

THE GOVERNANCE OF MUSSEL PRODUCTION IN GALICIA: AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Gonzalo Caballero Miguez
María Dolores Garza Gil
Manuel María Varela Lafuente

(University of Vigo, Spain)

Introduction

Galicia: cultivation and production of mussels

Galician Rías: “flooded tectonic valleys located on the Northwest Iberian Peninsula”
(Ares, Muros, Arousa, Pontevedra, Vigo)

System: “floating raft culture”

The mussel sector in Galicia

3337 mussel rafts

Relevant sector in employment, production, backward and forward linkages in the production chain.

Galician weight in world mussel production: 11%

The sector represents 23% of the total Spanish fish production.

65% is destined for the canning and freezing industry; 35% is destined for the fresh-consumption market

RÍAS

Percentage of mussel rafts

Ares-Betanzos	3.08%
Muros-Noia	3.53%
Arousa	68.68%
Pontevedra	10.36%
Vigo	14.32%

The New Institutional Economics

Property Rights and Transactions

Transaction Costs and Institutions

History, polity and culture matter

The role of the State

The dynamics of institutional change

The historical path of the Galician sector

Previous efforts in Spain: Barcelona

1946-1976: Granting the rafts licenses in Galicia

Canning industry, labour intensive activity , “family capitalism component”

Warning: Number of licenses / Number of installed rafts

Technical Advances and Mechanization Process

Number of mussel rafts in Galicia

Year	Number of rafts
1946	10
1956	410
1960	1099
1975	3134
1997	3337

Institutional Analysis (I)

A) The sea as a resource: the problem of the “common pool“

From the “tragedy of commons” to an institutional solution (titles and enforcement mechanisms)

B) The role of the State

1946-1976: Granting of licenses (Dictatorship)

1975-1978: Political transition

1978- ... Decentralization; Regional Government

Institutional Analysis (II)

C) Legal Rules

D) The system of property rights

Exclusivity of Access and Mussel Extraction

Transferability (mortis-causa, inter-vivos, no hiring)

Period of time: 10 years (+20). (Fishing Law, 1993)

Choice of techniques and products: Limits

Institutional Analysis (III)

E) The failure of a co-management experience in the 1970s

Atomised production, “oligarchy of demand”

Public sector created a Society

1974: Society of Mussel Producers of Galicia

1977: Financial situation of SOMEGA was critical

F) The organisation of the sector

After SOMEGA: Associations to gain influence

70% of total production is associated

Institutional Analysis (IV)

G) Rules and Public Policies

Rules: property rights, public policy

Public Policies: - Planning and management
- Control and inspection tasks

H) Institutional Equilibrium and Status Quo

Institutional equilibrium: no new licenses

Status Quo: Winning coalition