

Title: **Weak and Strong Sustainability Assessment in fisheries: An application to a real case study.**

Author(s): Eneko Garmendia, Arantza Murillas, Marta Escapa, Mari Carmen Gallastegui

Abstract: This paper analyzes the suitability of strong and weak sustainability assessment in the context of fisheries management. This topic is a main stream issue in the field of Ecological Economics, but its application to fisheries is rather ambiguous, although fisheries have been the focus of many pioneering studies related to natural resource management. In this paper, through an application of a multidisciplinary technique designed to assess fisheries sustainability (RAPFISH), we bring this gap analysing the implications of both approaches in a real case study: the Basque trawl fisheries operating in the North East Atlantic. Strong sustainability assessment is postulated as the more suitable index to guide natural resources management in general and fisheries in particular. In contrast weak sustainability approaches are suggested as just a complementary tool to be applied together with critical thresholds.