

# Why do recreational fishers fish?

MEDAC WG4 – 27.10.2020

STUDY:

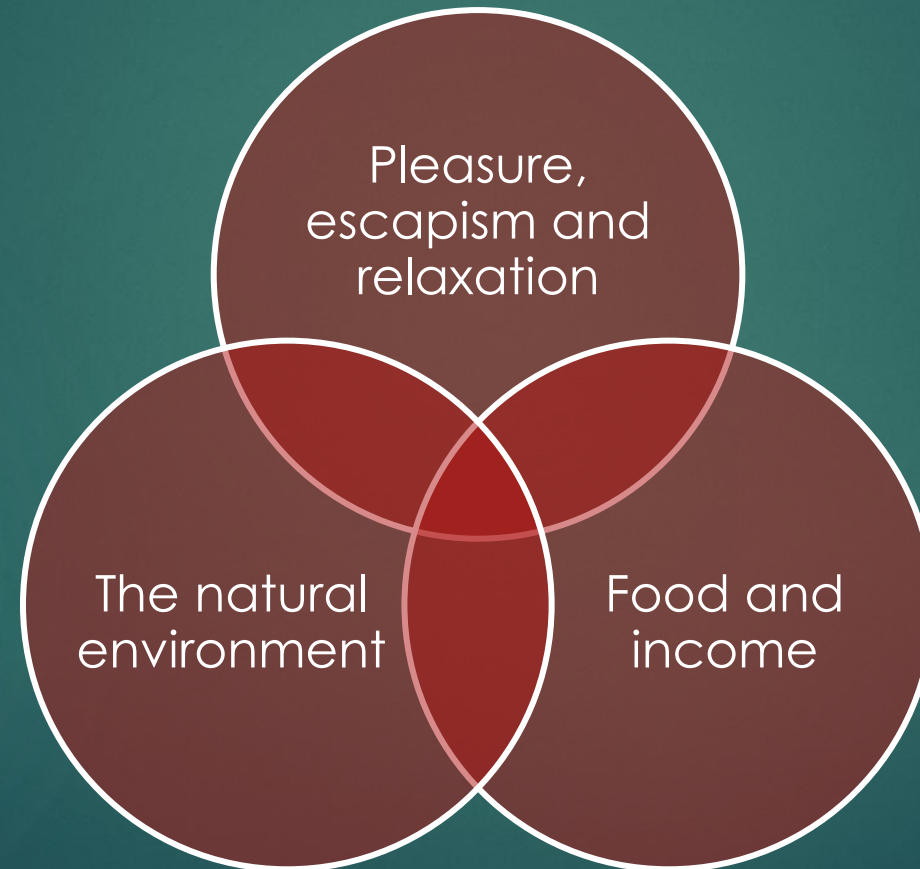
## Why do fishers fish? A cross-cultural examination of the motivations for fishing - 2016

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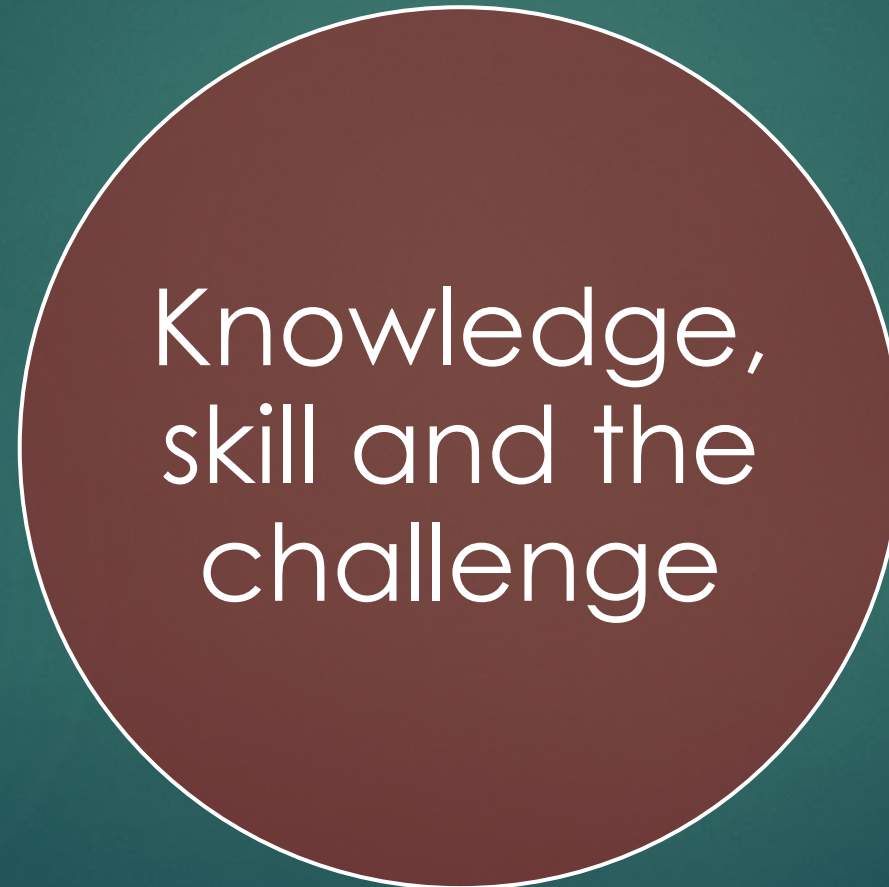
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*“Life today is so busy and there is constant background noise. Fishing is an escape back to basic existence that improves mental health and clears the mind.” (Australian fisher)*



Importance of knowledge development and demonstration of skill (40% of fishers) and challenge of hunting and deceiving prey (60% of fishers) as important motivations to fish



*“Fishing allows me to spend quality time with the family and I can share knowledge with my son.” (Australian fisher)*

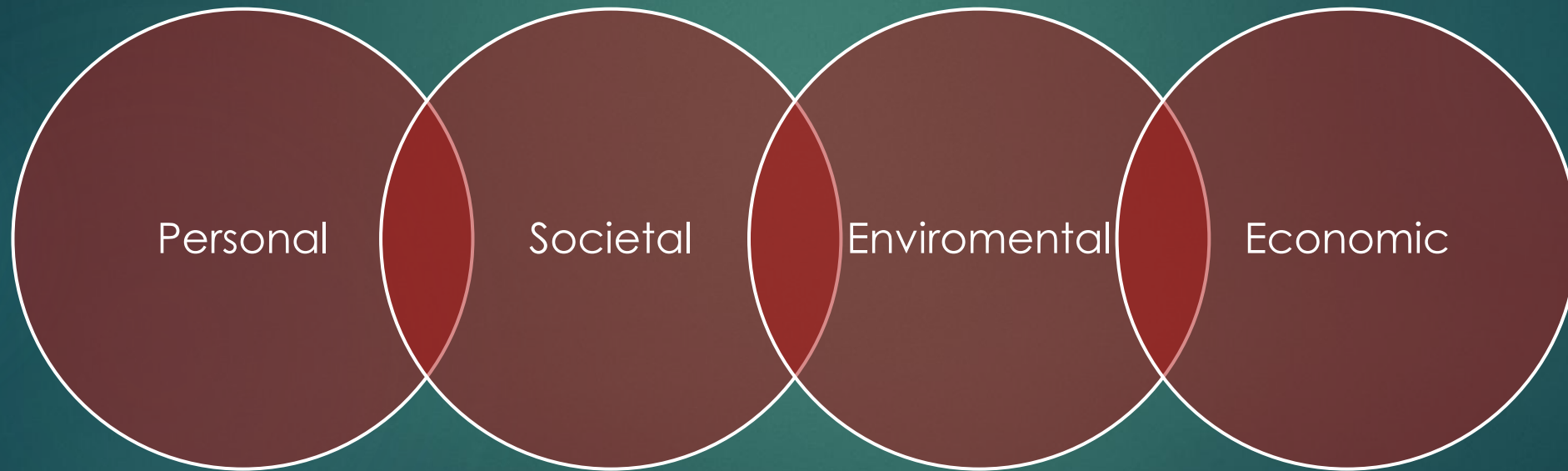
*“Fishing provides social benefits to the community through camaraderie, fishing clubs and the sharing of a common interest. It also contributes to social cohesion as it crosses social boundaries and encourages unification.” (Australian fisher)*



*“There is a primal hunter-gatherer instinct for men to feel like they are providing for the family. This is a natural thing and the more we disconnect from this in modern life, the more frustration and stress in society.”*  
(Australian fisher)

Instinct,  
masculinity  
and ego

Recreational fishers in Australia identified a range of personal, societal, environmental and economic factors that they perceived to be important benefits of fishing



# Personal

- ▶ Physical fitness – exercise
- ▶ Mental health - escape and stress release
- ▶ Healthy food supplement
- ▶ Social interaction – friendships
- ▶ Family time and bonding
- ▶ Relaxation



# Societal

- ▶ Satisfies hunter-gatherer instinct
- ▶ Enhances community wellbeing - mental and physical health
- ▶ Community cohesion - crosses social divides
- ▶ Relationship building
- ▶ Avenue for adolescents to vent frustration
- ▶ Teaches discipline and life skills
- ▶ Encourages individuals, families and children outdoors
- ▶ Accessible for all walks of life

# Enviromental

- ▶ Fosters respect for the environment
- ▶ Encourages a desire to protect nature
- ▶ Self-harvest reduces dependence on commercial fishing
- ▶ Teaches children to appreciate nature
- ▶ Provides perspective and appreciation of food

# Economic

- ▶ Fishing tourism
- ▶ Economic boost for many coastal and regional towns
- ▶ Fishing tackle, equipment and bait sales
- ▶ Vehicle sales (boats, motors, trailers and 4WDs)
- ▶ Fuel sales
- ▶ Accommodation and flights
- ▶ Food, alcohol, and ice sales
- ▶ Restaurant and pub patronage
- ▶ Camping equipment sales
- ▶ Employment

# Conclusions

- ▶ The desire to engage in fishing crosses cultural and social boundaries and is driven by a deep connection with nature and a host of underlying cultural and social motivations.
- ▶ The desire to fish can often transcend necessity, even among highly resource-dependent populations.
- ▶ Many of the environmentally-oriented values identified by recreational fishers align closely with those of conservationists, providing a clear opportunity for regulatory authorities to embrace a consensus approach.
- ▶ Fishers may act as valuable advocates for marine conservation if their values and motivations are harnessed appropriately.

*Thank you!*

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