

SS023: Casting a line over the Great Rift Valley: Investigating the Trials and Tribulations of Recreational Fisheries Management in South Africa and Kenya

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Globally, recreational fisheries (RF) are considered to contribute significantly to total fish landings. Despite this, they generate significant economic activity, directing much-needed financial support to rural and coastal communities. It is therefore, imperative that fisheries managers balance the negative impacts of these fisheries without losing the positive economic activity generated by the sector. To complicate these situations, RF are often at conflict with other fishers such as the often-marginalised small-scale sector which relies on the same resource but does not have the financial subsidies that recreational anglers can afford and implement e.g. large vessels, eco-sounders and expensive tackle that increase their fish catching ability. Therefore, these factors make it incredibly challenging to manage RF, particularly in developing nations such as South Africa and Kenya. To this end, both these nations have adopted divergent RF management strategies both in terms of definitions of what constitutes RF and how the management authority regulates these fishers. This special session aims to have a closed session semi-structured round table discussion between recreational fisheries experts from South Africa and Kenya as well as invited RF stakeholders from Kenya. The session will be opened by talks explaining how RF are managed in Kenya and South Africa respectively, followed by discussions on how these strategies work or do not work in their respective country context. A second follow-up special session will be held in South Africa at the 11th World Recreational Fishing Conference, by the same group of organisers but with South African RF stakeholders.