



# Situated transformations of women and gender relations in small-scale fisheries and communities in a globalized world

Katia Frangoudes<sup>1</sup> · Siri Gerrard<sup>2</sup> · Danika Kleiber<sup>3</sup>

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## Abstract

The need to uncover, interrogate, and integrate women's contributions to fisheries in research and development has never been clearer. As coastal and fisheries management continues to look to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, as frameworks and mandates, gender equity and equality have become a central concern. To fill the still existing gap of documentation and theoretical engagement, in this thematic collection, we gather together voices from researchers and practitioners from around the world, with one overarching common approach of using a gender lens to examine the relationship between humans and aquatic resources. Drawing on Donna Haraway's classic feminist concept of situated knowledges, we examine the many and varied approaches researchers are using to engage with the intersection of gender and fisheries. Beginning and ending with two reviews that examine where gender and fisheries has come from, and where it is going, this thematic issue includes case studies from 10 countries, engaging in the topic at various scales (individual, household, national, institutional etc.), and using multiple methodological approaches. Taken together, these pieces explore the mechanism by which women's contribution to fisheries are overlooked and provide direct evidence to contest the persistent invisibility of women in fishing, fisheries labor, and fisheries decision-making. Going beyond the evidence of women's contributions, the authors go further to examine different coastal contexts, intersectional identities such as age, and explore gender transformative approaches to fisheries development.

**Keywords** Women · Gender gap · Aquatic resources · Global coasts

## Introduction

Welcome to the second issue of the thematic collection "(En)gendering Change in Small-Scale Fisheries

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✉ Katia Frangoudes  
Katia.Frangoudes@univ-brest.fr

Siri Gerrard  
siri.gerrard@uit.no

Danika Kleiber  
danika.kleiber@jcu.edu.au

<sup>1</sup> Univ Brest, Ifremer, CNRS, UMR 6308, AMURE, IUEM, 29280 Plouzané, France

<sup>2</sup> Center for Women and Gender Research/Department of Social Sciences, UiT The Arctic, University of Norway, Postbox 6050 Langenes,, 9037 Tromsø, Norway

<sup>3</sup> ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies and WorldFish, James Cook University, Room 119, Building DB032, Townsville, QLD 4811, Australia

and Fishing Communities in a Globalized world" of Maritime Studies entitled "Situated Transformations of Women and Gender Relations in Small-Scale-fisheries and Communities in a Globalized World" of Maritime Studies. Here, we build on the first issue of the thematic collection "(En)gendering Change in Small-Scale Fisheries and Fishing Communities in a Globalized World" (Frangoudes and Gerrard 2018). Together, these two issues illustrate the diversity, as well as core commonalities of gender relationships and their connections to household and family life, labor, governance, and well-being in communities that depend on aquatic resources. The thematic collection highlights emerging theoretical and practical approaches being used to research and understand the intersection of gender and fisheries.

The main objective of the thematic collection is to bring together examples of feminist-based research and work, illustrating a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches that examine the material, social, and cultural realities of women and men in fisheries and marine resource-related activities. It also explores the underlying construction (and at

times reconstruction) of gender as a social and cultural category in various coastal contexts.

The inspiration for this thematic collection emerged from a network of researchers who for years have recognized a gap in the understanding of gender and fisheries. A need for greater understanding of the intersection of gender and fisheries has, in part, been driven by new policy innovations. Examples given here are the UN's (2015) sustainable development goals, especially goal 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. In addition, there are the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines; FAO 2015), which includes gender equality and equity as a core principle (Kleiber et al. 2017; Said and Chuenpagdee 2019).

The two issues of this thematic collection have been supported by the Too Big To Ignore project and its cluster "Women & Gender in Fisheries," and the Working Group "Gendered Seas" of Ocean Past Platform (OPP) IS1403 COST Action, of European Cooperation in Sciences & Technology. Contributions have come from researchers and practitioners from a diversity of disciplines and continents, but with a shared interest in women's lives and gender relations in coastal areas. The outcome of the thematic collection is 24 articles representing novel research from diverse disciplinary, practitioner, and geographic contexts.

## Diverse approaches in theory and practice

The 13 articles in this issue give insights into empirical characteristics and processes in the field of women, gender, fisheries, and coastal communities, representing work from 10 countries spanning Africa (Malawi and Tanzania), the Americas (Mexico and Peru), Asia (Indonesia and Japan), Europe (Portugal, Spain, and Norway), and Oceania (Solomon Islands). An article with a global scope and a few articles encompassing two or more countries are also included.

A uniting theme throughout this issue is the use of a "gender lens," or in some cases an explicit feminist approach to fisheries research, policy, and practice. These include various analytical perspectives (Alonso Población and Niehof, 2019; Williams, 2019a, b) and concepts such as social relations, or social networks to explore gender in fisheries contexts (Delaney et al. 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Medard et al. 2019). Some articles articulate the barriers to, and breakthroughs of political change (Pettersen 2018; Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019; Neilson et al. 2019) while others focus on the practice of development and activism (Lawless et al. 2019; Neilson et al. 2019; Stacey et al., 2019; Torre et al. 2019). All this variety attests to

the issue's rich mixture of theory and practice, and their interaction.

In this issue, most of the articles draw primarily on qualitative data collection such as participant observation, interviews, and focus group methods. The use of different methodologies and techniques provide thick descriptions of the interactions between gender, people, households, places, and institutions (Delaney et al. 2019; Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Lawless et al. 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Medard et al. 2019; Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Pettersen 2018; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019). Stacey et al. (2019) also used systematic review techniques to analyze the gender sensitivity of fisheries development projects.

Feminist methods are diverse, and mixed method approaches are often intentionally used to explore multiple perspectives on a single topic (Alonso Población and Niehof, 2019; Delaney et al. 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Pettersen 2018; Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Williams 2019b; Stacey et al. 2019; Lawless et al. 2019). This diversity of approaches is seen both among, and within, the articles in this issue. Participatory action research (Neilson et al. 2019), and other forms of research aimed at examining development projects is used to document while simultaneously creating opportunities to enact change (Torre et al. 2019). Finally, a quantitative statistical method is used together with participant observation to track the number of women as registered fishers over time and to highlight the gendered impacts of fisheries policy (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019). The strong representation of qualitative approaches may reflect disciplinary proclivities of the authors but may also point to the general lack of readily available sex-disaggregated fisheries data to enable quantitative analysis and conclusions about gender and fisheries.

The issue begins and ends with sweeping reviews of the gender and fisheries literature. Alonso Población and Niehof (2019) explore the gendered metaphors that determine how women's contributions are perceived, acknowledged, and supported. The article of Williams (2019b) outlines a roadmap for future research on gender in fisheries.

The different articles apply multiple and often interacting scales, also reflecting the diversity of themes found in this issue. While some authors focus on intra-household dynamics (Delaney et al. 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Pettersen 2018), others examine institutions such as physical or transboundary markets (Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Medard et al. 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019), organizations (Neilson et al. 2019; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019), or projects (Stacey et al., 2019; Torre et al. 2019). In other cases, the unit of analysis is at the country level to examine the gendered impacts of national policies, juxtaposed to women's responses to such policies (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019).

## The power of gender research in context: situated knowledges

Looking at the diversity and specificity of the articles in this issue, the introduction presented here tries to relate the examples of fisheries and coastal communities to Haraway's (1988) concept of situated knowledges. Haraway's concept gives an opportunity to acknowledge and understand the contingency of women's position in the world, emphasizing that the subjects, in this issue, mostly focused on women, but often in relation to men or larger gender norms and structures, can produce knowledge with stronger objectivity compared to neutral observers. This kaleidoscope of perspectives, when taken together, can offer a richer understanding than simply flattening the world into numbers meant to be described and compared from an untouchable (read objective) perch. Haraway (1988: p. 590) expresses herself as follows:

“Situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular. The question in feminism is about objectivity as positioned rationality. Its images are not the products of escape and transcendence of limits (the view from above) but the joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions-of views from somewhere.”

Blaise et al. (2013: p.13) inspired by Haraway elaborate:

“This means making room for and attending to all the ‘objects’ (human and nonhuman) under study, as well as considering the researchers involved in these inquiries. From this perspective, the researcher no longer stands from a safe distance, ‘objectively “doing” research “on” objects’ but is researching from somewhere....”

In fisheries research, the natural resources, climate change, fishing gears, boats, ports, houses, etc. are nonhuman “objects.” Human “objects” are associated with fishers, other household members, traders, politicians, and other human beings in the field. Blaise et al. (2013: p.13) also continue: “While situated knowledges highlight the material, social and political conditions that enable knowledges, this also comes with responsibility for these knowledges in all their diversities.” In other words, the actors of different situations and contexts have to be responsible, for example, for not overexploiting resources or for improving women's and men's living and working conditions.

Like Haraway (1988) in her contributions to a feminist theory of science, Davis and Nadel-Klein (1997: p. 50-51), two of the pioneers in international research about women

within fishing communities and fisheries, bring gender to a sophisticated and abstract theoretical level. Davis and Nadel-Klein emphasize the importance of giving good descriptions as a basis for improving women's situation and suggest three different frameworks. The first framework is that the lives of women should be studied as separate and distinct, treated as oppositional or complementary from the life of men. By doing so, the domestic and public dichotomies could overlap and reflect those of land and sea. Their second framework concerns the historical construction of the roots of power, powerlessness, and empowerment. Gender analysis can relate to systemic models of inequality, such as colonialism, global capitalism, race, and class, representing the macro-level, often Marxist/materiel models of production and reproduction (Davis and Nadel-Klein 1997). Such an approach is relevant, since many of the fishery societies and communities are socially marginal and powerless. While these two frameworks, according to Davis and Nadel-Klein, deal with gender as a binary phenomenon, they also suggest a third framework, which aims to deconstruct such polarities by challenging gender as critical reflections to our own androcentric and Eurocentric biases. Davis and Nadel-Klein, inspired by the anthropologist Henrietta Moore (1988), argue for studies that advocate renewed attention to ethnographic intensive micro-levels of research, which show that there can be multiple concepts of power and value within a given cultural context as well as across culture. The diverse contributions in this thematic issue demonstrate such use of multiple concepts and approaches.

Davis and Nadel-Klein argue, as Haraway does, that the search for universal hypotheses and global theorizing about gender as a source of stratification is premature. Instead, women and men should be portrayed as thinking social actors with different roles, statuses, and positions within the power structure and belief systems of their particular societies. Gender must be studied from an interpretive, reflexive, and highly personal perspective. When they wrote their article (Davis and Nadel-Klein, 1997), they enthusiastically referred to the literature on Oceania and South East Asia because of its contributions to the body of thought emphasizing that these studies expose the Western bias that treats gender as a discrete rather than a continuous phenomenon. The articles in this thematic collection give examples that bring new knowledge about women in fisheries and coastal communities, within the context of gender relations in fisheries, and broader gender norms and cultures.

The process of reframing knowledge production through the “joining of partial views and halting voices” highlights previously missing and subordinate perspectives (Haraway 1988). In a fisheries and coastal context, as evident from the articles in this thematic collection, it is still the perspectives of women, as objects of inquiry in fisheries, which are missing.

The shift from women in development (WID) to gender and development (GAD) has demanded an expanded scope of enquiry from a sole focus on women (see for example Geisler et al. 1999, Frangoudes and Gerrard 2019). We have gone from documenting women in isolation to understanding the gendered relationships that shape women's and men's lives, but the reporting is still framed around the missing perspectives of women.

## Contributions, benefits, and transitions

Several themes that run through the articles highlight some of the most pressing issues in gender and fisheries research and development. In the following sections, we will examine the multiple perspectives presented in this issue and beyond within three broad themes: (1) women's contributions to fisheries, (2) equitable distribution of fisheries' benefits, and (3) transitions and transformations. These loosely follow the progression of gender and fisheries scholarship through the years, in this issue laid out by Williams (2019a): (1) noticing androcentrism (1990–1998), (2) investigating omissions and adding women (2001–2004), and (3) adding gender, politicizing hierarchies—intersectionality and post-colonial critique (2007–2018).

## Women's contributions to fisheries

Women's labor in fishing (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019), the fisheries value chain in general (Pettersen 2018; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019), and fish marketing in particular (Medard et al. 2019; Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019) are repeated areas of inquiry in this issue. Some case studies extend beyond the value chain to also include women's contributions to resilience, collective action, and research (Delaney et al. 2019; Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Neilson et al. 2019; Torre et al. 2019). Others look even further to interrogate why women's direct and indirect contributions to fisheries are persistently devalued and overlooked (Alonso Población and Niehof, 2019; Neilson et al. 2019; Williams, 2019a, b).

Alonso Población and Niehof (2019) point out that women's fishing labor, in multiple contexts, is often made invisible through limiting metaphors that overlook work that does not fit into a neat binary of women on land, and men at sea. Women's intertidal fishing is not counted as fishing, and women's work on boats is seen as an anomaly that can be overlooked. In contexts as diverse as Norway, Malawi, and Peru, it is still clear that there are gender norms, cultural expressions, or symbolic barriers that limit women's involvement in certain types of fishing (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Delaney et al. 2019).

In Norway, gender-blind quota policies associated with men's dominance in fishing politics coupled with gender practices and symbolic meaning surrounding the care of young children as well as other social, cultural, and political barriers mean in practice that women are less likely to be boat or quota owners, and that they make up just a small proportion of registered fishers (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019). In Malawi, Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara (2019) also point to gender norms as limitations to women's participation in fishing. In this case, the perception is that the lake is an unsafe environment, and thereby an unsuitable place for women to be. However, in Malawi, there are examples of women that defy gender norms and fish with their crew, thereby giving them more decision-making power over the catch process (Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019). Yet in Peru, women are still banned from fishing boats due to the shared constructive meanings of the sea as not only female, but also a jealous female. If women are on the boat, the sea will punish the fishers (Delaney et al. 2019). Established cultural knowledge in this area plays an important role in understanding women and men's working roles in fishing and coastal communities.

Expanding the view of fisheries to include the entire value-chain shifts us away from assumptions of a male-dominated sphere, and in this issue, this is exemplified by the role of women as brokers, fish traders at local or international markets, entrepreneurs, managers, and fisheries advocates. In other words, through their direct and indirect roles, women contribute to livelihoods, communities, and fisheries at large. In Japan, for example, women in seaweed farming households create different high-quality products from seaweed, thereby increasing its value. The emphasis of the quality of their products over quantity is also branded and marketed on-line (Delaney et al. 2019). The production and marketing of fishery products often requires new skills such as using social media to identify and reach a national market to sell their products. Soejima and Frangoudes (2019) mention the diversification of household and community activities developed by entrepreneurial groups of women. Creating new products is a strategy responding to different objectives such as promoting local fish and employment, and in parallel, strengthening and revitalizing communities.

Petersen (2018) similarly looks at the role of women in the family business of fisheries, but from the geographic context of Norway. She finds that family strategies to fishing, where a husband and wife are a team with defined roles, persist, but mostly in small-scale fisheries. By contrast, wives and daughters of fish farming households often act as professional partners, employees, owners, board members, or managers and have formal roles as shareholders of the business.

Medard et al. (2019) also examine women's contributions to fish processing and marketing of Lake Victoria Nile Perch fisheries in Tanzania. In contrast to Delaney et al. (2019) and

Pettersen's (2018) focus on household value chain strategies, Medard et al. (2019) detail the shifting regional and global trading relationships that have benefited some women (foreign women traders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC), while marginalizing others (local Tanzanian women traders and marketers). By comparing these two different groups of women, and their marketing strategies, Medard et al. (2019) illustrate interacting and enabling factors that are necessary for women to not only succeed in fish marketing, but also in consolidating their dominance of the market. These factors include access to capital to purchase larger volumes of fish, access to knowledge of market prices and fish availability, and the ability to build alliances with influential middlemen and brokers to influence network rules and regulations in their favor. While Tanzanian women struggled to make a living from the fisheries trade, a few DRC women accumulated substantial wealth and became prominent traders in the market, which men previously dominated.

Pedroza-Gutiérrez (2019) focuses on women's entrepreneurship in the Mercado del Mar in Guadalajara and shows the involvement of Mexican women in the value chain. Women, who were previously unable to occupy leadership positions in the market, are now running small- and medium-sized trade businesses. These women are supported in these positions by family networks and have often inherited the enterprise or were financially supported by their fathers and husbands to start-up in the industry. Women have also attained top management positions in the Mercado del Mar including the position of president and the director of the association leading the market. The level to which women influence the decisions remains unknown, however, since it is usually the men who travel to the ocean landing sites to directly negotiate fish prices with fishers.

Women's contribution within the fishing household has been and continues to be invisible and like all forms of labor varies over time and space. In fisheries contexts, as with other labor contexts, women's tasks including caring for and socializing children, producing and maintaining the fisher's clothing, cooking food for the family and the vessel deckhands, and responsibility for the administrative running of the fisheries enterprise (Gerrard 1983; Porter, 1991; Thiessen et al. 1992; Frangoudes 2011) are within this framing; these tasks are taken for granted and not valorized. Neilson et al. (2019) point out that women in fisheries with the least visibility are the unpaid collaborating spouses. Their invisibility is also internalized, as they frame their labor as "helping," rather than as "fishing." This was mirrored in the findings of Delaney et al. (2019) in Peru, where women who worked on land did not identify their domestic labor as direct support to their husbands' fishing. In Japan, Soejima and Frangoudes (2019) also point to the fact that women's work does not count, even if it is important for the household, the fisheries, and the communities: this is nothing new. Rosemary Firth doing fieldwork in

Malaya in the 1930s viewed women and their occupations in a Malay village as simply the complementary housekeeping side of men's work. Her husband, Raymond Firth, on his side, wrote the monograph about Malay Fishermen: Their peasant economy. Williams (2019b) who cites the Firths' work, concludes that such foci illustrate how women occupy a position as secondary actors in fishery economies.

## Equitable distribution of benefits

The diverse case studies presented here explore the importance of women's contributions by examining outcomes and benefits. The benefits derived from women's contributions to fisheries are described in material terms, such as increased income, or greater food security, (Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Medard et al. 2019), and increase in self-determination, or personal empowerment including leadership roles in markets (Medard et al. 2019, Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019), development projects (Torre et al. 2019), and political action (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019). They are also described in terms of personal empowerment by taking leadership roles in markets (Medard et al. 2019, Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara, 2019; Soejima and Frangoudes 2019), development projects (Torre et al. 2019), or political action (Gerrard and Kleiber 2019).

The gendered distribution of benefits is perhaps most directly studied in Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara (2019) case study from Malawi. They found that women in two fishing communities in Malawi dominate land-based fisheries labor, and in some cases, they own boats and fishing gear. They also sell fish in international markets. In these roles, and through their access to these markets, they are able to earn and control money. With this money, the women contribute to communities' well-being by bringing in items (such as food, clothes, cosmetics) from the market to their communities to be sold. They also increase the food security of their own household. A further benefit gained by women was through their participation in the Village Savings and Loans program, which helped them not only to obtain money but also to create networks. A final benefit may also be the increase in self-determination, or personal empowerment, although the effects are still sharply curtailed by gender norms.

Throughout this issue, the authors also analyze gender norms and other barriers to equity in the distribution of fisheries benefits. As Lawless et al. (2019) state "Gender norms are the attitudes and informal 'rules' that govern behavior considered to be appropriate, acceptable, or desirable for women and for men within a particular society" (Boudet et al. 2013). In many cases, the limitations on women are related to gender norms that prioritize women's reproductive labor. Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara (2019) also found that, in

Malawi, social norms surrounding marriage such as early marriages and polygamy, and domestic violence create barriers for women to be equal to men. In Norway, one factor that can limit women's participation in fishing, and thereby limit their competitiveness to own boats and quotas, is the lack of special regulations and policies in fisheries to alleviate women fishers' specific situations in fisheries (Gerrard & Kleiber 2019). There are, however, examples—such as Japan—that show how women, often married to fishermen, initiated actions and created women groups associated with Fisheries Cooperative Associations (FCA). The women became central in campaigning for reduced pollution, which was threatening their resources, as well as developing diversification opportunities. Despite their important role, women have not been empowered in the community decisions as Japanese fisheries law does not recognize the participation of women in decision-making, and women are not welcome as members of the male-dominated FCAs (Soejima and Frangoudes 2019).

Within a development context, ignoring gender creates gender-blind approaches. While these approaches may ignore gender, they can nonetheless have gendered implications. In Stacey et al. (2019), the assessment of 20 development projects in Indonesia found that all, but two, were gender-blind, with very little attention given to how gender would influence individual experiences, opportunities, and benefits. At best, the outcomes of the projects were gender neutral, but without paying any explicit attention to gender, these projects can easily end up reinforcing existing inequalities between men and women (FAO 2017). Lawless et al. (2019) further support this view with their agency approach to livelihood development projects in the Solomon Islands. The authors used the agency approach developed by Boudet (2013) in a case study “to emphasize the distinction between the sets of livelihoods available for women and men, and the differences in their capacity to exercise choice between and among these livelihood pursuits.” They found that the diversification of livelihood activities could increase women's labor burden. In the Azores Islands, Neilson et al. (2019) and in Mexico, Torre et al. (2019) both track the intricate relationships between research and development projects and the gender norms in the communities they are working with. Torre et al. (2019) demonstrate how women were included in sea-related projects initiated by governmental institutions and *Comunidad y Biodiversidad* (COBI, a Civil Society Organization). They describe how the projects boosted women's participation in a wide spectrum of activities including fishing, diving, whale-safaris, and marine resource monitoring. An interesting outcome is the support that local women received from female researchers (as role models) and their husbands who supported the women in developing new skills.

The participatory action research conducted by Neilson et al. 2019 made women's work visible, and women established associations, gained self-esteem, and gender

consciousness. In other words, they became actors in fisheries and fisheries governance, since they were recognized within fishing associations, among other villagers, and in public circles. However, recently, scientific knowledge has been prioritized over local knowledge and has once again excluded women as central fisheries actors.

### Looking to the future: new strategies in research and policies

The future of gender inclusive fisheries research and governance is a key concern of this issue. For example, many authors point to the continued need for reliable and comprehensive sex-disaggregated data throughout the fisheries value chain (Pedroza-Gutiérrez 2019; Gerrard and Kleiber 2019; Williams 2019b). This is also closely connected to developing and using methods that can include the contribution of women's (largely) unpaid domestic labor as a key part of fisheries labor. By focusing on female fishers in Norway, Gerrard and Kleiber (2019) demonstrate the need for more gender aware fishery policies. This is echoed by Soejima and Frangoudes (2019), who suggest that Japan's official national fisheries plans include women and their contributions to the fisheries sector and their communities. This inclusion would create gender-sensitive laws that could also benefit women. Williams (2019) also reflects on where feminist research currently stands drawing on the need for a gender lens, a concept that has inspired many feminist fishery researchers (Kleiber 2015; Harper 2013). Williams (2019) then goes on to explore where gender and fisheries should go next, emphasizing future research into “feminist fisheries political economy.”

Lawless et al. (2019) and Stacy et al. (2019) mention that a move towards gender transformative approaches are needed, for example, approaches that include reimagining and renegotiating gender norms. This was also echoed by Manyungwa-Pasani and Hara (2019), who found the need for changes to men's negative attitudes towards women working in fishing value chains. Gender transformative approaches that have focused on reshaping masculinities which subjugate women have been successful in other contexts (Kato-Wallace et al. 2016). Other authors have also emphasized the need for practical approaches to capacity building for gender to be integrated into fisheries development projects (Stacy et al. 2019).

### Final thoughts: gender research and perspectives

Donna Haraway (1988, p. 590) wrote that situated knowledges are about communities, not isolated individuals. She argued that joining partial views and halting voices represent a collective subject position that promises a vision of the

“means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions-of views from somewhere.” When the anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1992) asked for pioneering knowledge in development studies, he also expressed himself in the same direction as Haraway.

This implies, as already mentioned, a need for and a development of continuous situated and pioneering knowledges from different situations and different parts of the world. The reason is that fisheries, fishery policies, fishery cultures and women’s and men’s actions in fisheries are not stable but are continuously changing and creating different living and working conditions for coastal and fisheries populations.

In this thematic collection, like the previous one, there has been an effort to include the voices of researchers and practitioners throughout the world. However, we must still acknowledge the conditions that make it easier for researchers from Western and post-industrial countries to publish. Western researchers have for a long time defined the standard of what counts as publishable research, which predominantly includes English language standards. These barriers are then further compounded by open access fees, which are often beyond the capacity of women researchers outside and inside of Western institutions to afford. Without more women, especially from non-Western institutions, and a change in working and publishing conditions, these obstacles will continue, impeding the addition of Haraway’s partial views and halting voices to our understanding of fisheries. Therefore, as long as there are overarching institutions, formal and informal, that regulate fisheries and women’s and men’s lives, there will also be a need for good descriptions, analyses, and comparisons about women and gender relations in the varied fisheries and in the many coastal communities around the world.

As international, regional and national development frameworks (i.e. SDGs) and guidelines (i.e. SSF Guideline), increasingly call for the integration of women and gender equity and equality, the need for these diverse voices and situated knowledges are more pressing than ever. This must include knowledge about how gender shapes, and is shaped by fisheries, but also how the living and working conditions can be transformed in the direction where the women themselves want to go. This collection adds to the body of knowledge that can help shape a future that includes all people that contribute to and benefit from fisheries.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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