

Global governance/politics, climate justice & agrarian/social justice: linkages and challenges

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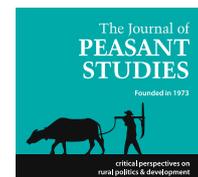
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Blue Growth and Ocean Grabbing: A Historical Materialist Perspective on Fisheries in East Africa

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Abstract

This paper introduces the concept of ocean grabbing by first exploring multiple crises of neoliberal capitalism which systematically destroys the environment and creates social inequality. Using the example of fishing, I want to show how capitalist core countries try to circulate their own crises of over-fishing and relocate it geographically into the periphery, which in turn creates piracy and migration flows towards the core countries. The concepts of “accumulation by dispossession” and “ocean grabbing” are applied to empirical examples in East Africa in order to exemplify the ongoing dispossession of small scale fisheries at lakes, inshore and offshore areas. The paper concludes that the emergence of a corporate (sea)food regime can be traced and that the challenges for terrestrial food sovereignty via land grabbing are equally relevant for seafood sovereignty and ocean grabbing.

1 Introduction – The Multiple Crises of Capitalism

In the last few years, the majority of the world population is witnessing the unfolding of multiple crises which are mutually dependent and reinforcing: economic crises (financial markets, unemployment, debt, inequality), political crises (democratic participation, legitimacy, stability), ecological crises (loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, water pollution and acidification, climate change, energy) and crises of social reproduction (gender relations, care, public services, social security, food) are threatening the life and livelihoods of billions of people globally. Whereas the bourgeois public sphere tends to trivialize the interrelations between these crises, by focusing on the economic sphere and addressing each crisis separately, it appears theoretically and politically important to sharpen the concept of crises and to understand its dynamics. Contrary to what Robert Cox calls “problem solving theory” as ahistorical, fragmentary, deductive and oversimplified approach that does not call into question existing power relations, critical theory attempts to provide a historical, holistic and inductive method that calls into question existing power relations of domination, their origins, institutions and consequences (Cox 1981).

Recently, critical scholars have tried to analyze the interconnections of these crises with different concepts: Görg (2003) identifies a socio-ecological *double crisis*; Gill (1993) and Moore (2001) identify a *triple crisis*; Satgar (2014) identifies a *fourfold crisis* in neoliberal capitalism; whereas Foster (2013) and others even talk about an *epochal crisis* which, like the Great Depression, implies a historical transition to a new mode of production. Brand (2009) and Demirovic et al (2011) identify *multiple crises* based on fossil-capitalist production and consumption patterns which were restructured as a neoliberal and imperial project in the last thirty years. Despite their different dimensions, dynamics and manifestations in time and space, the concept of multiple crises suggests that the aforementioned crises are not independent of each other. Their interconnections can be traced to historically-specific constellation of various mutually influencing crisis processes in neoliberal financial market capitalism which emerged after the crisis of Fordism in the 1970s and encompasses four central crisis complexes: the crisis of finance-dominated accumulation, the socio-ecological crisis, permanent crisis of reproduction as well as the crisis of parliamentary democracy (Demirovic et al, 2011:13). A central analytical question is therefore what is a crisis and for whom? As the term permanent crises for some parts of the population suggests, historical materialism and especially works inspired by the regulation approach (see Jessop and Sum 2006, Brand 2009, Demirovic et al 2011) conceptualize crises as being inherent in capitalism. Cyclical crises that occur in a rhythm of four to five years are differentiated from major crises which occur every 40 – 60 years when social contradictions are unloaded in structural crises (Demirovic et al 2011:11). Even though the inherent limitations (global warming, the risk of nuclear power technology, and the dependence on oil) of this fossilist-industrial production and way of life were already visible since the 1970s (Demirovic et al 2011: 18), the current mode of production and consumption has led to an ecological crisis that potentially threatens human survival.

Multiple Crises as window of opportunity – but for whom?

“Only a crisis - actual or perceived - produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable.” – Milton Friedman (2002: xiv).

If the conjunction of multiple crises challenges the continuation of dominant practices, crises emphasize the need for change and opens up possibilities for change. Crises can thus be understood as a window of opportunity which can be used by different forces to pursue their interests. Human progress is understood as the outcome of social struggle, which is non-deterministic, but does not take place under equal conditions. As Marx wrote, “men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past” (Marx 1852). Arguably, most crises since the 1970s were used by the dominant capital class to further assault regulations, democracy, common property ownership and state intervention in order to protect its citizens from market ravages. Crises tendencies in financial markets, the environment and societies have intensified since the neoliberal turn that

originates in the years 1978-1980 which Harvey calls “a revolutionary turning-point in the world’s social and economic history” (Harvey, 2005: 1). As the dominant post-war mode of Fordist mass production and the class compromise of the Keynesian welfare state went into crisis, the rise of neoliberal capitalism was possible and promoted further privatization, flexibilization of working time, the further commodification of essential areas of human life and the destruction of non-capitalist forms of production. During the neoliberal “passive revolution”, the very management of crises was geared towards free market solutions (Demirovic et al 2011: 18). Optimistic of technological silver bullets, global environmental management is solely focusing on the control of risks and subsequent costs, not on eliminating the causes. For example, the promotion of flex cropping and bio fuels in order to selectively address the energy crises in turn dispossesses peasant agriculture and contributes to hunger crisis. The crisis management thus becomes a substantial part of crises dynamics. Furthermore, social polarization and descent of the middle class in many countries of the global North and the marginalization of large sectors of the population and increased poverty, migration and wars in parts of the global south have increased political instability and intensified the reproduction crises. The economic crises in Europe (Greece, Italy, Ireland and Spain for example) have not led to a break with neoliberal policies, but the constellation of forces resulted in enforced austerity measures. Crises manifestations also bear the risk of the rise of right-wing populist tendencies as can be currently observed in Europe (France, Poland, Germany, Hungary) and lead to authoritarian government (Demirovic 2011: 25).

Consequently, the concept of multiple crises does not presuppose a structural or hegemonic crisis of neoliberal financial market capitalism (Demirovic et al 2011:14) which automatically leads to emancipatory social change. Rather major crises dynamics and intersections in the global north and global south shall be analyzed in order to identify emancipatory potential for progressive social change beyond the dominant interpretations and policies which are closely related to the interest in the maintenance of existing power relations.

Food Regime Analysis

A historical materialist conception of multiple crises with the case study of fisheries would be incomplete without the naming of crises tendencies identified in the third food regime and a theoretical justification to locate food at the center of the (re)production of capitalism itself. This task was done by Food Regime Analysis which was developed by Philip McMichael and Harriett Friedman based on concepts of World Systems Theory (Wallerstein, Hopkins), Regulation Theory (Aglietta, Lipietz, Jessop) and Regime theory and many scholars who extended the approach. Besides analyzing stable phases of capitalism, the approach increasingly takes into account contradictions, transition phases and struggles of social movements (Campbell and Dixon 2009). Food Regime Analysis (re)locates agriculture in the theoretical center of understanding society and capitalism and provided a new way for political economists to frame power relations and policy analyses in the agricultural and food sector (Campbell and Dixon 2009: 261). Whether food regime scholars seem to agree on the first (extensive, colonial, British centered) food regime from 1870 to 1914 and a thirty year long transition phase between 1914 and 1945 (that encompassed the first and second World War and the Great Depression), as well as the second, (intensive, US centered) food regime from 1945 to 1973, a debate has started whether a successive, post-fordist food regime has emerged since the 1980s or if the increased corporate influence is an “hangover” from the second food regime (Campbell and Dixon 2009). The crisis moment of the second food regime is seen as the multiple crises of 1973 that led to a decline in US hegemony and the neoliberal marginalization of the role of the government that was central before due to the Bretton Woods System in the management of currencies and agriculture. In the 21st century, the increasingly recognized interlinkages of climate change, industrial agriculture, financial crisis and world food crisis underscore the analytic currency of Food Regime analysis (McMichael 2009). In this paper, I will apply McMichael’s conceptualization of the Third Food Regime which exemplifies the social and ecological contradictions of capitalism in global food relations and problematize the global displacement of peasant cultures by accumulation through dispossession (McMichael 2005) in the fisheries sector. Both Brand and Demirovic’s conceptualizations of multiple crises extended with food regimes analysis inform the theoretical framework for this paper which locates ocean grabbing as intensifying phenomena in the third food

regime of neoliberal capitalism which systematically destroys the environment, creates social inequality and has inherent crises tendencies which are circulated in time and space.

2 Capitalism and Nature

But how can the extraction of fish and other marine resources systematically be analyzed and theoretically understood? I will argue that concepts from the historical materialist tradition such as accumulation by dispossession and the enclosure of the commons can be applied to global fisheries in order to trace critical developments in both offshore and inland waters.

Capitalist Nature Relations

Capitalism is a system whose basic principle, logic and values are based on an unlimited accumulation of capital. However, the "Impossibility Theorem" states that unlimited economic growth in a limited environment is not possible in the longer term (Magdoff and Foster, 2011: 7). In the capitalist understanding, the economy is not embedded in nature and a reversal of reality takes place: In order to survive in the "green" economy, nature becomes a market participant that must produce value in the form of "ecosystem services" and is in competition with nature elsewhere where the environmental services are potentially produced "more efficient" (Fairhead et al 2012: 245). The reconceptualization of nature as a commodity separates biodiversity and ecosystems from their historical-ecological origin and subordinates natural resources to the market logic with momentous consequences (Fairhead et al., 2012). Contrary to this, in the tradition of historical materialism, humanity is itself part of nature and has an active relationship with nature, which is designed according to historical and geographical specifications (Görg 2003). Capitalism represents a particular human-nature relationship, which consists of continuities and convertible discourses. Raw material extraction and the capitalist development have a long and controversial common history, in which the ideas and discourses on the human-nature relationship alternated, but the systematic exploitation of nature remains continuity. The European imperial expansion in America was driven by precious metals, followed by the extractive imperialism, slave labor on sugar cane plantations and the industrial revolution, which is also heavily depended on natural resources. Extractive imperialism has taken several forms in the era of conquests, commercial capitalism, industrial capitalism and monopoly capitalism (Veltmeyer, 2013: 80). Each phase of capitalism emerges from a restructuring of human-environment relations, because society and nature interact mutually (Moore, 2003: 431). Social-ecological conditions are thus embedded in the historical and geographical transformations of capitalism in the last five hundred years and geographic and ecological contradictions are of central importance for accumulation, crisis, and world development (Moore, 2003: 453). Also Polanyi has emphasized the fact that the commodification of labor, land and money into "fictitious commodities" has fundamental and potentially self-destructive potentials for human society that has to protect itself from the ravages of a so called "self-regulating market system" (Polanyi, 2001:80).

In **summary**, nature and its value is always constructed discursively in order to control resources and to marginalize the access and use rights of their former users (Fairhead et al, 2012: 247).

Accumulation by Dispossession

Marx sketched **primitive accumulation** as an important precondition for the capitalist system and "none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage labourer" (Marx 1887: 508). Marx predicted the dispossession of the peasantry as necessary, but not sufficient condition for the development of capitalism and the creation of capitalists and wage laborers. Marx conception includes a wide range of processes such as the "commodification and privatization of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations; the conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive private property rights; the suppression of rights to the commons; the commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neo-colonial, and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources" (Harvey 2003: 145) which are relevant for the fisheries sector and the continuous dispossession of artisanal and small scale fisheries.

Marxist scholars debate whether primitive accumulation was a historic phase or can be understood as an ongoing process. David Harvey argues that primitive accumulation is an ongoing process on a global scale which can be applied to recent phenomena as “accumulation by dispossession”, representing a temporal or partial attempt to address a crisis of over-accumulation since the 1970s (Harvey 2003) since capitalism has inherent crisis tendencies that can never be solved, but are systematically and geographically circulated (Harvey, 2011: 11). Confronted with stagnant effective demand, Harvey noted that “non-capitalist territories should be forced open not only to trade (which could be helpful) but also to permit capital to invest in profitable ventures using cheaper labour power, raw materials, low-cost land, and the like” (Harvey 2003: 139). The state plays a crucial role in these developments (Harvey 2003: 145). As a class-based process, neo-liberal states encourages privatization, financialization and state redistribution in favor of the interests of capital, which is made possible through a process of containment, territorialization, legalization and violence (Fairhead et al, 2012: 248). Consequently, the territorialization of the oceans, and the redistribution of formerly common property resources to private interests, e.g. via bilateral fisheries agreements, can be understood as legalized form of violence and a “new round” of the 'enclosure of the commons' (Harvey 2003:159). Veltmeyer describes accumulation by dispossession as “the separation of peasant farmers from their means of production, forcing them to abandon agriculture and take one of development pathways out of rural poverty: wage labor and migration” (Veltmeyer, 2013: 81).

In **summary**, the concept of accumulation by dispossession applied to fisheries would mean the separation of small-scale and artisanal fishers from their fishing grounds via the enclosure of the oceans, forcing them to abandon fisheries and take one of development pathways out of rural poverty: wage labor and migration.

Blue Growth

There is only a “misplaced hope that, post the current crisis, capitalism will be less unequal, more humane and perhaps a little greener.” (Satgar, 2014:3).

Analogous to the "Green Growth" debate, FAO's focus in the fisheries sector is in the concept of "blue growth" as a "coherent framework for the sustainable and socio-economic management of our aquatic resources" in which the collaboration with private actors play a central role (FAO, 2014: V). A technocratic understanding is predominant which supposedly can understand and quantify the fish stocks, their reproductive capacity and the relationships in complex ecosystems to economically "optimal uses" of the resource (Hartje, 1979: 752). Concepts such as the "maximum sustainable yield" make it appear as if fishing activities could even be increased sustainably in some regions. However, this approach to fisheries management ignores important factors such as size, age of the animal and its reproductive status which has led to the collapse of many fish species (Walters and Maguire 1996). Economic growth and capitalism are identified here as a solution rather than a problem.

Ocean Grabbing

“Ocean-grabbing’ – in the shape of shady access agreements that harm small-scale fishers, unreported catch, incursions into protected waters, and the diversion of resources away from local populations – can be as serious a threat as ‘land-grabbing’” - Olivier De Schutter, UN special rapporteur on the right to food 2012 (cited in TNI, 2014: 5).

The dispossession of artisanal and small scale fisheries in the name of conservation, management or development can be conceptualized as ocean grabbing with comparable dynamics to land grabbing, water grabbing and green grabbing (TNI 2014: 8). Land grabbing can be defined as “large-scale acquisition of land or land-related rights and resources by corporate (business, non-profit or public) entities” from often remote countries (Borras et al., 2012: 619). Land grabbing “creates specific kinds of property dynamics, namely dispossession of land, water, forests and other common property resources; their concentration, privatization and transaction as corporate (owned or leased) property” that transform agrarian labor regimes (Borras et al., 2012: 620). A tentative application to ocean grabbing would thus be to define it as large scale acquisition of seafood and other maritime resources or access rights by business, non-profit or public entities which dispossess coastal land, water, mangroves and other common property resources, who privatize, concentrate and transact them as corporate property. In both land and ocean grabbing, national governments play a central role in the

(re)allocation of common property resources to private investors and local communities tend to be constructed either as destructive or as romanticized primitives (Fairhead et al., 2012: 251). Such a discursive turn can be identified as “spatial fix” to relocate multiple crises of climate, food and energy to peripheral areas (McCarthy et al. 2012).

Besides adopting insights from the land grabbing debate, the concept of “ocean grabbing” is only recently developed and has not yet received major attention. Google Scholar finds less than 70 publications which refer to “ocean grabbing” compared to over 18.000 entries for “land grabbing”. Even though the definition of land grabbing includes the term “water” and many dynamics are interlinked, a conceptualization of ocean grabbing can be justified by its spatial focus on oceans. The first and most comprehensive paper on the dynamics, drivers and impacts of ocean grabbing which I have read is a 2014 publication by the Transnational Institute (TNI) called “The Global Ocean Grab: A Primer”. Ocean grabbing is defined as a “major process of enclosure of the world’s oceans and fisheries resources, including marine, coastal and inland fisheries. Ocean grabbing is occurring mainly through policies, laws, and practices that are (re)defining and (re)allocating access, use and control of fisheries resources away from small-scale fishers and their communities, and often with little concern for the adverse environmental consequences. Existing customary and communal fisheries’ tenure rights systems and use and management practices are being ignored and ultimately lost in the process.” (TNI 2014: 3). The change of resource uses “from small-scale, labour-intensive uses like subsistence agriculture, toward large-scale, capital-intensive, resource-depleting uses such as industrial monocultures, raw material extraction, and large-scale hydropower generation” is seen as a common dynamic in the land and ocean grabbing debate (TNI 2014: 4). The TNI identifies three main drivers of ocean grabbing which are rooted in the current economic system and include a) corporate concentration along the whole seafood production chain which include a socially-constructed global demand for tuna, Nile perch, shrimps and omega 3 fish oil for urban elites as well as mass consumption for subordinate classes, b) the profit oriented conversion of coastal and sea areas for industrial, residential and recreational uses and c) the financialization of natural resources and fishing companies (TNI 2014: 15-17).

One of the other few recent papers is by Bennett, Govan and Satterfield (2015) who define ocean grabbing as “sanctions, policies or initiatives that deprive small-scale fishers of resources, dispossess vulnerable populations of coastal lands, and/or undermine historical access to areas of the sea”. This definition encompasses the dispossession and appropriation of marine resources as well as terrestrial and maritime spaces. The authors suggest that it would be counterproductive to label all conservation (e.g. marine protected areas) or development activities (e.g. for eco-tourism) which re-allocate space and resources as “ocean grabbing”. In order to be considered ocean grabbing, a reallocation must “(1) occur by means of inadequate governance and (2) be implemented using actions that undermine human security and livelihoods, or (3) produce impacts that reduce social–ecological well-being.” (Bennet et al, 2015:61). The authors suggest the following methodology to identify ocean grabbing:

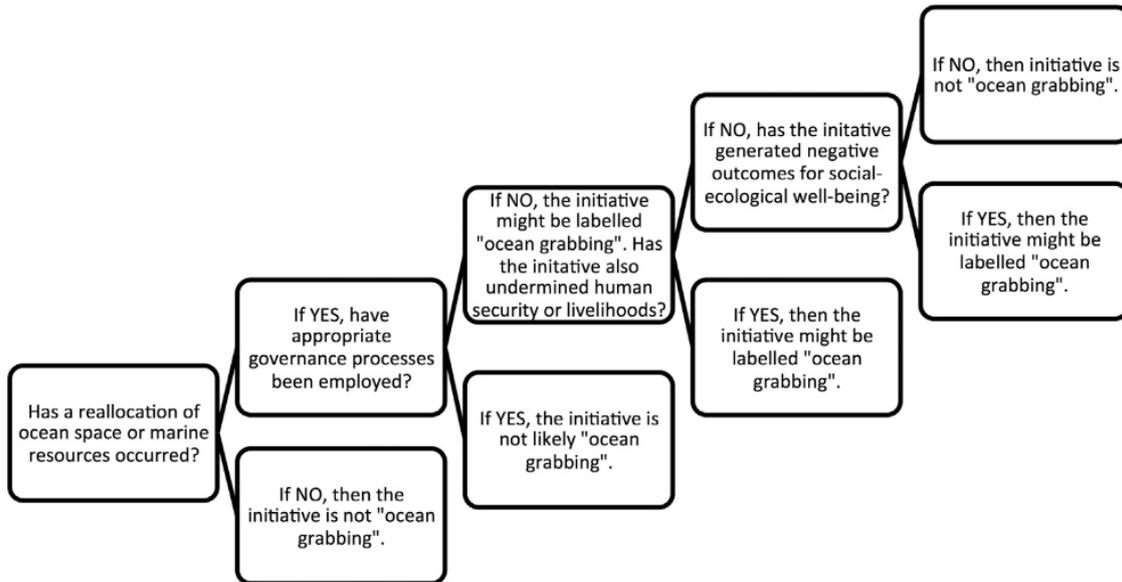


Fig. 1. Deciding whether an initiative is ocean grabbing.

Source: Bennet et al. 2015: 66

Appropriate governance is understood in line with the good governance debate and includes criteria such as transparency, lawfulness, accountability and participatory decision making. *Human security and livelihoods* includes basic needs (such as food, shelter), cultural identity, traditional governance procedures and physical integrity of individuals and communities. Outcomes for *social-ecological well-being* include ecological impacts (provision of ecosystem services) and social impacts ask who benefits from the reallocation (for a detailed view, see Bennet et al, 2015: 64). In the above figure, the governance process gets a privileged position in relation to human security and social-ecological wellbeing which includes free, prior and informed consent as crucial dimension. Given this encompassing definition, it would be instructive to find examples of the reallocation of marine resources which cannot be identified as ocean grabbing. The authors furthermore define five means of reallocation which include a) single use enclosure of space (e.g. tourist resort), b) multiple use enclosure of space (e.g. ocean zoning), c) changing property regimes (e.g. privatization of common coastal land), d) changing resource allocation regimes (e.g. sale of fishing quotas) and e) changing resource use regime (e.g. subsistence to export) (Bennet et al, 2015: 62).

Another important driver of ocean grabbing is the increasing demand and the increasing scarcity of resources and new technologies that enable the extraction of resources in formerly inaccessible areas. Parallel to the granting of licenses for the exploration and exploitation of resources in the national 200-mile zone, there is a race for resources in international waters. Under and on the seabed, oil and natural gas as well as minerals and precious metals can be found in the form of manganese and polymetallic nodules. With the permission of the International Seabed Authority, states and private companies such as the Canadian "Nautilus Minerals" search deposits in international waters (Arte, n.d./ ISA 2014a). The environmental impact of this maritime extractivism in largely unexplored deep sea areas are visible on offshore drilling for oil and gas, which were profitable through new technologies and rising oil prices. The explosion of the "Deepwater Horizon" in 2010 illustrates the massive environmental and health risks, and the destruction of livelihoods by transnational corporations, which do not attach great importance to work safety and environmental protection (Magdoff and Foster, 2011: 73). Important drivers for „Ocean grabbing“ are thus a global competition for fishing grounds, oil, manganese nodules and other limited resources.

3 Fisheries and Seafood Sovereignty

The Role of Seafood Sovereignty in Food Sovereignty

Food Sovereignty as well as Food Regime analysts and activists tend to contrast the corporate dominated neoliberal food regime (food from nowhere) with its counter movement of Food Sovereignty which emphasizes localized production, distribution and consumption (food from somewhere) (McMichael, Campbell 2009, Holt Gimenez and Shattuck 2011). **Food Sovereignty** can be understood as multiple scales of social organization that can be analyzed on an individual level (e.g. somebody living in a food desert), on the community level (e.g. the maintenance of small-scale local food retail shops with local produce) as well as on a national level where production methods and marketing mechanisms are regulated and multinational (e.g. GATT) and multilateral (e.g., NAFTA) trade agreements are negotiated, affecting a variety of food safety, plant, animal and environmental health (also known as sanitary and phytosanitary) standards (Harris 2013). Even though all these levels are interlinked, I want to mention that while exploring the introduction of the Nile Perch, I will focus on a community level while the overfishing at Somali shores focuses on a national level.

Whereas the debate on Food Sovereignty receives increased attention and recognition, the role of fisheries and seafood sovereignty remains underestimated and has received little attention in relation to its importance. Fish is very nutritious and provides an important global source of essential nutrients such as protein. The importance of fish protein in diets increases internationally as the level of economic development decreases (Harris 2013: 1). The fisheries sector provides the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people. With a value of 90 billion US dollars of the world's annual fish landings, fishing is an important sector (FAO, 2014). Fish is one of the mostly traded foods in the world and can make up half of the total value of traded commodities in developing countries (World Ocean Review, n.d.). The often marginalized small-scale fisheries make an important contribution to food sovereignty. According to the United Nations, fisheries and aquaculture can play an important role in the eradication of hunger, health promotion and poverty reduction (FAO, 2014: V). Key problems of fisheries include overfishing, the large-scale loss of habitat and biodiversity, as well as the lack of effective management and enforcement (Global Ocean Commission, 2015a).

This paper argues that the challenges to food sovereignty for terrestrial foods occur equally with regard to aquatic resources and will therefore use the term “**Seafood Sovereignty**” to specify the aquatic food resources such as marine and freshwater animals and plants as well as to emphasize the importance of seafood for food sovereignty. The term “Seafood” refers to all aquatic life (fish, shellfish, mammals, seaweeds and algae) in both fresh water and the oceans that is used for human consumption. The term “fisheries” is used to describe the “harvesting, production, marketing and consumption activities” of seafood resources (Harris 2013: 2).

Harris identifies the following main challenges to seafood sovereignty which include:

- a) “The introduction of exotic species,
- b) inshore aquaculture, inshore harvesting by non-traditional technologies,
- c) allocation of access to offshore fisheries to foreign interests with non-traditional technologies, the tendency for foreign interests to deplete and depart,
- d) the creation of marine protected areas,
- e) the introduction of frankenfish and supersalmon, habitat destruction, and exploitation for exportation” (Harris 2013: 1).

This paper will exemplify the challenges emerging from the introduction of exotic species into Lake Victoria as Africa’s biggest freshwater lake, and trace the link between the surprising emergences of piracy at the horn of Africa to the depletion of fish stocks by industrial fishing fleets with non-traditional technologies.

Scale of fisheries and implied conflicts

As in the Food Sovereignty discourse and the constructed dichotomy between small scale farmers and industrial agriculture, conflicts have emerged between small scale fisheries and industrial fishing and

processing fleets that threaten the democratic management of fisheries and the right of people to determine their food systems.

One way to classify the scale of seafood harvesting is to divide it into a) small scale artisanal fisheries, b) intermediate scale mechanized fisheries and c) large scale industrialized fisheries (Harris 2013: 5).

FAO differentiates between a) small scale/artisanal, b) semi-industrial, c) industrial and d) recreational fishing operations based on criteria of vessel size, man on board, technology, purpose and capital investment per fisher which can vary across regions and is rather a relative distinction (FAO n.D. [2016]).

According to the FAO glossary, small scale fisheries are:

"traditional fisheries involving fishing households (as opposed to commercial companies), using relatively small amount of capital and energy, relatively small fishing vessels (if any), making short fishing trips, close to shore, mainly for local consumption. In practice, definition varies between countries, e.g. from gleaning or a one-man canoe in poor developing countries, to more than 20-m. trawlers, seiners, or long-liners in developed ones. Artisanal fisheries can be subsistence or commercial fisheries, providing for local consumption or export. They are sometimes referred to as small-scale fisheries". (FAO, n.D. [2016])

This definition homogenizes artisanal fisheries (as a term predominantly used in French and Spanish literature) and small scale fisheries (used in English literature) which can substantially differ in technology and purpose (subsistence or commercial, part time or full time). Many fisheries programs for example only consider full time fishers as stakeholders and thus exclude part time fishers from resource management (FAO, n.d. [2016]). Small-scale fisheries encompass all activities along the value chain, account for about half of global fish catches and employ more than 90 percent of the world's fishers and fish workers (TNI 2014: 5).

As in terrestrial food production, the predominant antagonism can be conceptualized as conflicts and competition between labor intensive, local small-scale/artisanal fishing and capital intensive, export oriented industrial fishing. As small scale peasants, small-scale/artisanal fishers are often marginalized as "backwards" under the modernization paradigm and national development plans and their socio-ecological contribution to employment, livelihood, subsistence and environmental conservation is not recognized or valued under financialized neoliberalism due to their lack of integration into global capital circuits. Contrary to the industrialized, capital and technology intensive as well as destructive industrial fishing, small scale and artisanal fisheries have been recognized as having lower running costs and fuel consumption, a lower ecological impact, higher employment opportunities, higher versatility, lower construction costs and less expensive technology. Small scale and artisanal fisheries tend to optimize human power and reduce fuel consumption by travelling short distances, use more environmentally friendly fishing techniques, enable local harvest, processing and consumption relations and can even have higher returns of investment compared to industrial fishing (FAO n.d., [2016]). In other words, small fishermen catch more fish per gallon of fuel and produce less by-catch compared with industrial which are only profitable because of high subsidies and the ability to externalize the costs of overfishing and destruction of resources (srfood.org, 2012). Governments may tend to favor middle and large scale fisheries which contribute to tax revenues and usually have a better interest representation compared to artisanal and subsistence fisheries, especially if they rely on an export led development paradigm.

Conflict

In front of developing countries, the super ships of the rich extract the wealth from the seas of the poor. Traditional fishermen return home with empty nets. Often, fish is a key source of protein for these people. In the western Pacific international fleets capture around 90% of tuna worth 1.9 billion US dollars. For the fishing rights they pay only one-thirtieth of it to the affected countries "- Greenpeace, (n.d., own translation).

Through subsidies, the capacity of the global fishing fleets since the 1970s has doubled to 3.5 million vessels. Of these, only one percent are industrial ships, but they extract up to 60% of all seafood stocks (Greenpeace, n.d.), whereas the vast majority of over 90% of small-scale/artisanal fisheries (FAO, n.d.

[2016]) are left behind with depleted stocks. Conflicts between these different scales of fisheries arise since small scale and artisanal fisheries find it difficult to safely fish in offshore areas, whereas industrialized fishing and processing ships with advanced technology can severely deplete fish stocks in inshore areas and depart, thus depriving small scale fisheries from their source of subsistence and petty commerce. If the same species is harvested, another problem arises as many fish species spent time in inshore as well as offshore areas (Harris 2013). This reminds me of Stephen Gills concept of disciplinary neoliberalism, in which the “burdens of market force are most frequently imposed hierarchically on the weaker states and social actors whilst the more powerful receive tax-write-offs, state subsidies, and other prerogatives” (Gill 1993:140). The antagonism in fisheries is characterized by a power asymmetry in terms of mobility, technology and fishing capacity and market opportunities.

Overfishing

“Natural resource plunder is organized theft disguised as commerce. Commercial trawlers that operate under flags of convenience, and unload in ports that do not record their catch, are unethical” - Kofi Annan (Africa Progress Panel)

The decline of fish species close to extinction is well documented globally and an example of how even "renewable" resources can be exhausted. Between 1950 and 1990, the annual global seafood extraction of marine fisheries has quadrupled from 20 million in 1950 to 80 million in 1990 (World Ocean Review, n.d.).

Through a decade-long increase in global fishing quantity many fish stocks are now considered overexploited or collapsed. The causes of overfishing are seen in a technocratic-capitalist understanding, especially in the increase in global demand and the constant expansion of fishing capacity and techniques. Global solutions to fisheries management as catch quotas or limiting the number of fishing days have failed, because the limits are too generous and not adequately controlled and sanctioned (World Ocean Review, n.d.). The number of overfished and collapsed fish stocks has steadily increased through more efficient fishing techniques, improved technical instruments for locating schools of fish and increased reach and depth of fishing fleets since the 1970s. Almost all fish species will be overexploited in the middle of the 21st century. (Magdoff and Foster, 2011: 69). Marine ecosystems are being plundered by short-term interests, whereby the food sovereignty and the economic, social and cultural well-being of millions of people worldwide are taken at risk. As the crisis of biodiversity increases, industrial fishing fleets intensify their exploitation techniques for example via trawling and new technologies (Demirovic et al, 2011: 17).

Overfishing is often cited as an example of the "tragedy of the commons". The assumption is that goods which are limited, but freely accessible are systematically plundered by private short-term interests and the good is destroyed for all users on the long-term. The tragedy of the commons is prominent in capitalism because it is a system based on individual self-interest and endless accumulation in which the state is unwilling or incapable to manage resources as common heritage until these have been severely depleted. Contrary to neoclassical assumptions, the real problem is not the very existence of commons in itself, but the tendency to leave public wealth unprotected or subordinate it to private interests instead of sustainably managing it as shared collective heritage. It would therefore be correct to speak of the "tragedy of the private exploitation of the commons" (Foster and Magdoff 2011: 70) which operates through the dispossession of customary and communal tenure rights systems and management practices which ensured sustainable resource uses for centuries.

Overfishing is only one problem that diminishes the productivity of the oceans, furthermore pollution and acidification of the oceans caused by chemicals, industrial effluents and waste pose great health risks on remaining marine life. These problems emphasize the interconnected problems of industrial agriculture, urbanization and imperial lifestyles whose toxic output is ultimately washed off into the oceans.

Aquaculture

A prominent example of fish introduction in the last century was the introduction of Atlantic salmon from the North Atlantic to the Pacific region. Unlike the Nile perch which was introduced for wild harvest to Lake Victoria, Atlantic Salmon was intended for cage aquaculture in inshore areas due to its

high market value and easy handling. The Food Sovereignty issue arises as Atlantic salmon escapes its net pens, outcompete native species in terms of food and habitat, interbreeds with native salmonids and thus reduces the genetic diversity, adaptability and disease resistance of native species (Harris 2013: 4).

As inshore aquaculture has been scaled up to industrial dimensions in the last decade, its impact on coastal fisheries has been controversially discussed. Even if hypothetically no fish escape the aquaculture facilities, the high density of fish in the net pens allows both diseases and parasites to develop and disperse into the oceans, affecting endemic species like wild salmon and consequently communities that historically relied on the wild stocks for their nutrition and livelihoods (Harris 2013: 4). Besides Salmon, shrimp is another important species in aquaculture. As in aquaculture in general, the value capture of different actors along the value chain is shifted from the harvesters of wild seafood to the producers of inputs and the owners of coastal production facilities. Especially industrialized shrimp aquaculture was enabled by the expropriation of coastal lands and the destruction of mangrove swamps that provide protection against waves, absorb carbon and provide breeding and nursery habitats for local seafood species consumed locally (Harris 2013: 4, 10). Again local habitats and communities bear the burden of this transformation, whereas the food industry can supply cheap seafood to the working and middle classes in industrialized countries.

Aquaculture can therefore be not seen as an easy solution to global overfishing. In terms of efficiency, aquaculture can even further worsen the overfishing situation since most species with high economic value (salmon, tuna, Nile perch) are predators that need to be fed on other fish species or fish meal produced from them. In order to produce one pound of salmon for example, two to four kilograms of fish meal is required (Harris 2013). Small scale and artisanal fisheries are thus being marginalized in inshore and offshore waters, might be least responsible for overfishing and pollution activities but bear most of the social and environmental costs.

Deep Sea Fishing

After the depletion of coastal fishing grounds around the world and a soaring demand for seafood, industrial fishing fleets have increasingly focused on the deep sea as one last economically attractive fishing ground. Deep sea fishing is increasing in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) since the 1990s and is increasingly pursued by those excluded from exclusive economic zones (EEZs) (FAO, n.D.). Between 1960 and 2004, the harvest of deep-water species by scratching massive metal plates across the ocean floor has increased sevenfold (Eilperin 2011). Deep sea fishing has become criticized for its destructive fishing techniques such as bottom trawls which destroy coral reefs, have a high by-catch of “non-target species” and are only profitable due to government subsidies. The tragedy of deep sea fishing is that the deep sea is one of the largest, but least productive parts of the ocean. Many deep sea species have less population resilience due to their longer life spans, slow reproduction rates and high biomass (whales) which creates an economic incentive to annihilate their populations. Enforced by a very weak regulatory regime, deep sea fishing can rather be compared to mining than fishing since populations are eliminated and fleets move on (Norse et al, 2011). Even though the deep sea is recognized as “vulnerable marine ecosystem”, its status as area beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) poses special challenges to regulation and conservation enforcement. FAO’s “International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas” were developed with the involvement of the fishing industry and only provide voluntary guidelines for states and regional fisheries management organizations to follow.

Governing the oceans/ territorialization of the sea

The governance of the oceans has passed through different phases and evolved especially since the creation of the UN system. Since the seventeenth century, the freedom of the seas doctrine limited national jurisdiction over the oceans except for a narrow coastal line of three sea miles. Due to the main developments during the second food regime, namely the completion of state system with decolonization in Asia and Africa, Cold War, the industrialization of agriculture and chemicalization (green revolution), the claims of nation states to oceans was continually expanded since the middle of the last century. Concerns included both geopolitical considerations as well as the establishment of long-distance fishing fleets and pollution hazards from container ships and oil tankers which

surrounded the globe. US president Truman, pressured by national oil interests, put the first serious challenge to the freedom-of-the-seas doctrine in 1945 by unilaterally expanding the domestic jurisdiction over all natural resources (including oil, gas and minerals) on the US-American continental shelf. An example which other nations followed soon: Some Latin American states claimed a 200 sea miles hoping to limit foreign fishing fleets since 1947, other nations claimed a 12 mile zone of territorial waters and archipelagic states like Indonesia and the Philippines started to claim all waters connecting their islands. Since the 1960s new technologies enabled off shore oil drilling and other lucrative extraction forms of resources such as oil, metals, diamonds and seafood and the oceans became an area of conflict and sovereignty disputes (UN 1998) that would soon extend until the Arctic. Attempts to establish a “constitution of the oceans” as a way to regulate the emerging conflicts started in the 1960s, negotiations held place in the 1970s and UN Member states signed the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982. It was not until 1994 when the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) entered into force and regulated rights and responsibilities of nation states in terms of fishing, navigation, scientific exploration and seabed mining. The convention created “**exclusive economic zones (EEZ)**” of 200 nautical miles (about 370 kilometers) which secures the exclusive use right of coastal states to natural resources such as fish stocks and minerals (UN, 2013). UNCLOS is the main source of international law for the governance of the oceans. The establishment of UNCLOS has changed global fisheries policy dramatically and led to a complete nationalization of fishing rights, especially in the North Atlantic, which transferred a community resource to the public ownership of coastal states. Foreign harvesting fleets from now on had to negotiate the access to seafood in terms of species, time, area and quantity in national waters of other countries; usually this negotiation takes place between the governments of both states. Governments might be tempted by the license fees paid for the exploitation of its fishing grounds and especially governments in the global south might find themselves in a weaker position to negotiate, control and enforce such agreements. The established EEZ should lead to a reduction of the number of factory ships from remote fishing nations in favor of the coastal medium and small fishing boats. However, coastal states can define a **Total Allowable Catch (TAC)** quota based on region and species. If the officially reported national harvesting quotas stay below the TAC, access rights for foreign fishing fleets can be allocated in bilateral negotiations (Hartje, 1979: 741). However, the TAC is just an estimate and the reported national fishing quotas do often not include by-catch which can make up to 80% for some fish species. (Greenpeace, n.d.). The major portion of the commercial fisheries in Africa is attributable to European and Asian vessels (Standing, 2009: 1).

The seafood sovereignty issue arises if access to seafood is allocated, e.g. via trade agreements, to foreign fishing fleets with a great discrepancy in harvesting power compared to national fisheries for species that migrate between inshore and offshore areas in time and space. As local fish stocks are depleted, the whole chain of harvesters, processors, marketers and consumers in the host country might find themselves dispossessed of their livelihoods and nutrition, whereas the foreign fleets depart and lucratively sell the processed fish to markets in industrialized countries with higher purchasing power. Examples of this kind in offshore areas include the overexploitation of the Patagonian toothfish on the coasts of Chile and Argentina driven by a growing US demand which also incentivized illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) as well as the redfish (red drum) in the Gulf of Mexico (Harris 2013:7). In the EEZ, states are also responsible for environmental protection, research and to prevent pollution. Beyond the EEZ, international cooperation shall preserve "living resources" in international waters which represent the majority of the world's oceans (UN, 2013). Beyond the exclusive economic zones starts the so called “high seas” which lie under international jurisdiction and represent around two thirds of the global oceans and 45% of the Earth’s surface (Global Ocean Commission, 2015b). The International Seabed Authority was established to control and coordinate activities in international waters, especially in terms of resources (ISA 2014) but has no sanction mechanisms. Ocean governance is thus highly fragmented and encompasses many sectoral issues such as the laying of seafloor cables, seabed mining and ocean dumping which are regulated by separate treaties. On a regional scale, regulation can be even more complex, the UNEP runs 13 regional seas programs and additionally there are over 30 fisheries management organizations (Global Ocean Commission, 2015b). Even if the existing legal frameworks would be effectively implemented and

enforced, the Global Ocean Commission identifies the following main gaps in the global ocean governance system:

1. The protection of biodiversity on the high seas is not formally recognized and there is no organization with a mandate to do so
2. No mandate exists for the establishment of high seas marine reserves
3. Fisheries management is not effectively implemented and geographically fragmented
4. Ocean noise and its potential impact on marine life is not regulated
5. There is no enforcement mechanism for ocean conservation and few or no sanctions for non-compliance (Global Ocean Commission, 2015b).

Besides the establishment of UNCLOS as a transfer of a common property into a public resource of nation states as a first step, access and use of ocean resources was soon be allocated to private actors as a second step, emphasizing the key role of the territorial nation state for the expansion of global capitalism. The enclosure and privatization of fish and marine resources unleashed in the 1980s when so called “Rights-Based Fisheries (RBF)” became a dominant approach to national fisheries management. Several fisheries economists suggested in a 1989 article that the overfishing can only be prevented by “the enclosure and privatization of the common resources of the ocean” (cited in TNI 2014: 10). In concrete, RBF meant the establishment of private property rights and a market to trade them, neglecting any forms of effective traditional management practices and not recognizing the inefficiency of existing international agreements. With so called “Catch Shares” in the USA, “Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs)” in Iceland, “Transferable Fishing Concessions (TFCs)” in the EU or “Wealth-based Fishing” of the African Union, the privatization of fishing rights and marketing mechanisms spread the corporate (sea)food regime around the globe and marginalized state control over seafood resources (TNI 2014: 12). One main threat to seafood sovereignty comes from the ability of the fishing industry whose vessels can catch fish on a truly global scale, process it on board and sell it in great distances to lucrative consumer markets, while often depleting fishing grounds in the global south, depriving people of their livelihood, right to determine their food system and the availability to purchase the industrially processed fish. The impact of Climate Change on fisheries is likely to worsen the situation, since some Atlantic fish stocks have shifted northward and spurred political conflict between the EU, Iceland and the Faroer Islands (Harris 2013). Besides the dispossession of small scale fisheries by industrial fleets in coastal waters, further pressures are exercised by the runoff of polluted water from cities and agriculture, rising prices for coastal land, the destruction or pollution of fish habitats such as mangroves. Access to seafood in national inshore waters is allocated by both formal regimes of governmental regulation as well as informal regimes of common property resource management. Conflicts arise when traditional informal regimes are transformed by formal arrangements without the democratic consent of affected producers and consumers.

EU Fisheries Policies

The European Union is the biggest single seafood market in the world and a net importer of fish and fish products. The European Common Fisheries Policy aims to “ensure that fishing and aquaculture are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable and that they provide a source of healthy food for EU citizens. Its goal is to foster a dynamic fishing industry and ensure a fair standard of living for fishing communities” (EC 2015a). However, the CFP has been considered as a failure in terms of the conservation of fish stocks in European waters as well as from a biological, economical, legal and political perspective (Khalilian et al, 2010).

Through a precarious overfishing EU waters, the European Union pays - in open harmony with the commercial fishing lobby - high subsidies for European fishing vessels in other regions. Access to fish stocks in the territorial waters of African states is very important for fishing fleets from the European Union, especially for states with a close geographical proximity such as Spain and Morocco (Harris 2013: 5). More than a quarter of seafood caught by European boats takes place outside EU waters (EC 2015b). Through preferential trade agreements, jobs shall be secured and the availability of raw fish and its processing, sale and consumption in Europe shall be ensured. In bilateral negotiations access rights are assigned that specify quantity, species and region, bringing foreign currency for African governments. The actual catch and the actual fish stocks are hardly monitored and controlled. In

addition, the donor activities of EU countries are often linked to the allocation of catch quotas to European companies in the context of so-called "Fisheries Partnership Agreements" (Standing, 2009: 238). Due to the lack of transparency in terms of catch figures in other regions, the discourse of sustainability and partnership of the EU is highly questionable.

There are two types of fishing agreements with non-EU countries. The "Northern agreements" target a joint management of shared seafood stocks with Norway, Iceland and the Faeroe Islands. The so called "Fisheries Partnership Agreements" allow EU fleets to extract seafood in third countries' Exclusive Economic Zones in the Global South in exchange for financial and technical support. Officially, only surplus stocks are targeted and the EU states to contribute to resource conservation and environmental sustainability. Thirteen active fisheries partnership agreements with countries like Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Gabon, Madagascar, Senegal, Comoros, Seychelles and Mauritius for example allow EU fleets to chase migrating tuna stocks as they as they move along the coasts of Africa and the Indian Ocean (EC, 2015c). A Fisheries Partnership Agreement signed in 2009 between the EU and Mauritius allowed EU fleets to extract 16,500 tons of fish for 660,000 € representing less than five per cent of the local market value. The Mauritian government allocated these access rights because of lacking national capacities and assured that national small scale fishers would not be negatively affected. Due to the targeting of the same species and a high bycatch of the EU vessels, the catches of local small scale fishers decreased by up to 60 percent (TNI 2014: 18). With so called autonomous tariff quotas (ATQs), the EU wants to ensure the supply of the raw materials for the EU processing industry (EC 2015a). A relocation of the overfishing crisis to the global south show how inherent crisis tendencies of neoliberal capitalism are both geographically and systemically circulated, as Harvey observes: "capital never solves its crisis tendencies; it merely moves them around" (Harvey, 2011:11). The unequal access to seafood resources is also reflected in unequal consumption patterns. Worldwide, the annual fisheries supply is about 16.4 kilograms of live weight per person. With a per capita consumption of 25.7 kg, seafood consumption in the EU countries is significantly above this average (World Ocean Review, n.d.). The seafood consumption of the global North at the expense of the Global South can be seen as another dimension to the "imperial way of life" (Brand and Wissen, 2013).

In **summary**, the EU fisheries policy serves the profit interests of European industrial fisheries and processors with the policy objective of job retention and the supply of raw materials, while at the same time exporting the overfishing crises and the fishing overcapacity to developing countries. There is a financial incentive to strengthen the global overfishing crises both for the fishing fleets as well as for the governments of the home countries.

4 Empirical Evidence – Fisheries in East Africa (Somalia and Lake Victoria)

The case studies for this paper have been selected based on field visits to Kenya and Uganda, as well as the Ugandan side of Lake Victoria which inspired me to write this paper. Whereas Lake Victoria problematizes one of the most prominent introduction of exotic species into Africa's biggest freshwater resource, the overfishing of the Somali coastal waters after the collapse of its central government at the beginning of the 1990s exemplifies problems of international regulatory frameworks and questions the role of the state in resource management.

Depletion of Somali fish stocks by foreign industrial fishing fleets with non-traditional technology and the emergence of piracy in the 21st century

Since the collapse of the Somali central government and its coast guard at the beginning of the 1990s, issues of illegal fishing and waste dumping have affected Somali coastal fisheries.

Fisheries and piracy

As Mahnkopf shows, legalized piracy has contributed historically to the wealth of European states and piracy can be seen as a form of "primitive accumulation" (2010: 59). The Horn of Africa is a geopolitically important intersection for the Euro-Asian trade and oil transportation. The lack of control of the 200-mile zone of the weak Somali government since the early 1990s enabled the overfishing of the Somali coasts by industrial factory ship fleets from Europe and Asia. In addition to a massive fish theft, thousands of tons of toxic waste, including radioactive waste and other toxic

substances was sunk illegally off Somalia's coast (Mahnkopf, 2010: 61). It is estimated that over 300 Million US\$ worth of tuna, shrimp, lobster and other marine life is being illegally extracted from Somalia's EEZ (Hari 2009). Instead of asking for the causes of the piracy of the 21st century, several NATO countries decided an expensive military action with a United Nations mandate. The costs of the escort protection for commercial vessels are not borne by the private actors, but by public tax payers (Mahnkopf, 2010: 58). This can also be seen as a continuation of a class conflict in which gains are privatized and costs are socialized. The UN anti-piracy mission can be conceptualized as 'hegemony armored by coercion' (Gramsci), meaning that if consent to neoliberal globalization is eroding, its division of labor can be enforced with coercion.

In order to prevent asylum applications from convicted Somali pirates in the EU, the EU shifts the combat against piracy their own borders to third countries such as Kenya with intergovernmental agreements, financial assistance, military equipment and exchange of information on their own borders to third countries such as Kenya, which can be called a new European border Imperialism (Mahnkopf 2010: 73). Interestingly, the neighboring Kenyan fishing industry appears to be recovering, since piracy keeps large fishing fleets out of the region (Magdoff and Foster, 2011: 69). Besides overfishing, the dumping of barrels into coastal waters was reported and the coastal population started to suffer from rashes, nausea and malformed babies. After the 2005 tsunami, leaking barrels were washed on the shore and over 300 people were reported dead or suffering from radiation sickness. According to the UN envoy to Somalia, besides atomic material there are also heavy metals like cadmium and mercury dumped which partly can be traced to European hospitals and factories, which apparently pass it to the Italian mafia to dispose it cheaply (Hari 2009).

Applying the criteria for ocean grabbing to the case of illegal fishing and waste dumping in the EEZ of Somalia can arguably be identified as an extreme case of ocean grabbing since all criteria of governance, human security and social-ecological well-being are met.

Introduction of exotic species in Lake Victoria

Overfishing and pollution are not only problems in the oceans, but also in inland waters. Africa's largest freshwater lake, Lake Victoria located between Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania is a good example for the analysis of potential intersectionalities, neo-colonialism and the dark side of development projects.

There are many cases globally that could be used to problematize the introduction of exotic seafood species for wild harvest or aquaculture into local habitats without the full informed consent of affected local populations.

Environmental destruction in the name of development

One of the most prominent fisheries introductions is the release of the Nile Perch (*Lates niloticus*) into Lake Victoria at the beginning of the 20th century. The Nile perch is a freshwater predator, which can grow up to two meters long and 200 kg in weight (Fishbase.org, n.d.). While all ecosystem services are affected by the introduction of a new species, I will focus on the impact of the deliberate introduction of the Nile Perch at Lake Victoria for the provisioning of food and livelihood. Until today, it remains unclear who exactly introduced the species into the lake, however British colonial managers had discussed the introduction of the predator for commercial and recreational purposes for years (Harris 2013: 3). Since no aquatic predator existed anymore to control the expansion of the Nile perch population, the predator was able to deplete endemic small fish species on which traditional local fisheries relied for consumption and commerce.

Not only did the native lakeside communities not like the taste of the Nile perch, their traditional fishing gear was also not suited to catch the large and heavy perch. Its explosive expansion led to the development of industrial fish processing facilities around the lake which output was too expensive for local markets. Of all Nile perch catches, 60 to 80 percent are exported and to Europe and North America, while local populations are deprived of an important protein source (TNI 2014: 9). For the export industry, the Nile perch became a lucrative business, while the local dry fish industry was ruined by the extinction of many cichlids. As in the oceans, problems caused by overfishing, destruction of wetlands, pollution and poisoning by discharges of waste and raw sewage from

industries and towns, and nutrient intake by herbicides and pesticides from agriculture causing a growth of algae and water hyacinth and led to a substantial decrease in fish stocks (Wirkus and Böge, 2005: 30).

The intersectionalities of class, nationality and gender should be considered for the analysis.

Class: Due to its weight, the Nile perch cannot be caught with the gear of the traditional small-scale fishing and due to its high fat content; it cannot also be dried in the traditional processing methods. The investment portion of foreign capital in larger fishing boats and new fish factories thus led to a transformation of biologically diverse, labor-intensive fisheries to biologically unbalanced, capital-intensive fisheries. Therefore conflicts arise mainly between export-oriented and traditional fishing (Wirkus and Böge, 2005: 30). While the expansion of the Nile perch export industry has had the effect of reducing poverty in the region of Lake Victoria, has also increased income inequality. While middlemen and factory owners benefit, fishing communities have not significantly benefited from its position in the value chain and "trickle-down" effects are not noted (Bergman and Vieweg, n.d.). Due to poor trading conditions, low reinvestment, capital flight and the low use of local processing facilities and thus a low local value capture, there are few examples of developing countries which were able to benefit from fish trade with developed countries (Allison et al., 2009). This process could be grasped by the concept of "unequal exchange" as the appropriation of surplus value by capitalist core countries from "peripheral" countries on the basis of monopoly production. Wallerstein, one of the central scholars who developed world systems theory as a critique of modernization theories, defines unequal exchange as a "constant flow of surplus - value from the producers of peripheral products to the producers of core - like products." (Wallerstein 2004: 28), in which cichlids would be the peripheral product displaced by the Nile perch with the European Union as main export destination (Van der Knaap and Ligtoet 2010: 432).

Nationality: National borders of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania cross Lake Victoria. Of the total sea area, Uganda and Tanzania have almost half each, while Kenya has only 6% of the lake area. In the littoral states about 3 million people live from fishing and fish processing, which is an important export for all three countries. Conflicts along nationalities arise because of the unequal distribution of borders. Kenyan fishermen are most often arrested by Ugandan authorities for alleged illegal fishing in Ugandan waters (Wirkus and Böge, 2005: 30).

Gender: In many low- and middle-income countries, but particularly on Lake Victoria, a gender-based and sexual economy has emerged, which is known as "sex for fish". Unequal power relations determine gender-related factors on access to work, the division of labor and payment. Fishing is almost exclusively operated by men, while processing and market sale is carried out mainly by women. The increase in population growth and demand for fish combined with overfishing and pollution of Lake Victoria result in lower catch so that more economically disadvantaged women compete for fresh fish. Some fishermen offer buying rights and reduced prices for fresh fish in exchange for often unprotected sexual benefits (Mojola, 2011). The first HIV / AIDS infections in sub-Saharan Africa have been detected in the 1980s in fishing communities around Lake Victoria (Mojola, 2011). Deteriorating socio-economic and ecological conditions thus create an additional health dimension and exacerbate the HIV / AIDS situation through changing sexual partners and the mobility of unemployed fishermen and market women. As Mojola anthropological fieldwork has shown, environmental changes are closely related to an increased the risk of HIV infection and strengthened a gender specific division of labor. In other low- and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the HIV prevalence for fishers was found 4-14 times higher than the national average for adults aged 15-49 years, which relates to their status as migrant workers (Mojola, 2011).

The intersectionalities of religion and ethnicity also play a significant role, since the infection rate among some ethnic groups, such as the Luo is particularly high and some faith communities prohibit condom use.

This example of intersectionalities of class, nationality, gender, religion and ethnicity point at the complexity of multiple crises and their mutual interaction. This very superficial analysis raises no claim to completeness and could be developed in consideration of other factors such as age and education.

Local, labor-intensive and environmentally friendly fisheries instead of foreign commercial fishing fleets should be a policy objective of African States. However, as Standing noted, this is as likely as the vision that local small-scale mining can expel international mining companies (2009: 353). The problem will not be solved as long as industrialized countries subsidize far too large fishing fleets, promote destructive fishing methods and a neo-colonial plundering of the oceans for the benefit of the capitalist centers.

The case study of Lake Victoria, however, also shows that the ongoing privatization and enclosure of water resources leads to a marginalization of subsistence and small scale fisheries who, “with no alternative livelihoods and faced with poverty, they resort to illegal practices, like using illegal gear, or fishing in forbidden waters” (TNI 2014:9) which further undermines local ecosystems. Also FAO notes that not all small scale fishers have a low environmental impact since some may use destructive methods such as poison and dynamite (FAO, n.d. [2016]), reflecting Bernstein’s critique of Food Sovereignty and the discursive homogenization of the peasantry (Bernstein 2013: 14ff). This aspect shows that migration and wage labor might not be the automatic result of “accumulation by dispossession” but that people for various reasons are not able or unwilling to migrate and/or find wage labor.

Applying the criteria of ocean grabbing to the introduction of the Nile perch into Lake Victoria arguably meets all three criteria of governance, human security and social-ecological well-being and can thus be labeled as another form of ocean grabbing.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, I tried to move from the abstract to the concrete: Starting with the multiple crises, which are embedded in neoliberal capitalism, I tried to provide a sectorial analysis of crises in the fisheries sector and then moved from a global level to a national level (Somalia) and from there to a community level (Lake Victoria) in order to exemplify the ongoing dispossession of small scale fisheries at marine, coastal and inland areas along the whole value chain from harvesting to marketing and consumption. What these examples have in common is that local habitats and livelihoods are transformed so that the economic and nutritional benefits are shifted away from local communities towards industrialized countries for mass consumption whereas the social and ecological impacts are externalized. The restructuring of the access, use and management of resources and the related working conditions has thus a profound impact on traditional socio-economic, environmental and social relations. The concept of “accumulation by dispossession” as the ongoing version of “primitive accumulation” seems to describe the marginalization of artisanal and small scale fisheries well since the enclosure of common property resources deprives customary users of their means of subsistence, thereby (often violently) forcing them into wage labor, opens local circuits and resources to capitalist valorization and gears consumption towards global markets, whereas non-capitalist lifestyles and management regimes are destroyed. After the depletion of fish stocks in national waters of industrialized states and questionable policies which give them access to EEZs in the global south, the exploitation of the deep sea has begun as last resort.

As I hope to have been able to show, the challenges for terrestrial Food Sovereignty via land grabbing are equally relevant for seafood sovereignty and ocean grabbing. With deteriorating environmental conditions, attempts to both land and ocean grabbing seem likely to intensify in the near future. As a new round of enclosure and privatization of one of the biggest common property resources, ocean grabbing and seafood sovereignty deserve a more prominent role in academic study and activist circles. The example of global fisheries has many connection points with other crises of the economy, energy, nutrition, gender relations, the role of the state, financialization as well as the environment. Blue Growth is an extension of the sustainability discourse that does not promise substantial change to capitalism’s environmentally and socially destructive practices, whereas Seafood Sovereignty advocates environmentally friendly and labor intensive practices which should receive recognition and protection as traditional or acquired fishing rights. To address these multiple crises, market-based and technological innovations are sought as a solution, and not recognized as a fundamental problem.

As it seems to me, Food Sovereignty advocates (Holt Gimenez, Shattuck, McMichael and others), Solidarity Economy scholars (Satgar 2014, Williams 2014) as well as other critical scholars

(Demirovic et al 2011, Brand 2009) seem to agree about the unfolding of multiple crises which can be attributed to neoliberal capitalism and its corporate (sea)food regime. Counter-hegemonic forces, however, are seen as too weak and divided to cause a regime change unless substantial coalitions are built across different crises moments. One approach to coalition building might thus be a stronger connection of Food Sovereignty, Solidarity Economy and Eco-Socialist activists and scholars. Whether the new rounds of enclosure of the commons will be successful is not predetermined and will depend on resistance, political action and coalition building which make the negative impact of the corporate (sea)food regime visible and challenge the legitimacy and “passive consent” to neoliberal policies of crises management.

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After completing community service in a music project in Nicaragua (2007) and an internship in a civil war museum in El Salvador (2009), **Florian Doerr** graduated in Political Science and History at the University of Hannover with a focus on International Relations (2010). After that he worked for a year in various projects at the International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) in Germany (2010). As part of the German development cooperation GIZ, Florian supported the environmental foundation FUNDENIC (2011) and worked as consultant for various GIZ programs in the field of resource management, human rights and civil society in Nicaragua (2012). Returning to university and working for the ICDD, he co-organized workshops in Kenya, Uganda and Germany on the administration of international third party funded research projects (2013-2015). In 2014, he graduated from the 52nd United Nations Graduate Study Programme in Geneva and taught a seminar on "Poverty & Development". Currently, he is enrolled in the Master course Global Political Economy (GPE) at University of Kassel, Germany.