



Exploring the social sustainability of Aquaculture

An ethnography of shellfish
farming in Killary harbour

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[A Sociology of Aquaculture]

- Aquaculture is of the only long term employment alternatives outside of agriculture for the coastal communities in the west of Ireland. (Phyne 1996)
- Aquaculture requires qualitative research on two critical factors – Resource management and the Oligopolistic market.

[Research Questions]

- Can rational actors manage common pool resources through the collective action process? Under what circumstances is collective action possible? What prevents it from happening?
- What does collective action look like? Can it illustrate trends on new forms of local governance?
- What is the role of the state in this process?

[Research Questions]

- What are the effects of an oligopolistic market on small scale producers?
- How do they manage to up-skill to meet the demands of price, quality and environmental concerns that have dominated the aquaculture industry?
- What effect has this on the social organisation of small scale producers?

[Methodology/ Work Schedule]

- Research to be done through an ethnographic analysis of Shellfish farming in Killary Harbour North Connemara
- Methods will include observation, unstructured interviewing, participant observation and document analysis.
- Next year will centralise on developing the empirical aspect of the research.