher representative

Table 32.2 Use of active and inactive vessels in the category remaining (small-scale) coastal fisheries in 2012

Use of active and inactive vessels in the category small-scale marine fisheries in 2012	
Usage	Number of vessels
Active vessels	256
Gill net fishing	54
Beam trawl	19
Other bottom trawls	31
Shell fish (razor clams)	5
Other passive gears, such as fyke nets, baskets, cages, hooks, and lines (incl polyvalent)	147
Inactive vessels	197
Total	**453**

not disturb the bottom of the sea or lead to the water getting turbid (Quirijns 2010). This is in contrast to the rest of the fleet in the Netherlands who predominantly use active gear.

Shellfish fishing has a long history in the Dutch coastal waters (Van Ginkel 1991). Initially only shellfish banks were fished, but ever since the 19th century mussels and oysters have been cultivated (aquaculture). Apart from the traditional fishery of oysters, mussels and cockles, more recently other species such as razor clams have been targeted (http://www.pvis.nl/visserij/schelpdiervisserij/).

The small-scale shellfish fishery also includes hand raking of cockles or manual picking of oysters in the Wadden Sea. 10 kg of oysters can be picked per day. When this is done by a professional fisher, he/she is allowed to sell the oysters as well (Stichting Waddengroep 2010). In the manual cockle fishery, 34 licenses have been issued, but not all of them are active. The hand rake cockle fishery can only be profitable if it is done on cockle banks that have a high density of cockles. This fishery can be considered more small-scale than the mechanical cockle fishery, which was important before, but is now prohibited except in one area.

Market

In the Netherlands, most landed fish is directly brought to the auction, where it is weighed, sorted, and registered. When fishers are members of a Producer Organization they sign private agreements to sell at least the quota fish through the auction. Over the last 5 years, some criticism has been articulated about auctions, both from the buyers' side (they prefer to negotiate directly with suppliers), and suppliers' side (low prices, too many tiers in the supply chain). As a result, fishers try to sell their products directly to the market. This is especially the case for small-scale fishers who try to sell their products in organic markets, to local restaurants, and to small organic supermarkets. As small-scale fishers often target species that are not regulated by quota, they are not obliged to register their fish at the auction. However, some small-scale fishers choose to sell their fish through the auction, buy part of their fish back, and sell it to consumers or trading companies. Especially when buyers offer low prices, fishers buy their own fish. Other fishers do not make use of the auction and clean the fish themselves. Direct selling gives the fishers the opportunity to get connected with consumers and wider society and to teach them about the practice of fishing.

Small-scale coastal fishers usually have the advantage that their fish is fresh as they do not stay out at sea for 5 days like the trawl fishers. Disadvantages can include the variability in volume and dependency on seasonal availability. Small-scale fishers often work with local labels (e.g. Waddengoud, Zeker Zeeuws), sometimes combined with an international label such as that of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). They use different labels as the utility depends on the specific market. Some small-scale fishers also are not in favor of international labels, for different reasons:

> We catch grey mullets in the Wadden Sea. We needed a label, but MSC was too expensive. Now I am happy we did not get it, we do not want our fish lying next to MSC fish fingers in the supermarket. We have a special product, and we have no difficulty to sell it despite the fact that we do not have MSC. (Roodenburg cited by Gualtherie van Weezel in the Volkskrant 2014)

An international label can be more difficult to obtain because of a lack of data on certain fish stocks, or because of the assessment costs. However, the government has provided some funding to help with these costs. At present, a group of

line fishers of sea bass, the hand-rake cockle fishery, and the razor clam fishery are MSC certified. Until 2013, the gillnet fishers of sole were also certified. However, when after 5 years they had to pay for the reassessment, they decided to withdraw. The costs outweighed the benefits.

The labels can be a way to empower small-scale fisheries, as it improves their visibility in the market and gives them a license to produce. In some cases it also impacts on the governability of the small-scale fisheries. This was for example the case with the gillnet fishers of sole. This fishery was a relatively open fishery, it was only after the gillnet fishers requested the government to regulate – seconded by a MSC condition-, that the government regulated the number of licenses and the number of nets. Another example was that of the sea bass fishery that went for certification so as to get a voice at the government level.

The Governing System

Fisheries in the North Sea are governed under the CFP, but there is some space for the Member States to define additional rules. Also the coastal waters (<12 nm) are a national responsibility. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Economic Affairs is responsible for the implementation of fisheries policy. They cooperate with co-management groups (in which 90 % of the fleet holding quota rights is represented) for the management of quotas. These co-management groups nowadays overlap with Producer Organizations.[2]

In informal interviews with policy officers of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs it became clear that small-scale fisheries as such is not a focus of the Ministry. It was underlined that the Ministry focuses on sustainability regardless of the scale of the fleet. That does not mean that no attention is given to small-scale fisheries. Small-scale fisheries are discussed as part of stock management (for instance eel or sea-bass); area management (for instance for the Wadden Sea or the Delta-area in Zeeland) or gear management.

Another important point to make is that in general the Dutch government increasingly wants to withdraw from (over) regulating; a process which can be labeled as 'the less rules and taxes the better' motto. One of the clear outcomes of such thinking has been the closure of the Dutch fish Product Board (along with all other sectoral boards). The product boards were industry boards with co-management tasks and were financed by sectoral taxes.

[2] Producer Organizations are officially approved bodies set up by fishery or aquaculture producers. In general these Producer Organizations guide producers towards sustainable fishing and aquaculture, help them match supplies with market demands, and support them in creating added value (http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/market/producer_organisations/index_en.htm).

The small-scale fisheries 'label' per se does not have a specific 'place' at the Ministry. The fisheries department in the Ministry of Economic Affairs is currently[3] organized in such a way that there is a policy division and a regulations division – dealing with the administration of rules pertaining to licenses, quota management and days at sea. The policy division has five groups: marine fishing, pelagic fishing, coastal fishing, inland fishing and aquaculture. The regulations division has two groups, one dealing with marine fisheries (including pelagic fishing) and the other with coastal and inland fisheries and aquaculture. This division between coastal fishing and marine fishing is related to the fact that coastal waters are a national responsibility.

Small-scale fisheries are often part of both institutional 'worlds' so to speak; they cross a number of borders in their diverse operations. They are often both coastal and marine (for instance gill netters fishing for sole in the coastal waters are regulated by quotas and are therefore part of 'marine fisheries'), and both inland and coastal (such as some fyke net fishers operating in the IJsselmeer and the Waddensea). These institutional borders impact the room to maneuver for small-scale fishing operations. It also means that there are more policy officers from different groups with whom they need to deal.

Interactions between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed are, in the case of small-scale fisheries, often limited to the use of instruments such as permits, fishing rights and in some cases quotas. Many of these instruments have been developed with a focus on larger scale fishing operations, as the Dutch fishing sector is dominated by its demersal and pelagic trawler fleet. This sometimes results in mismatches, as for instance in the case of the weight regulation where fishermen had to weigh their catches on board their vessels or at auctions. The weighing device that was tested for on-board weighing was tested on a trawler, making it suitable for North sea vessels but not for smaller scale vessels.

Another issue is that small-scale fishers cannot 'claim' part of the stocks, as they mainly target species that are not regulated by quotas. It is difficult for 'outsiders', such as small-scale fishers, to obtain fishing rights and quotas. "The value of individual quota makes the costs prohibitively high. Therefore, aspiring newcomers are effectively barred from entry into the fishing industry." (van Ginkel 2009, 254).

In the last 5 years, many traditional beam trawlers have switched to other fishing techniques such as flyshoot, twinrig, and pulse trawl. This has sometimes meant a change in target species as well. This is for example the case with the flyshoot, which targets non-quota species such as red mullet and gurnard. However, as a result of this switch, the pressure on non-quota species has increased (such as sea bass). The recent extension of pulse permits (from 42 to 84)[4] has meant that the

[3] This is the case until June 2014. After June 2014, the ministry has been in the process of reorganization, which is yet to be completed at the time this article was written.

[4] Under the current regulations pulse fishing (which makes use of electric stimulus) is prohibited in the EU. There is however a provision in place allowing 5 % of fleets surrounding the North Sea to make use of the pulse. The Netherlands have arranged for extra permits under these regulations as they see the pulse as a case for more selective fishing.

availability of sole quota has become more scarce, impacting on gill net fishers who often don't own (all of) their sole quota but lease them. As a result of these changes, interactions between the different fisheries have also increased, leading to spatial or market conflicts.

Many small-scale fishers want to have some flexibility in the way they fish. However, this means that they have to obtain a variety of licenses, for example for different fishing techniques, as well a quota, which is costly and difficult to get. The mismatch between the instruments used to govern the Dutch fishing sector and the requirements for small-scale fishers has been recognized and led to an experimental approach towards small-scale fishers in 2008 called 'integrated fishery'. Integrated fishery was a project in which the government and a group of Wadden Sea fishers created a group license out of all the individual licenses. The aim was to:

- limit the fishery to the season with best catching possibilities and lowest costs;
- spread risks over alternative catch possibilities/target species; and
- postpone fishing activities when required to maintain the stock at a sustainable level.

The project also aimed at improved cooperation between fishers and government through the sharing of licenses, gear and knowledge. One of the reasons the fishers participated in this experiment was because they realized that by pooling their knowledge and gears they would become more flexible, allowing also for more sustainable choices. As one of the fishers said:

> An important reason for which we cannot implement the ideas we have for integrated/diversified small-scale companies is the regulation which allows individual trading of licenses (…) As this is in fact stimulating scaling up, especially for new companies, which usually can only afford 1 license. Because these documents are so expensive, the danger is that one will speed up the fishing, and use it as much as possible. When one has to pay a lot for the license, then one will not take a strategy to invest in 5 different licenses, and to only use them when it is working well. No instead one will take as much advantage as possible of the single license. However, because of local community reasons, and seasonality (to give time to a stock to recover itself), we advocate more flexibility. (…) (Kraan and Paaijmans 2014, 16)

This project also had to cross many institutional borders. For example, when the license-sharing project of the integrated fishery group was evaluated in 2014 fishers expressed the wish that quotas be shared and that they could fish further out at sea. The Ministry responded that they were prepared to look into this, but that they foresaw difficulties in organizing this as it implied that also EU law would impact on the project, as both quotas as well as fishing outside the 12 nm zone fall under the CFP (Kraan and Paaijmans 2014, 19).

Governability Challenges

There is no common definition in the Netherlands regarding what should be considered small-scale and what not. In this section we will show that fisheries data collection has brought to the fore discussions around the definition of the Dutch small-scale fishing fleet.

Data Collection on Small-Scale Fisheries in the Netherlands

The Dutch Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI) is responsible for the gathering of economic data for the Ministry of Economic Affairs pertaining to the Dutch marine fishing fleet. Until 2007 the focus of data collection was on vessels that form the largest part of the Dutch fleet, in terms of volume, and yield (the borderline was set at 50 k euro per year per vessel – vessels below that amount were not included). These vessels were also the focus of fisheries policy ever since the introduction of fishing quotas in 1976.

There was a remaining coastal fishing fleet that was not included in data collection. This changed when within the framework of the European Data Collection Plan (EU regulation 2001/1639) it became obligatory to gather data on all fishing activities. Some discussions took place between LEI and the EU before the regulation became effective in 2007. Collecting data on this remaining group meant extra effort as the group was extremely diverse.

From 2007 onwards LEI started integrating the remaining coastal fishing fleet (mostly small-scale vessels) in the annual publication 'Fisheries in Figures' (http://www.agrimatie.nl/SectorResultaat.aspx?subpubID=2386&sectorID=2391), a publication focusing on economic performance and the size/effort of the Dutch marine fishing sector. The remaining coastal fisheries category was in fact a 'rest'-category. This category was not labeled as small-scale fisheries, but did include the majority of fishers that are commonly perceived of in the Netherlands as small-scale coastal fishers (personal communication with a representative of small-scale fishers, 2014). In other words, the category included all fishers that applied passive fishing techniques. It also included fishers that applied active fishing gear, but had an income which was below 50 k euro per year and/or fishers who had been active only part of the year.

As it is a rest-category, the group of fishers falling in this category is rather heterogeneous. Not only does it include fishers with small vessels, passive gear or low incomes working part-time but also fishers that are not required to fill in the logbook and therefore do not show up in the data from the official logbook database (VIRIS),[5] such as dredge fishers (of whom some use a larger vessel). The data for this part of the fleet is collected by means of a survey as opposed to in the case of other fleet segments where data is available in e-logbooks, or as calculated through quotas or at auctions. The survey is sent to all skippers owning vessels that fall into the remaining category of coastal fisheries.

The research institute IMARES is responsible for the collection of biological fisheries data pertaining to the main Dutch fishing fleets. For this data-collection IMARES is restricted to standards that make sense in a European context, resulting in less visibility of small-scale fisheries. This is the case for a number of reasons: (1) data is often projected to maps built on so-called ICES[6] rectangles representing

[5] In this database, information is available on effort and landings for all vessels that have to fill in a European logbook.

[6] ICES stands for International Council for the Exploitation of the Seas.

2500 square km, which is a large-scale setting that does not link up with the spatial scale used by coastal small-scale fisheries; (2) catches below 50 kg do not need to be registered in logbooks under EU regulation, again excluding some small-scale fishermen; (3) days at sea – as an expression of effort – is not compatible with 'soaking time' of gill netters; and (4) the Vessel Monitoring System is not required in the regulation for vessels under 12 m, resulting in small vessels not showing up when VMS data is gathered.

In sum, the practices for data collection have been tuned to capture the larger vessels of the Dutch fishing fleet. It leaves out many of the métiers considered to be small-scale in the Dutch context. The category 'remaining coastal fleet' therefore is quite a mixed bag and cannot be used one-on-one to describe small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands for a couple of reasons. Firstly, because the inland fishers, who generally are considered small-scale (personal communication with representative of small-scale fishers, 2014), are not included. Second, certain types of fisheries such as gill net fishing, now included in the 'remaining coastal fleet' category, are questionable 'small-scale'. Gill netting is a passive fishing technique but some companies use several kms of net. Third, shrimp fishers, applying bottom trawls, are also included if they earn less than 50 k euro per year.

Another important governability challenge for small-scale fishers, besides for data collection, is their representation. This will be discussed in the next section.

Representation of Small-Scale Fishers

Though fishery organizations play an important role in fisheries management, many small-scale fishers do not feel well represented by them, as they mainly focus their attention on large scale fishers, who form an important part of their organizations and who are less diverse. Other reasons barring small-scale fishers joining fishery organizations are the membership fee (of 700 euro per year), and the agreement that fish has to be sold through auction. The latter is not always favorable for small-scale fishers who want to distinguish their product from bulk sales. For these reasons, small-scale fishers have set up their own organizations, hoping for increased visibility, especially in the policy arena. There are several organizations for small-scale fishers:

- Vereniging van Vaste Vistuigvissers Noord (VVVN, Association of passive gear fishers in the North), established in 2010
- Combinatie van Beroepsvissers (CVB, Combination of professional inland fishers)
- Vereniging voor Belangenbehartiging Kleinschalige Kustvisserij (Association for the representation of small-scale coastal fisheries).
- VBHL: Vereniging van Beroepsmatige Handlijnvissers (Association of professional line fishers).

However, despite the presence of a number of organizations the impact in the policy arena is still limited. A ban on eel fishing for 3 months per year, for example, resulted in a general rule of not allowing the use of fyke nets during that period. This also had an adverse impact on other fishers using fyke nets to target species other than eel. Other issues that adversely affected small-scale fishers include a requirement (include a) to have a computer on board for digital registration (certain small boats cannot have a computer on board), and the need to have an installation on board that weighs fish. All of these requirements cost money and therefore it will be difficult for small-scale fishers. Hence, small-scale fishers want regulations that are more tailored to their characteristics, and diversity.

As one small-scale fisher explained to us:

> When the electronic logbook was implemented, the fishers (including myself) were consulted. Most of them were trawler fishers. There were trial versions. The inspection and builders and fishermen thought about it. However the logbook and the rules surrounding its use slowly became more tuned to the fishing reality of the trawl fleet. In our fishing reality we noticed that the E-logbook had to be on board of the vessel that was registered as fishing vessel. We however fish from a small rubber boat and have a mother vessel. In earlier times we had the license on our rubber boat, then we had to change that to our mother vessel –as we were storing our fish there at times – but now we were tempted to change that back to the rubber boat again. Sometimes we fish without the mother vessel, with some of our fishing grounds so nearby the harbor. But because of the regulations surrounding the e-logbook it now means that we have to use the mother vessel when we go fishing at all times, as we have to send a 'leave-the harbor' message (from outside the harbor!) before fishing even though we sometimes go by foot or use the rubber boat. (28-11-2013)

In addition, the Ministry of Economic Affairs has emphasized that it only wants to do business with one national organization that represents small-scale fishers and that future financial support depends on fishers meeting this condition (Visserijnieuws 2013). In 2013, the CVB, which had lost a great part of its members due to the eel closure, together with the PO IJsselmeer, and the small-scale coastal fishers took the initiative to establish a single national organization that represents all small-scale fishers in the Netherlands, both coastal and inland. In April 2014, the organizations received a subsidy from the government to further stimulate the establishment of one organization (personal communication with a representative of the CVB 2014).

The process is still ongoing. The initiators have not defined small-scale fisheries, but will most likely follow the métiers as shown in Table 32.1. Instead of excluding fishers, they will focus on a mindset, a code of conduct which their members will have to follow. Elements of this code of conduct will most likely include compliance with the law, introduction of digital registration in a way that is suitable for small-scale fishers, willingness to cooperate with research institutes, and to share knowledge. Other likely elements are transparency about one's catches, by-catches, and fishing practices, and finally the willingness to fish according to Corporate Social Responsibility guidelines, such as safety on board and good working conditions (personal communication with a representative of the CVB 2014).

To Define or Not to Define?

In addition to the governability challenges due to the diversity of small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands as described above, we raise a question as to whether it is necessary for the governability of small-scale fisheries to define small-scale fishers, and if so, how this has to be done. Defining the small-scale fisheries sector is a challenge in itself, as 'the boundaries of small-scale fisheries are not at all clear and the term encompasses different characteristics from setting to setting' (Johnson 2006, 748). Therefore, "a common view is that definitions and comparisons are impossible, claiming that natural and social systems are too complex and that each individual fishery and fishing community is unique and distinctively different from others" (FAO 2003; Johnson 2006 in Carvalhoa et al. 2011).

Johnson et al. (2005, 73) argue that instead of defining small-scale fisheries by using technical demarcations, such as vessel length, it would make more sense to take a closer look at the various attributes underlying different categories of fishers, and linking them conceptually. Attributes such as social organization, technological intensity of fishing and speed and coverage of operation reflect the dynamics of fish capture. Complexity lies in the interactions between these attributes seen over time (Johnson 2006).

However, from an institutional perspective a definition seems to be needed to develop or implement fisheries policy. The European Commission (EC), for example, defined small-scale fisheries as *fishing carried out by fishing vessels of an overall length of less than 12 m and not using towed gear* (EC 2006), in order to be able to allocate subsidies. In the Dutch case, the EC definition would imply that most gillnet fishers would be excluded, as well as small-scale trawling. Most NGOs might see this as a good thing as these fisheries are often critiqued for their negative environmental impact. Also some small-scale fishers that work with a mother vessel (>12 m), from which they depart to go fishing on smaller boats (<12 m), would be excluded.

The FAO, with their recently developed guidelines for small-scale fisheries, abstained from providing a global definition and instead left it to individual countries to do so. This means that locally (or country) specific definitions are needed. In turn the variations in local definitions will possibly trigger discussions worldwide about the locally accepted images and values of small-scale fisheries.

Such discussion could be advantageous to fishers as their visibility will increase. Not having a clear definition for small-scale fisheries has had repercussions for data-collection and representation as we have seen. To solve the problem of representation, it might be useful for small-scale fishers to define themselves (in relation to 'others'). This can also assist them in becoming a partner to government, whilst at the same time increasing their influence on policy-making. Of course the process of defining, including and excluding might also have other consequences. By defining themselves as *small-scale* it might help them to link up with other small-scale fleets in the EU, to together influence policy at the EU level – which in the long run might have positive consequences also in terms of data collection procedures.

Table 32.3 Characteristics of the small-scale fishery in the Netherlands as seen by the small-scale fishers

Attributes	Explanation
Vessel	The combination of fishing technique and the number/length of nets/hooks used
	Low catch capacity
Management	Weather dependency
Fishery	The number of fishers in a fleet segment (thousands of shell pickers is questionably small-scale)
	Trips of 1 day
Location	Fishing area (small area that is being fished)
	Fishing close to the coast
Finances	Low capital investments (mainly private money)
Fisher	The owner should be actively fishing
	Size of the crew (max the owner, and one crew member)
Market	Fish is often sold to local markets, restaurants or specialized fish shops (organic)
	Whether the fisher is active in the marketing of the catch
	Focus on quality instead of quantity of the product
Environment	Low environmental impact

In order to find out more about the characteristics of Dutch small-scale fisheries and fishers perception as to what this constitutes we conducted interviews with 16 small-scale fishers from the remaining coastal fisheries group, and organized a focus group meeting with members of the knowledge circle of small-scale fisheries. In this meeting, we presented a table with potential characteristics of small-scale fisheries on the x-axis, and métiers on the y-axis. The attributes were based on Johnson's (2006), which we expanded with attributes that related more to the Dutch context

The majority of the consulted fishers agreed to these characteristics. The only characteristic that they found questionable was the length of the vessel. Some felt that small-scale fisher boats should be limited to 8 or 9 m, some said below 12 m, and others said below 15 m, depending on the size of their own boat. Others mentioned that the size of the vessel does not matter at all. In Table 32.3, those characteristics that small-scale fishers deemed relevant to define small-scale fisheries are shown.

One of the interview questions pertained to whether fishers consider a definition of small-scale fisheries relevant. However, in order to avoid steering the discussion too much, it was left to the fishers to explain why such a definition was relevant, and with what purpose in mind. The majority of the 16 interviewees thought it was in their interest to define small-scale fisheries, as in their opinion it could help develop regulations, which are better tailored to their needs. Two fishers gave an example:

> For eel we need an increase of mesh size for example from 34 to 35 cm. (fisher 2)

> Yes it is necessary, because of the regulation. I think we should only have small-scale fisheries. Until five years ago everything went well, but then large-scale fishers also started to fish for sea bass, and they are much less selective in their way of fishing (fisher 9)

A definition can empower them, and clearly distinguish small-scale fishers from other fishers which could result in beneficial outcomes for them:

> (…) It is a positive term, just like artisanal (fisher 1)

> (…) It helps to make a distinction between large and small-scale. Overall small-scale fisheries is less damaging for the environment. (fisher 3)

> (…) We need to distinguish ourselves from the rest. We reinvest our money, do not extract wages, and have the same yield with less effort. (fisher 5)

However, a definition means that choices have to be made, and that sometimes people are excluded that are now included and vice versa. It also means that hidden values and images are being made explicit, leading to potentially difficult discussions (for instance the aspect of family-owned businesses). Coming up with a definition of what is small-scale in the Dutch situation in fact means re-assessing the whole fishing sector. Many of the characteristics that were seen as important by small-scale fishers can only get meaning in relation to other aspects (for example 'closeness to the coast' – how close?; fishing area; and the number of fishers in a fleet segment). Related to this is the question *who* should be involved in (re)defining Dutch (small-scale) fisheries as we have seen that the mere exercise of defining results in discussions about who is in and who is out, what are the underlying principles of our fishing system and what implicit images do we have of our various fisheries.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have argued that the relative invisibility of the small-scale fishing sector in the Netherlands, its diversity, lack of representation at the governance level, and the 'preference' for specialization within the governing system impacts on the governability of small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands. Although Dutch small-scale fishers are empowering themselves through the market (via labels and local market access), which in turn has had an influence on government policies, in general Dutch small-scale fisheries receive little attention from policy and management. This, for instance, results in rules and regulations that are not fit for small-scale fisheries. As lately attention for small-scale fisheries in the EU as well as worldwide has increased, it is timely for the Netherlands to develop a perspective as to what small-scale fisheries are in the Dutch context. It is important to realize that developing a definition is not a 'neutral' activity but requires choices being made. It can have emancipating effects for some, and might be seen as threatening the status quo for others. One of the discussions that might need to take place is with regard to the practice of ITQs on small-scale vessels.

Small-scale fisheries are part of what has been termed a 'rest category', a direct result of the fact that the fisheries governing system is tailored to specialized, and large-scale, mostly quota based fisheries. The *implicit* image of small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands seems to be exactly that; an activity 'en marge' of the main fleets, in contrast to the image of small-scale fisheries in the reformed Common Fisheries Policy where 'an important role' is envisioned for small-scale fisheries. Whether the latter image will stand when the topic is discussed nationally in an *explicit* way remains to be seen.

The governability of the small-scale fishing sector in the Netherlands is threatened by the diversity in the sector both in métiers and in representation. A diverse category requires more attention from policy makers, as general rules cannot be applied. Control and enforcement is also more difficult to arrange. Seen in the light of the 'less rules motto' it is clear that the governing system is not in favor of adding complexity.

Figure 32.2 shows how the interaction between the governing system in the Netherlands and the system-to-be-governed plays out in terms of the government's choice to not have a specific policy directed towards small-scale fisheries (resulting in a lack of a coherent small-scale fisheries policy). It can almost be seen as a self-reinforcing vicious circle. As data-collection is steered by the needs of policy, and as the government does not feel the need to develop a coherent policy for small-scale

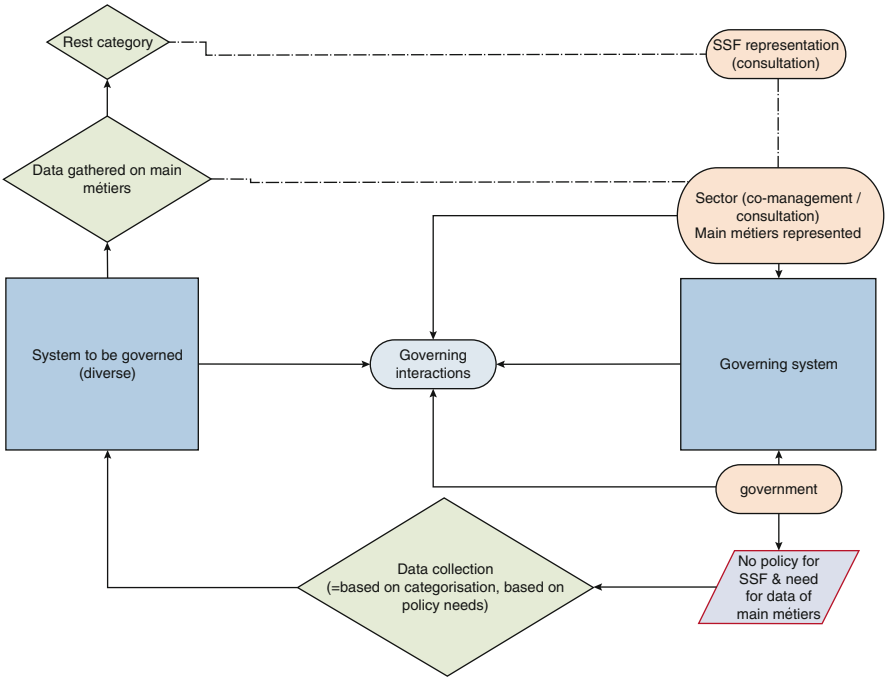

Fig. 32.2 The interaction between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed

fisheries, small-scale fishers are lumped together in a rest category, reinforcing their non-visibility, which is further strengthened by the difficulties of getting an organized representative body for themselves.

Categorizing small-scale fisheries in such a way that is meaningful for small-scale fishers will help them become more visible, especially if the clustering is not only 'on paper' but also in terms of actual representation. The difficulty, however, is to come up with a useful definition of small-scale fisheries with clear and meaningful demarcations, as many of the possible categorizations could have adverse impacts on some sub-métiers such as, for example, small-scale shrimp fishers or large scale gill-netters. It can therefore be helpful to make use of several definitions (i.e. per sub-métier), thereby doing justice to the diversity of the small-scale fishery category.

It has become clear that small-scale fishers are in favor of discussing a definition of small-scale fisheries – so as to increase the attention given at the policy level for small-scale fisheries. The government is, however, less interested as it does not think focusing on small-scale fisheries adds value to policy which already focuses on sustainability regardless of scale. From an institutional perspective a definition at the European level would be needed if the Netherlands were aiming to profit from subsidies for small-scale fisheries through the European Fisheries Fund. To conclude, a discussion on the definition of small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands would imply deliberating upon the current set-up of the Dutch fleet and the relevance of certain boundaries, as well as discussing research practices and policy perspectives. It might result, for instance, in a new perspective on specialization versus diversity, as although diversity provides governability challenges it also adds robustness to the ever changing system-to-be-governed.

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