

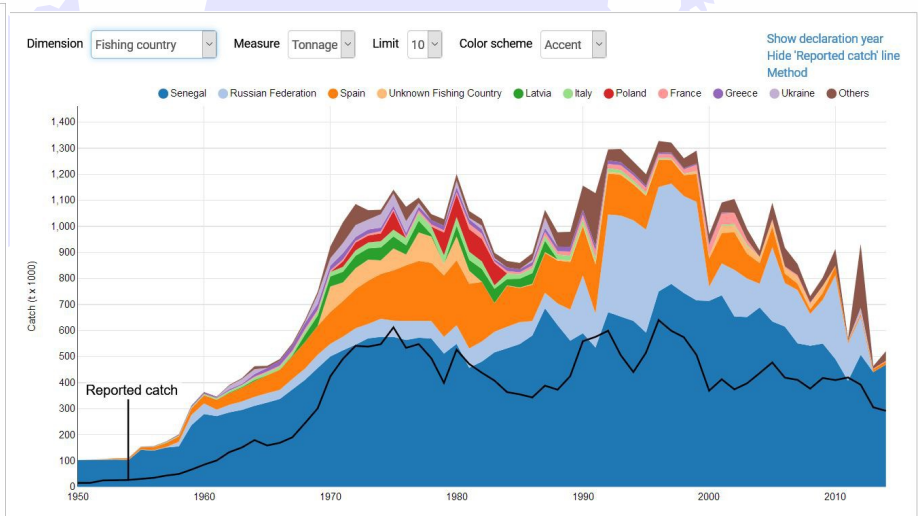
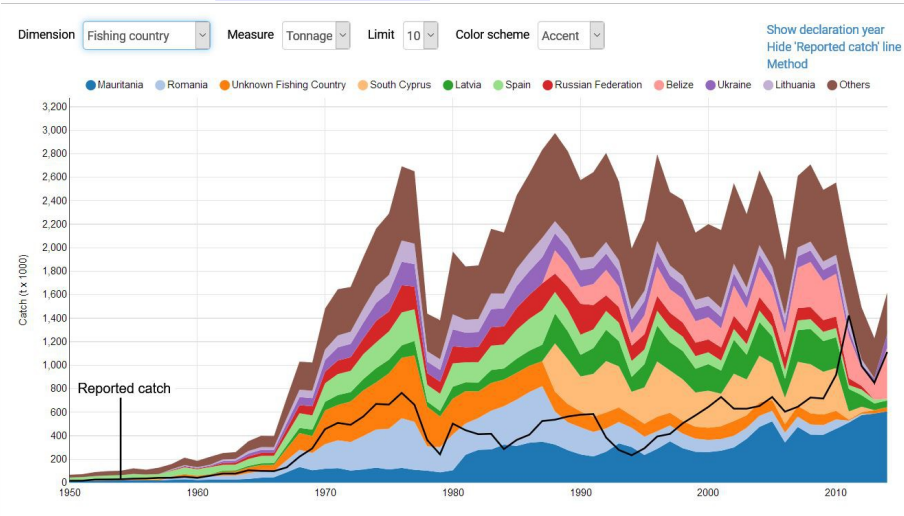
A light blue silhouette of a world map is centered in the background of the slide.

# Feminisation of poverty in artisanal fisheries in West Africa

Aliou Sall  
Mundus maris  
Sciences and Arts for Sustainability asbl

# How conditions have changed (1)

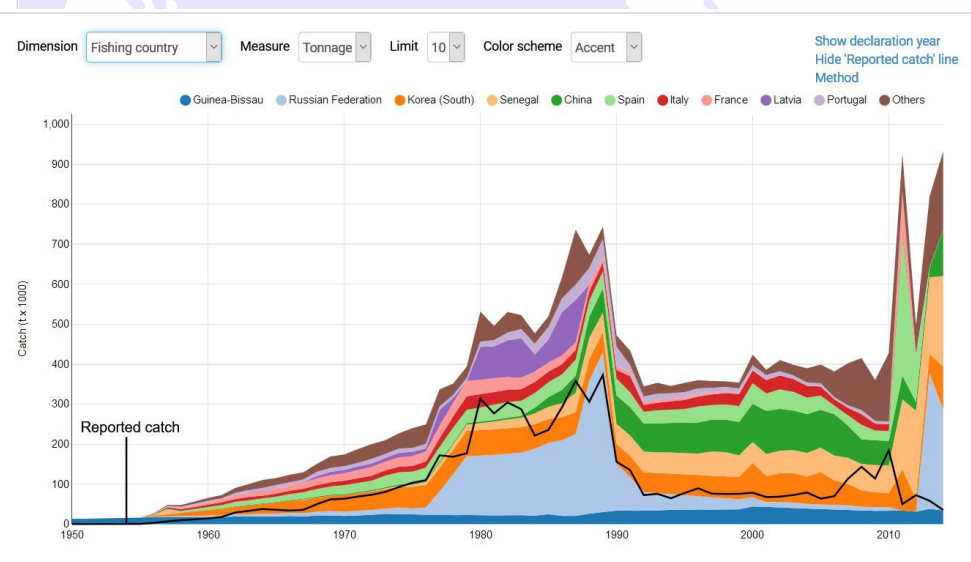
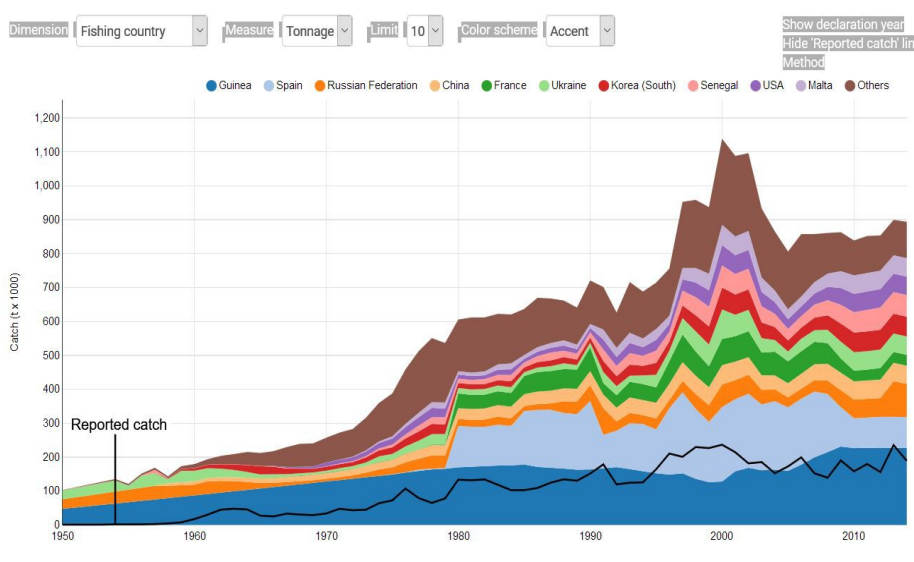
Poor numbers in national accounting systems on composition of catches and fleets – more than 50% of actual extractions in the North-West African sub-region were not officially recorded (black line in graphs of catch reconstructions by SAU)



Different fleets exploit the waters of the EEZ Mauritania (left) and Senegal (right) - note the differences in scale -

# How conditions have changed (2)

Poor numbers in national accounting systems on composition of catches and fleets – more than 50% of actual extractions in the North-West African sub-region were not officially recorded (black line in graphs of catch reconstructions by SAU)



Different fleets exploit the waters of the EEZ  
Guinea (left) and Guinea Bissau (right)  
- note the differences in scale -

# What empirical evidence do we find?

Examination of the evidence in three steps

- (1) the basis and articulation of their former high social status,
- (2) indicators of changing conditions leading to selective impoverishment of women that underpin the erosion of their status, and
- (3) discuss a number of women-specific initiatives to cope with or adapt to this new context.



# Women family entrepreneurs

In the past, women family entrepreneurs had almost exclusive control over certain segments of the value chain even as small-scale fisheries started tapping into international markets.

Their strength was the marketing of high value fresh fish and the artisanal processing sub-sectors.

Thanks to the revenues from these two activities and alternative savings schemes, women succeeded in establishing themselves in pivotal roles to meet the financing needs of fishermen, upstream and downstream the harvesting activities.





# Resource declines affect business conditions of women family entrepreneurs

When resources were abundant living was good in coastal fishing communities along the West African coast.

Women tended to be the managers of family enterprises, prefinancing fishing trips of the men folk and thus ensuring access to the catches at good prices for processing and sale and reinvesting profits in the family.

Resource rarefaction made upfront finance much higher: bigger boats, higher horse-power engine, fuel and supplies for longer trips.



Example Ms Barry, Boulbinet, Conakry - Guinea

# External investment affects business conditions of women family entrepreneurs

Massive influx of capital both in industrial fishing in direct competition to artisanal operations and investment of rich people from outside traditional fishing in new bigger boats and more sophisticated equipment raised stiff competition to the business model of family enterprises.

Women did not have access to affordable credit losing out.

More affluent local clients also raised stakes on freshness and hygiene, which women could meet only with difficulty - difficult market access.

Example Ms Sarr, Hann, SN.



# Coping strategies

The strategies women often adopt in these circumstances is to group their limited purchasing power for buying raw material and redistribute for individual sales as best they can.

Latest development: emergence of auctioning systems to access raw material.

Saving schemes for covering investment and running costs in addition to more limited schemes to cover outlays for festivities, school fees and/or health expenses (in the absence of insurance schemes).





# Gradual change so far – some expectations in the SSF Academy

We note that more girls go to school thus raising hope of more life choices, even though school drop outs remain high in fishing communities.

The recent launch of the SSF academy in Senegal is a contribution to support improving livelihoods through a platform of critical reflection, co-production of knowledge, empowerment and innovation.

Investing in people is key.

Supporting the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and use the political consensus around SDGs to build momentum.

Add value to coping strategies already under development.



Académie de la Pêche artisanale au Sénégal  
Session inaugurale, le 14 novembre 2018  
à l'Agence universitaire de la Francophonie



**Thanks for your attention**

More info on

[www.mundusmaris.org](http://www.mundusmaris.org)

[aliou@mundusmaris.org](mailto:aliou@mundusmaris.org)