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Abstract

**Assessing the concept of communities of practice for enabling a sustainable transition of the mussel culture in the Dutch Wadden Sea \***

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The Dutch mussel fishery is currently involved in a transition. The transition concerns the mussel seeds fishery – traditional bottom trawling is step by step replaced by mussel seed collector technology. In this transition a high degree of interaction between policy makers, environmental organizations, industry, and scientists is required to find a balance between different stakes. Because of the different stakeholder involved in this transition process, different types and sources of knowledge play a role. This paper explores whether the concept of *communities of practice* can play a role in the establishment of sustainable mussel seed fishery. The concept of communities of practice stresses the role of social learning, which implies that learning is not only a mental activity but also happens between members of a community. We elaborate on key issues/problems that affect the transition, and aim to draft possible objectives/activities which could be addressed by the community. The paper concludes that the operationalization of the concept of communities or practice may facilitate the articulation of critical questions concerning knowledge management processes and the sustainable transition.

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