Policy and Access: A Story of Marginalized Fishing Community in Pakistan

By Muzammal Bilal
Abstract

There are many cases around the world, where the shifting balance of power has left native peoples struggling to maintain a traditional way of life. Their traditional farming and fishing methods have been hijacked leaving many without land or the means to farm. Many are left at the mercy of politicians and tribal leaders, just to maintain subsistence levels of food. According to the paradigm of political ecology, it is vital that leaders and governments make decisions taking into account the current political and economic environment of local people before handing down some edict from on high. The consequences of policy are not thought out and even well-meaning policy decisions can have devastating effects. The situation of the *bhatar mohanas* is not a unique case, they are badly influenced by the fishing license policy introduced by the provincial government.

In the case of the *bhatar mohanas*, the provincial government tried to hand back fishing rights to the local people without realizing that the locals no longer had access to the traditional fishing grounds and are now beholden to the tribal leaders to such a degree, that they live in marked poverty. In order to make a living at all, only those subservient to the leaders are chosen to fish. Whilst money does change hands, none or very little of it is given to the fishermen themselves. Those who present any kind of opposition are ostracized or forced to obey. This case study describes the events and policies which have led to the *mohanas* loss of self-determination.

**Keywords:** Policy, access, political ecology, fishing, license, *bhatar, mohanas, wadera, saith,*
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction:
“My parents got married on a boat, and I was also born on it”, Jabbar told me, as he looked towards the river, grief transcended from his brown eyes into his words. His family and relatives never imagined leaving the river and the fishing profession. He was depressed but not hopeless. He was smiling, but there was pain underneath his smile. His life has become difficult since leaving the fishing profession, but he has been motivated to accept the challenges. Their life was threatened if they lived beside the river. Since he left fishing many years ago, he maintained his relationship to the river by working for one non-governmental organization to conserve the population of the Indus River Dolphin. He added, “I have become so happy by going to the river and its different canals to conserve the dolphin population, I always see many people fishing and it reminds me of the days when I fished with my father and other relatives.”

This was my first meeting with Jabbar, and his narrative brought two main things into question: the access, control and authority of fishing resources, and second; how other people manage to fish including the professional fishermen. In this thesis I shall introduce one fishing community which is struggling to continue their ancestral profession and pursue my discussion in the light of their political structure, and how it modified their behavior. I will discuss the ways in which it impacts their daily life, especially in regards to the fishing profession and accessing the fishing resources.

1.2 Purpose and Aims:
Fisheries around the globe have been in great crisis of decline both in fish and in fishermen (Martin, 2001, p. 122; Olson, 2005, p. 248), and rapid socio-economic changes have been observed in the livelihood patterns of traditional fishing communities. Furthermore, the ‘social environment’ (Acheson, 1981, p. 276) manifests a high level of inequality to access and control of natural resources (Kaag et al., 2003) leaving ‘few people opting for fishing as their occupation’ (Ulman et al., 2008, p. 316). Pakistan is no exception and faces this problem. The Indus River is the largest river in Pakistan and flows through three provinces of the country. It has remained the cradle of life for countless generations and Sindhi\(^1\) fishing communities are

\(^1\) Sindh is a province in Pakistan, and on regional bases people and communities are called Sindhi.
highly dependent on it for their survival. In recent years it has been observed that many fishing communities are leaving the ancestral profession of their livelihood. They have been influenced by the fast changes that have occurred in the natural and social environment, leading them to seek other occupations.

The economic differences in the fishing communities of the Sindh province are highly influenced by provincial government policies. The fishing license system is one that limits fishermen in accessing fishing resources as well as the involvement of other non-professional people in the fishing profession. Moreover, the social exclusion of local fishermen from government policies and procedures cause socioeconomic disparity within the fishing community. Hence, the question arises here: why do the provincial government policies not consider the perspectives of the locals and how people are marginalized? This thesis will explore the impacts of provincial government policies on this particular fishing community and describe how the community members develop new connections to remain associated with their ancestral profession. It also highlights how the political structure of the community can affect their perception of government policies.

1.3 Thesis Outline:
This thesis is comprised of eight chapters. A brief introduction, purpose and aims have been presented in this first chapter. The second chapter will follow the research methods used while completing fieldwork, but before describing the methods I will explain how I became interested in carrying out my study into fishing communities. I will firstly outline how I selected the specific community I studied, and then I will outline how I entered the field. The constraints and opportunities faced during the fieldwork are elaborated upon in this chapter as well. Lastly, I will briefly describe aspects of the local variety of Sindhi, the language of this community and give meanings of some of its local words used in this thesis.

Chapter three is about the theoretical framework used for this study. Firstly, I discuss the theory of political ecology and its origin. Secondly, I explain how the failure of governments to consider the concepts of political ecology has impacted human-environmental relations, such as the example of the Brazilian government policies which negatively impacted the Indigenous Kayapo community. In the next section, I describe different kinds of methods to manage the 'Commons' and present two case studies of successful management of natural resources at the
local level. Thirdly, I explain conflict over access to natural resources with the example of Mexican government and Artisanal fishing community of La Boquita. The last section describes how policies of access over natural resources, can adversely impact social and cultural practices. The example of the Savara tribe will explain how the government policies impacted their community. Finally, I highlighted how these all case studies are related to my study.

Chapter four introduces the community; it gives the history of its name and population settlement there as well as how one can access the community. The house architecture and the population are described in this chapter. Further, an attempt is made to trace the genealogy of the people. Education, health and latest facilities available for population are also discussed. The chapter deals with their dress patterns, religion and different rituals (birth, marriage, death and fishing) they are practicing. The political structure and social organization of the community is explained at the end of the chapter. Finally, before ending the chapter I will introduce a pond close to the community and its significance in the lives of the people.

An ethnographic account of the matter of access to fishing resources in both the present and the past is discussed in chapter five. It highlights the reasons for the change in access to fishing resources for the community people. I will explain the provincial government initiative to give equal rights to access the resources. Then I will analyze the role played by the community leader to maintain good relationships with influential people.

The sixth chapter presents an ethnographic account of fishing practices. It focuses on all the techniques carried out by fishermen before cultivating the fish in different fish farms and in ponds. It gives an overview of the preparation they do before fishing. Different local fishing methods are presented in the chapter. Then, I will explain how the fish are auctioned in markets and the procedure followed to share the profit.

In chapter seven, I will highlight the political stakes of the provincial government involved by introducing new policies. It focuses on the perceptions of local fishermen, and how they see the government policies to manage the natural resources. In this chapter I will also analyze the roles of the different provincial government department. The problems encountered in these departments and how employees manage is also addressed in the discussion. Later on in this
chapter I will give an account of the social exclusion faced by local fishermen because of the political structure and these government policies.
Chapter 2  

Field and Methodology

2.1 Methodology:
I came up with some interesting news about the fishing communities in Pakistan from different sources, including friends, family, media and teachers. Some of them were telling me that fishing communities are depleting in the country and people are choosing other professions, while others were emphasizing that all the inland fisheries in the country follow traditional fishing practices. However, I remained unsuccessful in finding any authentic sources of information or literature on fishing communities in Pakistan, as the focal point of my research was to study the local people’s behavior, attitude towards government policies and the role of their political structure for accessing the fishing resources. I was uncertain in my decision to conduct the study, because of security concerns and availability of resources (e.g. money, time, people, and logistic support). In this part of the chapter I will elucidate the research methods, techniques and strategies which I applied to identify my study field and carried out throughout my fieldwork to collect the data.

2.1.1 Identifying the Study Field:
I decided to study the traditional knowledge of the fishing community living in Karachi, Pakistan. The study aimed to focus on how traditional fish catching practices can protect nature and how local people transfer this knowledge through the generations. I selected one traditional fishing community (i.e. Ibrahim Hydri, Malir Karachi) and established contacts with resource people of the community. Further, I also arranged my accommodation close to the community. But unfortunately before leaving Sweden for fieldwork in Pakistan, I had to change the study site because of security concerns in Karachi city. The law and order agencies were unable to maintain peace in the city. In the past many political parties were formed on religious and tribe grounds, and to achieve their goals they created militant wings and many people lost their lives in targeted killing. According to one report, more than 7000 people have died since 2008 in different ethno political, sectarian, militant and criminal violence (Yusuf, 2012). My plan was to stay three months in Pakistan; however, I extended my stay to five months and used my contacts to discover a new field to conduct my study.
It took almost a month using my contacts to choose the study field, when I met Dr. Muhammad Zaman\(^2\), while staying in Islamabad. He advised me that it would be best to do a pilot survey before choosing a study field and introduced\(^3\) me to WWF-Pakistan. Though I was familiar with WWF-Pakistan, I did not know that they are working with fishing communities as well. Nonetheless, I got an internship opportunity in one of the WWF-Pakistan projects named ‘Indus River Dolphin Conservation Project’ (IRDCP) and met the project coordinator Miss Uzma Noureen in the WWF-Pakistan office in Islamabad. I was lucky to become engaged in this project because, after one week of my joining, the IRDCP rescue operation\(^4\) of the Indus Dolphin was going to be launched in which I would have the opportunity to access the fishing communities living alongside the Indus River. I went to the Sukkur WWF-Pakistan office at the start of January 2013 to participate for three weeks in the dolphin rescue operation, which made me able to collect relevant literature and first hand information about fishing communities. Moreover, it enabled me to select my study field which was the small fishing community of Shikarpur in the Sindh province. I started to work on my study proposal once again through literature reviews of contemporary scholars related to my initial findings during and after the pilot survey. By mid-February 2013, I had submitted my revised proposal and obtained approval with a permission letter from my home department at Uppsala University.

**2.1.2 Entering the Field:**

I started my fieldwork in the first week of March, 2013 and arranged my accommodation in Sukkur before leaving Islamabad. It was a two room apartment shared by three employees of WWF-Pakistan, and I was the fourth one to share the second room with another man. I established good contacts in the WWF-Pakistan office in Sukkur as well as within the community during my pilot survey; Mr. Jabbar was one of those and worked for WWF in Sukkur. I took advantage of his offer to help me during the fieldwork and asked him to be my guide. He had good knowledge of the region from working for WWF-Pakistan. So, I usually

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\(^2\) Dr. Muhammad Zaman is Assistant Professor in Sociology. He completed his PhD at the Leipzig University, Germany in 2009 and Post-Doc from Warsaw University, Poland in 2011. He is currently working at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

\(^3\) I requested Dr. Zaman to introduce me to some people in WWF-Pakistan, because I considered face-to-face contact the most sufficient way of contact. Also, this way of meeting is most common in Pakistan.

\(^4\) It took place every year from 5\(^{th}\) January to 22\(^{nd}\) January to rescue the trapped Indus dolphin in canals. The flow of fresh water used to be stopped during this time period from the Guddu Barrage to the Sukkur Barrage in order to clean the canals, and paint and oil the barrage gates. Due to a fresh water shortage there are heightened chances of dolphins dying.
preferred to go with him by motorbike into the field instead of using local transport. It was an easy and efficient way to reach the community within thirty minutes, whereas local transport took more than an hour, and it was also more costly. Further, he helped me to approach the community leader during my pilot survey for obtaining fieldwork permission within the fishing community. I spent six to seven hours daily within the community including travel time, and sometimes it would be extended when I went fishing with them in far away areas. Before beginning fieldwork, I learned some words in Sindhi and prepared myself for all the questions people would ask me, like, what the purpose of my presence there was, what I wanted to learn from the community people, and how I came to know about this community. The rules for answering these questions were very simple: “be honest, be brief and be consistent” (Bernard, 1988, p. 160-2). I selected 14 households as a sample for my observations and interviews. I employed the snowball sampling technique to select my sample and I took help from two of my key informants to choose the research sample. The sample was selected according to their active involvement in fishing activities – the frequency of their fishing activities, as well as the level of their involvement in political activities. Lastly, before going to the community, I avoided dressing in jeans or t-shirts, and always wore local dress (i.e. Shalwar and qameez) as well as adopting local get-up by having a beard and mustache. I always kept all helping stationary, my camera and recorder inside my bag when I had returned from a day of fieldwork.

Every day after coming back from the field, I went through all the activities and data which I had collected during the day. It was really beneficial for me to share a room with a Sindhi man, because he taught me some important Sindhi terms. Moreover, I asked him for his help in translating the Sindhi conversation of fishermen into Urdu language in which I participated during the day. I wrote down all the recorded interviews and videos before going to bed every night. This really helped me to collect more and more data, because every time I wrote up these notes I remembered more about the events that I had experienced during the day, which prompted new ideas, thoughts and motivations. Moreover, it also aided me in raising new questions about the objectives of my studies in my mind. I always took the contact number of my informants in the field and contacted them to organize interviews and discussions. Lastly, before ending my fieldwork, I told the community leader and my informants that I was leaving the Sukkur, and they promised to give me as much help and information as possible in the future.
2.1.3 Participant Observation:
The foundation and core of my fieldwork was participant observation. It facilitated me to provide good insight into cultural settings and understanding of contextual situations. I started my fieldwork in March 2013, which was a peak in the fishing season of the region. Therefore, I divided participant observation into two phases. The first phase of observation was to participate in their daily life activities and observe the role of their community leader. One of the very effective strategies which I applied during fieldwork was participating in prayers. It really helped me develop good rapport in the community. I also participated by playing different card games as well as by participating in singing competitions. By doing all of this, I gave them the impression that I was a community member, which helped me to develop very friendly and good relationships with my informants.

The second phase of observation was to participate in fishing activities. I worked alongside fishermen and observed them when they fixed nets and other fishing tools. I went fishing with them and participated when they were catching fish in small fishing farms where the depth was four or five feet. They used small boats while fishing in deep water and loaded nets and fishing tools onto these boats with them. Therefore, I was not able to go with them in the deep water as it would cause the boats to be imbalanced. Further, I cannot swim and I did not have a life jacket. Therefore, I observed and noted all their activities and actions while sitting at the bank of the pond\(^5\). I went to the fish market to see how fish marketing and selling takes place. I also observed the community leader and his dealing with different actors.

2.1.4 Semi Structured Interview:
With the help of informal and semi structured interviews my purpose was to, “grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world” (Malinowski, 2007, p. 56). Since I had only once been in the Sindh province before starting my actual fieldwork, informal interviews at the start of my fieldwork helped me to develop very friendly and trustworthy relationships with my informants. The terms, symbols\(^6\) and different expressions came at the start of my research and later served as a springboard for further in-depth investigation and

\(^5\) In local terms it is called Tallab, which means fishing pond. But the expanse of water equates to a lake.

\(^6\) For example, in the Sindhi community, showing the palm openly is considered a harsh insult. Similarly, after meeting someone and shaking their hand, one puts his hand on his chest, which shows a high level of respect of the other person.
familiarity of the culture. Whenever I got a chance during fieldwork I conducted informal interviews and tried to consume my time in a good way.

After two weeks of participating in different activities and conducting informal interviews, I was able to develop an interview guide to conduct semi structured interviews. Most of the interviews were conducted face to face and some of them were conducted via telephone for the convenience of my informants. It was normal for me to meet the same people many times during the fieldwork. Sometimes, I restricted myself to questioning them only about the fishing profession and their perceptions about the political structure of the community and government policies related to fishing. However, when I felt that an informant was not in a good mood, I usually avoided talking about subjects related to my study objectives and talked about general things. In the last stage of my fieldwork, I used the qualitative research tool ‘Focus Group Discussion’ (FGD) and held three FGD’s. The participants in it were those I already interviewed and the average number of participants was eight.

2.2 Constraints and Opportunities in Field:

The local norms and values of the community did not allow the women to talk to strangers, especially if they were men. This barrier restricted me recording the important perspective of women. However, by having a strong and trusting relationship with the community people I was successful in conducting five interviews with community women via telephone with the help of one female working in the Sukkur office of WWF-Pakistan. It was also the result of a good relationship with my respondents who made it easier to handle the uncertain situations which happened due to unexpected strikes, protests in the city and the construction of the roads. Lastly, one major ethical issue which I faced during the fieldwork was political affiliation of my respondents. It prohibited some of them to express their personal experiences. This ethical problem escalated the complexity of the relationship between two different variables of the study, which included family inherited profession, economic status represented by the individual, kinship or professional skills. In other words, it was difficult for me to consider the viewpoint of my respondent, one related to the stand of his representative political agency or the one he thought of as a personal beneficiary for him. Whatever their opinion was, whether it was favoring or opposing any political affiliation, their names will be kept anonymous except those who granted me consent to use their quotes and citations.
The permission from the community leader to participate and interview with the fishermen before the start of fieldwork made it easier for me to record the interviews and take photos during fieldwork. I did not face any trouble arranging the interview times with my informants, because they always had much spare time after fishing. Moreover, my young informants were keener to share things with me and constantly remained in contact during my fieldwork. Further, my affiliation with WWF-Pakistan helped me to conduct interviews and discussions with the provincial government officials working in different departments.

### 2.3 Language:

*Sindhi* is the official language of the Sindh province and belongs to the Indo-Aryan language group. The people in each community speak *Sindhi* with a slightly different dialect from that of other *Sindhi* speaking communities. The young people of the community along with *Sindhi* can also easily understand and communicate in *Urdu* – the national language of Pakistan. Conversely, the older people cannot communicate in *Urdu* and it is harder for them to understand if someone talks in *Urdu*. According to some of my young informants television played an important role to teach them *Urdu*. It was a good experience for me to learn the *Sindhi* words before entering the field, because many words of *Urdu* are used in *Sindhi* for the same things and purposes but some give different meanings – for example, the word *Kachari* is used in *Urdu* to represent the court, whereas in *Sindhi* it is used for informal discussion. During my time in the field, I also found many words in *Sindhi* similar to my mother tongue – *Punjabi*. However, it was difficult for me to understand anything when they spoke very fluently. While it was easy for me to understand the people’s questions which they asked slowly in *Sindhi*, my reply was always in *Urdu*. All the interviews were held in *Urdu*, except three in which I needed the help of an interpreter and the interviews conducted via telephone with women. They always communicate or talk in *Sindhi* while fishing or preparing the fishing tools and it became difficult for me to understand what they were talking about. By recording I was able with help from one of my *Sindhi* friends to translate their dialogue.

Some of English words have been adopted in their vocabulary and frequently used (e.g. Department, school, government, fisherman, fish farm, time, photo, automatic, fridge, mobile
People of the community use the word ‘Machi’ for the fish and ‘Machi Maran’ for fishing. The word fish is used everywhere – fish farms, Sindh Fisheries Department, Fishermen Welfare Card and Fisher Folk forum – so they also used it in their life along with machi. They have Sindhi names for all the fishing methods – Narro, Ghai, Tumb, Kurri, Phairi – and tools – Soa, Rassi, Rassa, Thaila, Bairi, Dorri. The word ‘Marti’ means fishing wages and the person who keeps all the financial records is called ‘Munshee’. The word ‘Wadera’ is used for the community leader, chief or head of any tribe, whereas the word ‘Mohana’ or ‘Mir-behar’ both represent fisherman. According to the mohana fishing abilities they have different ranks, for example, an expert mohana or one who can operate the boat is called ‘Nakho’ whereas one who can do only labor called ‘Khalasi’. The person who owns the boat, fishing tools or anything else is called ‘Maalik’.

Table 1. Some of the introductory sentences which I had learnt in Sindhi before entering the field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Sindhi</th>
<th>Punjabi</th>
<th>Urdu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is your name?</td>
<td>Tawhan jo nalo chaa ahay?</td>
<td>Tussan da ki naa hay?</td>
<td>Ap ka kia naam ha?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people are there in your family?</td>
<td>Tawahan je ghar main ketra bhati ahain?</td>
<td>Tussan da ghar ich kinnay banday hey?</td>
<td>Ap k ghar kitnay loug han?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your work difficult?</td>
<td>Chaa tawhan jo kum dukhiyo ahyay?</td>
<td>Tussan da kaam okhaa hay?</td>
<td>Ap ka kaam mushkil ha kia?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 The word machi is also used in Punjabi for the fish.
8 Munshee is also used in Urdu and Punjabi for the same purpose as in Sindhi.
Chapter 3  

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction:

In order to study about the marginalization of the fishing communities in the natural resource management of Pakistan, I rely on political ecology theory. Political ecology is considered a relatively new research area in the field of social science. It emerged (at least under that terminological banner) in the early 1980s from the environmental movement, and draws upon the theories from political economy, human geography and ecological anthropology. It is a testimony to the increasing concern about the complex dialectic between the environment and human beings. Its formal definition is quite elusive but the variables among the academic background and the researchers explore certain similarities, which focus upon resources and power (Doyon, 2002, p. 84).

Political ecology includes ecological concerns as well as broadly explained political economy. In combination with this, it encompasses the constant shift among natural resources as well as among the groups and classes in society (Blaikie & Brookfield, 1987, p. 17). Political ecology perspectives highlight the historical development of social relations of production and of society/nature relations. This analysis also includes a discussion between resource distribution and state policies. Bryant (1992, p. 13) comments that Third World political ecology might be explained as the attempt to analyze and understand the political conditions, sources, and ramifications of environmental change. To study the social exclusion of fishing communities regarding natural resource access and management policy formation, I have often drawn from Bryant’s political ecology theory. The next section will outline five case studies: the first from Turkey and the second from the United States; in which regulatory systems have enhanced traditional fishing practices; ensuring sustainable and equitable outcomes for the local communities. The other three examples demonstrate regulatory failure: one from Brazil, Mexico and India. This thesis illuminates the process of exclusion of local people in different aspects of resource access and environmental policies and clarifies in turn how this causes their social, cultural, economic, and structural marginalization.
3.2 Politics and Policies:

Changes in the environment have been important drivers of politics. Political response has of necessity come at local, national and international levels due to air and water pollution, soil erosion, global warming, degradation of forests, and floods. Political-ecological forces mediate our common future in unprecedented ways (Bryant, 1991, p. 164). In the last couple of decades, it is noted, policies that were developed to manage the environment and to restrict increasing resource degradation have received high attention. It is important to address how all these policies as well as ideas used to justify them are actually understood by all the various stakeholders. As Schmink and Wood demonstrated, ‘ideas are never “innocent” … [they] either reinforce or challenge existing social and economic arrangements’ (1987, p. 51). Bailey and Bryant stressed, “third world political ecology must address the politics of all types of environmental change, and at various scales, in so far as they have an impact on the third world” (1997, p. 06). State policies have an important role in contemporary human-environmental relations and also structure social discourse in regards to environmental change. Noble-sounding environmental causes can even be used to justify greedy resource extraction and human exploitation (Beach, 2012, p. 37). Therefore, it is important to analyze their origins, content, implications and impact (Bryant, 1992).

Centralized, “top-down” policies to manage natural resources are not complete without the consideration of local people's needs and desires. When only outsiders’ standards for policy formation are implemented, local people are excluded or marginalized. In regards to international cooperation, broad policies are sometimes beneficial, when unique and specific settings are considered for sustainability projects. However, they are often too slow and difficult to adjust in a dynamic, local context (Jentoft et al., 1998; Kaag et al., 2003). Communities directly engaging with their environment pose a great challenge to centralized control (Bunce et al., 2000). It is noted in Asia-Pacific practitioners of resource management, instead of centralized top-down policies, adopt decentralized and context-specific approaches; so called adaptive and integrated management (Acheson, 2006; IUCN, 2008: Siry, 2006), or community-based natural resource management. It is believed that these “ground-up” decision making and resource management policies, serve to empower the people directly related to the environment, as well as the sustainable use of the natural resources. Besides poverty reduction and recognizing indigenous
knowledge, this approach also supports the priorities of biodiversity conservation (Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997; Agrawal, 2001). Acknowledging the local people's rights to decision-making, as well as sharing management responsibility and devolving power, inspires them to actively participate rather than remain passive (Berkes & Colding, 2000; Armitage, 2003; Ferse et al., 2010).

3.2.1 Brazilian Case Study:
As discussed earlier, it is important to highlight politics and ideas when it comes to environmental policies, as they pose variable opportunities and challenges for different stakeholders. This section will present an example case study from Brazil.

The conflict between the Brazilian government and the Indigenous Kayapo community in regards to deforestation policy exemplifies the failure of centralized “top-down” policies. The Brazilian government supported economic development schemes, and this has become the reason for massive clear felling of forests in Amazonia. “In the 1980s, mounting evidence of these policies' failure to meet even short-term economic goals, and increasing recognition of the long-term negative economic effects of environmental degradation drew public attention to the limits of Western scientific knowledge of the rain forest” (Conklin & Graham, 1995, p. 697). The government interest to construct roads, industries and cattle ranching in Amazonia, jeopardizes the land rights of the Kayapo people as well as their cultural and social life.

There have been large efforts by Indian activists with the help of environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to elicit solidarity with indigenous peoples who have fewer opportunities for gaining political support (Conklin & Graham, 1995, p. 697). For the protection of indigenous rights, anthropologists, lawyers, the Pan-Brazilian indigenous organization, the Brazilian Catholic Bishops Council, the indigenous missionary council and different NGOs joined hands on a voluntary basis. Moreover, the Brazilian Anthropological Association (of about 600 members) has also become active on this issue concerning the rights of indigenous peoples. Among those leading NGOs are the Interchurch organization for development cooperation (ICCO), a Dutch organization of Protestant Churches, the Ford Foundation based in Rio de Janiero and British Oxfam. All these started different campaigns for the protection of indigenous lands. Irrespective of their success, these campaigns have some very important outcomes; for example, they helped to raise global awareness of the plight and major threats
faced by the Indians (Cunha & Almeida, 2000, p. 318). Moreover, the spread of information regarding indigenous resource management supplied vital data to support an ecological critique (Schwartzman, 1991). The international goal to preserve bio-diversity was attached to the idea of preserving the indigenous knowledge, because the Kayapo farming and forestry methods are actually increasing biodiversity. Indians are now being acknowledged by The West as the traditional guardians of the forest, with many environmentalists using the promise for advances in medicine and pharmaceuticals as a means to save the rainforest and its unknown resources (Conklin & Graham, 1995, p. 698).

Environmentalists pressured Brazilian policy makers to pay attention to their policies whose over reliance on multi-lateral lending institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) caused the nation’s massive foreign debt. Brazilian officials became sensitive to international scrutiny against their failure to recognize Indian land rights in several regions which were massively influenced by rapid, large-scale economic development (Conklin & Graham, 1995, p. 699).

3.3 Conflict Over Access to Natural Resources

Most natural resource management science policies originate from the “munching’- hypothesis” –the concept that rapidly increasing population will consume, contaminate and otherwise terminate the biotic resources that maintain life in the world, until adequate policies, rules and institutions have been established to protect the “global commons”. This view has been revived by Hardin in his article ‘The Tragedy of the Commons’ which emphasized that “ruin is the destination” when groups or individuals act out of self-interest contrary to the common good (Hardin, 1968, p. 1244). More recently, Ostrom demonstrated that commons are not open access and might be defined as “common-pool resource” (CPR): managed at the community level by setting and enforcing rules and norms to control the behavior of individuals, thereby avoiding the tragedy (Feeny et al., 1990; Ostrom, 1990). This kind of management benefits both humans and the environment. By managing natural resources, poorer people can make a good income as well as avoid the degradation or overexploitation of the environment. Turkish coastal fisheries is an example of a successful regulatory system. It was developed for fishermen of Alanya for the harvest of the fishing resource. It was successful because it introduced responsible management of a fragile resource. The fishermen drew lots to determine a starting point; from there the
fishing sites were responsibly spaced out and access was rotated amongst the fishermen, to avoid overfishing. Despite of the fact that only half of the licensed fishermen belong to local market cooperative but all of the stake holders fully participate in creating and maintaining regulations (Berks, 1986).

The next example of a successful ‘Commons’ is that of New Jersey fishermen in America. They implemented a form of self-regulation and formed a cooperative to enhance the bargaining power of fishermen. In order to reduce the incentives of overfishing, the cooperative determines the size of the fishing catch and the revenue distributed among each boat regardless of number of catches (McCay, 1980).

These cases demonstrate that people are not helpless but can organize and monitor resources by themselves and can adjust equal utilization of resources (McEvoy, 1988). Over the past decade, common property regimes and traditional resource management have come to be regarded as the standard framework to conserve resources and reverse the environmental destruction that often accompanies economic development in Third World countries, particularly in marine settings (Bunce et al., 2000; International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN], 2008; Johannes, 2002).

The fisheries problem cemented what is now known as “common property theory” (Warming, 1911; Gordon, 1954; Scott, 1955). This sort of reasoning is associated with fisheries caused by the involvement of various users exploiting this limited resource. The “fisheries problem” – overfishing in particular – continues to be given insufficient consideration by centralized state management and conservation efforts (Pinkerton, 2011). Recently, fisheries find themselves at the forefront of policy discourse in relation to natural resource management, now often known as “local level management,” “participatory management,” or “co-management” schemes. This is characterized by the sharing of authority and accountability between state, agencies and stakeholder groups. Co-management is defined as a collaboration of national government, researchers, commercial fishing and local communities which share responsibility and accountability for fisheries management9 (Pinkerton, 2011; Dale, 1989; Ward & Weeks, 1994;

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9 To encounter the failures in fisheries management four types of reform have been advocated, and co-management is one of them. The other three are: 1) still more and better science, 2) a humble and more
McCay & Jentoft, 1996; Schlager & Ostrom, 1999). Local communities hold a vested interest in the future long-term condition of the resource, justifying their rights as stakeholders. The frequent cases of some type of established collective resource tenure and management system reflect this proposition (Agrawal, 2001; Armitage, 2003; Berkes & Colding, 2000; Ferse et al., 2010).

It is important to clarify the confusion in the terms and concepts used in common property inquiry. “CPR” is the acronym for “common property resource,” “common pool resources,” and “common property regime” but each has a slight variation in meaning and emphasis. There is further confusion between the terms “commons” and “open access”. McCay presented a solution for this confusion in her discussion of “common property theory” or “CPT”. According to McCay, CPT is “a theory, a model, or a metaphor – depending on how formally it is presented – that accounts for the outcomes of consequences of behavior in terms of property rights.” Furthermore, she states, “In most formulations of this theory, the condition of absent or poorly-defined exclusive property rights are known as ‘common property,’ the behavioral and decision-making situation is known as ‘commons dilemma,’ and the outcome is called the ‘tragedy of the commons’” (McCay, 1992, p. 190).

CPRs with an objective to manage those resources on a communal long-term basis unite individuals in a community (Ostrom, 1990). Such CPRs normally engage two things: the first being, “well defined common property resources and resource users”, and the second being, “strict controls on access and use so as to prevent over-exploitation” (Bailey & Bryant, 1997, p. 161). However, Monbiot (1993), notes that traditional common property institutions are vulnerable to destruction by states in order to promote both privatization and strong government controls. McCay summarizes the enduring popularity of CPT: “CPT is attractive to anthropologists, [geographers] and other applied social scientists because it simply and elegantly brings to bear a theory of social behavior on environmental and resource management problems. On the [other] hand, it opens the minds of natural scientists to the importance of human institutions” (McCay, 1992, p. 193).

“adaptive” application of science to management, and 3) increased privatization of fisheries rights, letting the concealed hand of the market do the rational allocating (McCay & Jentoft, 1996, p. 238).
The term *access* is often used without having a proper definition by natural resource analysts. Ribot and Peluso, define access as “the ability to derive benefits from things,” (2003, p. 153). Access includes all possible ways which enable an individual to gain benefits from things; it does not specify legal property rights as opposed those socially sanctioned by custom or convention. All *socially acknowledged and supported* claims or rights (acknowledged by law, custom, or convention) are associated with the definition of property. The extension of the “bundle of rights” theory of property to a “bundle of powers” approach to access has been supported as meaningful when finding these “powers” amongst the social and political-economic frameworks that form people’s abilities to gain from resources. Various categories of power relations to demonstrate different mechanisms of access such as: access to technology, capital markets, knowledge, authority, identity and social relations can be noted. These classifications are speculative: none are obvious or complete. Every aspect of access may make possible, conflict with or compliment other access mechanisms and end in complicated social designs of benefits and distributions (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 156-173).

Bailey and Bryant (1997) demonstrated that the extreme poverty in the Third World provides a solid explanation for a specifically Third World political ecology. Such poverty escalates environmental conflicts that are predominately based on livelihood (Bailey & Bryant, 1997, p. 8). Natural resources (local land, water and forest) are often the main source of subsistence for poor villagers, and conflict occurs when powerful coalitions try to restrict their access to those resources (Bryant, 1992, p. 23). People and institutions of different areas and society have different powers over the natural resources. Their power affects the ability of the stake holders to benefit from the natural resource. The institutes and people who have power, often control the access of natural resources, while the weak have to go through them to get access. These people and institutes enjoy the access of natural resource whether or not they have right of using it. One important thing is that these institutes and people often pool their power forming a group of beneficiaries, acting in concert to assert greater control or to maintain their grip on the resource (Ribot & Peluso, 2003).

Thus Power is a key concept for political ecologists when describing the topography of a politicized environment. It is linked to the marginalization and social exclusion of weaker,
grassroots actors for managing and accessing the natural resources (Kaag et al., 2003; Bailey & Bryant, 1997).

**3.3.1 Mexican Case Study:**
The case of the Artisanal fishing community of La Boquita in Mexico, provides a prominent example of conflict over access to natural resources and linkage to power relations. The structural marginalization of the fishing community is directly related to government policies. Instead of providing the latest facilities, loans to strengthen the fisheries and acknowledging the pivotal issues of the community; the government sold land traditionally used and managed by the La Boquita fishing community. The government failed to address villager’s interests and continued to sell the residential and productive areas of the La Boquita community in order to develop tourism, even though the question of land ownership remains unclear (Doyon, 2002, p. 89). Two problems arose from the conflict between the government and the community. The first occurred when the government formed farming areas. Out of these farming areas some packets of land were given to engineers and managers who were involved in developing these farming areas without advising the community. Although this area was transferred by the government to the managers and engineers, the land remained unoccupied. As the local people were uninformed about the land transfers, they presumed the land was unbounded land and set about building their own farming areas there. When the people to whom this land was transferred came to know about the situation they complained to the government. The Mexican army was ordered to intervene and situation worsened. The army burned the villages, including the homes and all of the crops, as the government wanted the villagers to leave the site (Doyon, 2002, p. 91).

The second problem relating to the property is more complex. The government sold large tracts of land to powerful businessmen who wanted to develop the coastal area for tourism. These businessmen wanted the local community to be relocated elsewhere. It caused a lot of violence in the area. Despite the conflicts, the government continued to sell more coastal land to these businessmen at their request which resulted in bloodshed. The power relations of the state government and investors succeeded in marginalizing the locals. The sold territory was not only the source of livelihood for La Boquita community members, but represents their identity, social life and future. On the other hand it is a source of profit for the investors and state government. The main source of income for the La Boquita community was fishing and farming. In fact, the
fishing methods adopted by the local community were sustainable and never damaged the environment, unlike the development of tourism industry, which caused untold damage to the ecosystem of the area. The companies involved in development of the area, dumped tons of soil dredged up onto the seashore and lagoons. This activity destroyed large sections of the nearby fresh water sources that provide nutrients and oxygen to the local ecosystem. The damage to the ecosystem has affected fish stocks in the lagoons, and also along the sea coast where they set their nets, drastically reducing any fishing activity. The fishermen's productivity and income have decreased proportionately and, hence, so has their quality of life. “Their feelings about the decline in their quality of life can be observed in the nostalgic discourse about the lagoons as it used to be, apparently, a paradise on earth where all fishes, birds and vegetation flourished in abundance,” (Doyon, 2002, p. 92).

Apart from environmental degradation, the tourism industry has also created new social divisions within the community. Many fishermen of La Boquita have modified their activities in order to provide tourist services, such as fishing day-trips and fast rides on inflatable, banana-shaped rafts (Doyon, 2002, p. 93). But these activities do not benefit the cooperative, because the pool of income for the co-op is gained solely from fishing. Traditional fishing knowledge is being lost, as the village elders find their young apprentices are being lured by the promise of ‘easy money’ in the tourist trade.

The government intervened on the pretext of bringing all stakeholders to the table and hearing their concerns. But all these efforts were not convincing, as well as being irrelevant to the main issues of the La Boquita community. The government was still unable to address the issues of “…poverty, environmental degradation, resource depletion…,” and the disintegration of the fishing communities (Doyon, 2002, p. 83). The federal government's lack of interest to solve the conflict over access to natural resources, resulted in environmental degradation as well as social and economic destruction of the community (Doyon, 2002). The Mexican case study is a clear example of policy makers, ignoring the key aspects of political ecology, in a bid to develop a modern industry at the expense of traditional and sustainable ways of life.
**3.4 Social and Cultural Impact of Policies and Access over Natural Resources:**

Natural resources facilitate survival and can alleviate poverty as well being a source of solidarity, social and cultural life for a community. Change and disturbance of access to resources are likely to become important factors in shifting social processes. Just as politics can cause environmental change, so can the modification of water, land and forests cause significant change of political representation. For better understanding of these consequences, it is important to address the socio-economic impact and political process together. Two questions arise from the diverse literature on political ramifications: “first, to what extent are the costs of environmental change borne by socially-disadvantaged groups, and how does this unequal distribution of costs mediate existing socio-economic inequalities? And secondly, under what circumstances does unequal exposure to environmental change modify political processes (Bryant, 1992, p. 24)?”

Power relations manifested as control over access often lead to the marginalization of the weaker grassroots actors, and are linked to the social exclusion of their involvement in resource management. Further social exclusion is likely to happen in the form of political, cultural, economic or public policies. This also increases poverty and propels people to adopt new livelihood patterns. The emergence of new livelihoods has both positive and negative impacts. On the one hand it helps people to raise their living standards but on the other hand, it also erodes community solidarity and kinship ties, while causing the movement of people to new locations (Ellis, 1998; Haan & Zoomers, 2003).

**3.4.1. Savara Case Study:**

Local Government Policies and forestation department access the natural resources had a severe impact on the social and cultural life of Savara tribe. The Savara live in the state of Aresa and West Bengal, in India. The area in which they live is rich in natural resources and biodiversity. The Savara people are totally dependent upon the forest ecosystem for sustenance, as well as their social, economic and religious life. The big trees of the forest such as the Ficus, Pilnata and Arjuna etc, provides habitat to the local fauna, in turn, providing prey to the Savara; hunting was a favorite past time. There were also medicine trees such as Palmeta, Paniculate and Anacradium. These trees were employed in making medicines and used in local healing methods of the tribe. The community used the forest to meet their basic needs such as fuel, shelter, food,
building materials and medicine. They also fashioned Minor Forests Produces (MFPs) such as: ropes, plates, cups and other domestic objects.

The local government launched a reforestation program through the state forestry department but the species they chose are not relevant to the Savara people. For example cash crops, such as mangoes were planted on a large scale in a bid to provide an income to the local people. However, the Savara people did not reap the benefits and instead witnessed yet more destruction of their forests. At the same time, the demand for medicinal plants and ancient hardwoods grew and these were felled on a large scale. Powerful foreigners began collecting medicinal plants, and MFPs on a commercial scale, depleting various species to the brink of extinction and paying a minimal stipend to the local people. The Forestry Department then restricted the Savara people from collecting medicinal plants for themselves; the traditional owners of the forest.

The actions of the Forestry Department and townspeople of the state had a devastating impact on the social and economic life of the tribe. Previously, the Savara people could easily access their resources free of cost, but the impact of deforestation means they have to travel long distances to collect the things they need. It has severely affected the Savara women who were often engaged in gathering MFPs but are now without a source of income. The deforestation has also caused soil erosion, which has also negatively affected the production of their crops. The loss of their traditional habitat has resulted in decreasing their living standards. Their worsening economic condition has left them little choice, but to become workers on the land belonging to the townspeople.

The young people of the tribes who helped ladies to collect MFPs in the past, now go to nearby urban areas to find work in order to fulfill economic needs. The deforestation has also affected the cultural festivals of the tribe. The Savara people used different forest resources for celebrating different festivals, for example: palm leaves were eaten during marriage, death and other village ceremonies. Sago trees were given to girls, but nowadays, this practice has ceased due to the scarcity of these plants (Sabar, 2010). A tragic scenario where marriages are no longer blessed with a sago tree.
3.5 Relevance to the Bhatar Mohanas Case
As discussed the impact of top-down, government policies on societies can be detrimental if the political ecology factors are not taken into consideration. The Brazilian example highlights how the top-down policy, for short-term economic gains, had a devastating, environmental impact on local resources and indigenous communities. The Mexican case study illustrated a government’s desire to develop tourism at the expense of the indigenous community. Irreparably damaging a coastal ecosystem and losing traditional knowledge. The Indian case study was similar to the Brazilian one, in that it involved the relocation of a forest people. The Savara community lost their habitat and their way of life. In each case, a similar thread can be seen, of a policy makers ignoring the interests of their indigenous people, for short term economic gain. The same power struggle is presented in the featured case study of this thesis, of the Bhatar Mohanas in Pakistan.

In my study of the mohanas fishermen, the Jatoi landlord and Mahar wadera represent the two dominant groups in Shikarpur region, who have power and control over the natural resources. Whereas, the marginalized mohanas have limited access to the natural resources they previously enjoyed under their stewardship. Their subjugation is so complete, that they now require permission from the Jatoi landlords or Mahar wadera to work in their ancestral lands. The provincial government attempted to give back the power to the fishermen by issuing fishing licenses, but by then, the fishermen did not have the means with which to fish nor to transport the catch to market. This case study will describe the events and policies which have led to their loss of self-determination.
Chapter 4  Community Profile

4.1 Introduction:
This study is held in a fishing community living in a small Goth of the Shikarpur district. The district is located in the upper Sindh province of Pakistan and remains a famous route for trade just as it was many centuries ago. In the past, traders in South-East Asia would pass through it heading for Iran and Europe. Currently, two national highways pass through the district which connects it with neighboring districts (for example, Sukkur, Larkana, Khairpur and Jacobabad) of the province. The name of this district is comprised of two words: Shikar and pur; shikar means ‘hunting’ in Urdu and pur is used for a ‘living place’. It is believed that the region was created for hunting and recreational activities of ‘Talpur’ rulers centuries ago, which explains its name, Shikapur. The fishing community lives on the Eastern part of the district and can be accessed easily by passing a town called Chak. It is considered one of the biggest towns of Shikarpur. Its population is growing day by day because of its improved structure and availability of basic facilities (education, health, security etc.).

The place where the fishing community lives is called ‘Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir-Behar’ and belongs to the sub-tribe of fishermen named ‘bhatar’. Ghulam Muhammad was the name one of the respected late community leaders and mir-behar is fisherman tribe. The fisherman in local terms (Sindhi) is called either ‘mohana’ or ‘mir-behar’. The Goth name clearly indicates that it is typical mohana dominated community and is associated with the fishing profession. There is no written record about the history of the village, which means that exact figures about its origin are unavailable. Nevertheless, according to my key informants, it was a very large village. Easy access to the Indus River and fertile land attracted many people of other communities, but in 1942, a massive flood of the Indus River broke the ‘Flood Protection Embankment’ (FPE) and people migrated to other safe areas. Later on, the government constructed a FPE out of mud which was more than 150km long and more than four meters high, to avoid floods in future. The width of the FPE is fourteen feet and people can drive a car or

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10 The word Goth is used for the small villages in Sindh.
11 It is believed that mir-behar or mohana has approximately 140 sub-tribes which live along the Indus River throughout the country.
12 Flood Protection Embankment is a boundary made far from the mainstream of the River to avoid floods in wet season.
Figure 4.1 Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir-behar from Shikarpur & Sukkur (Source Google Earth)
Figure 4.2 (A) Showing the car can move easily on FPE and (B) showing the height of the FPE

truck easily on it. The construction of the FPE made the area safe from floods and people started to settle there again, but not as close to the river as they were in the past. The FPE area where bhatar community is living is called the ‘Araien Block’ and there are many Goths around this area. After the flood in 1942, wadera of bhatar community decided to settle his people in one safe place. His people named this new goth in his honor. Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir-Baher is almost at 5 kilometers from the Indus River and less than 6 kilometers away from the town of Chak. My informants believed that the decision of their wadera was feasible to access the river and go to town easily, as well as having a safe place to live.

There are two routes to access the community: the shorter way from District Sukkur, which is passing through Chak; the other is through the town of Rustam, which is shorter if one is coming from District Shikarpur. People mostly used to go to Chak for shopping or to avail themselves of the basic life facilities. The road which leads to Chak is semi paved but the one leading to Rustam is only half way paved. However, there is no local transport from both towns going to
Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir-Baher. One has to hire private transport or walk to go to the bhatar fishing community. It is not safe to travel late in the evening or at night, especially for visitors (will give details in next chapter). Few members of the community have motorbikes called ‘garri or gaddi. Other members of the community can also borrow bikes in case of emergency or if they want to buy things from Chak or another town. If one person is going into the town, their friends and family often ask him to bring home things that they need as well. If they cannot go to Chak themselves, then they often borrow things from other members of the community and return them later when after they have had the chance to visit the town.

4.2 Descriptive Overview:

In Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir-Baher there are around 30 to 35 households in total, with approximately 500 inhabitants. During the last two decades, people have stopped constructing houses with mud, and most of the houses have been built with bricks. The houses are all single floored. The land on which they construct the houses belongs to the government and people live there without owning the land or paying rent to the government. In most cases, houses consist of two rooms, otherwise three rooms, depending on the size of the family, however, bhatars can construct more rooms if necessary. They have separate bathrooms and small kitchens. Some mohanas can afford to use tiles in their rooms or in the kitchen, while others leave don’t have
tiles. The population consists mainly of children, young people, and middle-aged people, rather than elderly people. It is normal for a married couple to have more than four or five children. Sometimes, people are unable to remember the ages of their children. In Goth, most of the people belong to the bhatar sub-tribe of the Mohanas tribe and very few of them are from other sub-tribes of Mohana such as sanjicha, larik, jhabar and chandrani. As there is no written history about the goth, there is also none about the history of bhatar. However, in ancient times, people believed that when people were living near Manchar Lake in the Jamshoro district, there was a man who baked bread for the population. The oven in which he baked the bread was called the ‘bhatte’. A saint praised the man for providing the villagers with bread. Today, the people believe that they are descendants of this man, and they are therefore called the bhatar.

**Table 1. Different Tribe groups living in Araien Block**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Sub-tribe</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mohana</td>
<td>Bhatar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sindhi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sanjicha</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Larik</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chandrani</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jhabar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jatoi</td>
<td>Jatoi</td>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>Sindhi &amp; Balochi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahar</td>
<td>Mahar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sindhi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chachar</td>
<td>Chachar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sindhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solangi</td>
<td>Machi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sindhi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bhatar community is mainly dependant on fishing, and smaller groups of other sub-tribes of mohanas participate in agriculture and labor in and other towns. Bhatar Mohanas fish in a pond near to their homes and on different private farms owned by other people. When they fish in pond close to their homes, almost every child of more than ten years participate with their elders. This opportunity enables them to learn about fishing techniques and also to get paid separately of

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13 During fieldwork, when I asked my informants about the number and age of their children, they had to think about it. They did not know the exact age of their children and they calculated them only by guessing. Some of them had eight to ten children.

14 Many sub-tribes of the Mohana can trace their ancestry back to someone. For example, the jhabar can trace their ancestry back to the man who killed the crocodile who ate his six brothers.

15 In local terms it is called Tallab, which means fishing pond. But the expanse of water equates to a lake.
their catch. *Mohanas* do not catch fish during breeding\textsuperscript{16} season, which is May, June, July and August. Meanwhile, it is a wheat harvesting season in Sindh and they try to find labor work related to wheat harvesting. If someone fails to find work at that time, he can borrow money from other members of the community without interest. Women stay at home and take care of household matters. Sometimes, if they get orders for baskets or patchwork quilts, they remain busy with weaving baskets or preparing quilts.

The people of the community know the importance of education, but their economic status does not allow them to afford the expenses of education for their children. There are two persons in the community who get an education up to college, and less than five persons manage to complete high school. There is one government primary school in the *goth*, where girls and boys can get a free co-education. However, there is only one teacher in the school for all children, which affects their learning capacity. Moreover, there is no backup system for when the teacher may be absent.\textsuperscript{17} Besides studying in school, children get religious education from their parents and *Imمام* – who is responsible for the *masjid* (mosque) and who leads the prayers five times a day. As the educational facilities are not satisfactory in the community, the *mohanas* prefer to teach their children fishing techniques. Whenever they fish close to their homes they take the children with them and train them to become good fishermen. Children usually spend their evenings by playing on boats or sometimes helping their elders. The girls and boys play separately. For example, if they are playing on boats then no boy can go in the girls’ boat and vice versa.

People suffering from different diseases have to go to *Chak* or Sukkur to seek medical treatment. There is no hospital or small clinic in the *goth*. I have been told by my informants that *mohanas* are suffering from TB, asthma, skin infections and different types of cancer. Some of my respondents told me that people mostly eat fish and cannot afford other food like vegetables, fruits, meat or grains. This leads to the deficiency of vitamins and proteins in their bodies, which cause diseases. One of my key informants told me that most diseases that affect *mohanas* are

\textsuperscript{16} They have a unique way to remember the fish breeding season. Eating and catching of fish is forbidden in the months which have no ‘Ray’ (R) in their spelling. The spelling of May, June, July and August does not contain the letter ‘R’, while the rest of the months do.

\textsuperscript{17} During my fieldwork, people told me that a few days ago the school teacher had been robbed when he was heading back home. The robbers took his money and *gari* (motor bike), and he was unable to come to school the following day. In his absence school was closed.
water born diseases, as the land in Sindh is fertile and farmers use large amount of pesticides and chemicals to maximize the agricultural yield. Rain water then brings these pesticides and chemicals into the Indus River – the main source of water for ponds. This not only affects the habitats of water populations but also causes various diseases in human beings. Children also suffer from chest infections, diarrhea, and ENT (ear, nose and throat) problems.

*Bhatar* people avail some modern technologies in their daily life. They have been availing the facility of electricity for many years. It is available in every house and very helpful to them to run electric fans especially in summer when the weather is hot. There are three electric pumps in the community used for pumping the underground water for drinking and daily use. It is the property of individuals but other members of the community can use it only by sharing a small amount of money in electricity bills. Some members of the community own refrigerators and other people can borrow ice, especially in summer. *Bhatar* people (particularly women) watch television (TV) for entertainment, few households having a TV and others can visiting to watch TV. Moreover, at least one individual from every house possesses a mobile-phone. It is an easy way for them to be connected with their relatives in other cities.

### 4.2.1 Religion:

The *bhatar* community follows the religion of Islam and celebrates Islamic festivals *Eid-ul-Fitar* and *Eid-ul-Azhaa* with enthusiasm and joy. *Eid-ul-Fitar* is a two-day celebration, which occurs after the successful completion of *Ramadan* – a fasting month in the Islamic calendar while, *Eid-ul-Azha* is celebrated for three days, starting from 10th of *Zill Hajj* – the Islamic month when Muslim pilgrims perform the *Hajj* to Mecca. Both the festivals start after offering a particular prayer in the morning, which takes place at *Chak* – where the second prayer of the day on Fridays, 18 (the *jumah*) also take place. There is a small *masjid in goth* where all they can offer is the five daily prayers. The people of the community also follow the Islamic rituals related to birth, marriage and death. At the birth of a child rejoicing takes place in a family whether it’s a

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18 These prayers, which open festivals, are additional to the five daily prayers. On Fridays, the daily routine in terms of prayers remains the same, except that the second prayer of the day is not the same as every other day – it changes in a rotational cycle every week, and people meet at the Chak to offer this prayer.
boy or a girl. An elder male member of the family is called to give Azan\textsuperscript{19} in the ear of newly born baby. Other community members and relatives also come to greet the baby’s parents and grandparents, and sweet dishes and other foods are served to everyone present. The close relatives of the baby’s parents once again get together on the sixth night to participate in the naming and head shaving ceremony of that child.

Marriage is considered an important event in the community and the average age to get married is 17 to 22 years for both male and female. Without marriage having any kind of physical relation between male and female is considered unethical and against the rules of religion. All marriages are arranged and bhatar people strongly practice endogamy marriages. For the marriage, Nikkah is one of the most important ceremonies, and without it, the marriage is not completed. Nikkah is led by a religious scholar and takes place in front of three witnesses from both sides, bride and groom. It is completed after obtaining the consent of the bride and groom in front of their witnesses.

The death of any person in the community is also followed by religious rituals. Males and females sit separately to mourn in the home of deceased person. Coffin makers and grave diggers are informed about the death of a person. Then, according to the size of the deceased person, the grave is dug. Bhatar people bury the dead body 2 kilometres away from the goth in the graveyard. The announcement of the death and funeral time is done in surrounding goths on a loud speaker in masjids. Friends and relatives come to participate in the funeral activities after the announcement. Meanwhile, the grave maker or Imam of the masjid give a bath to the deceased person. If the deceased is a woman, the elder women of the community give the bath. The dead body is taken to the graveyard in a special box called paiti in the Sindhi language. Paiti is the property of the masjid in Chak and can be borrowed easily. Namaz e Jhanaza (funeral prayer) takes place within 24 hours after the death of a person. Three main sermons are arranged after the burial. The first is done on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} day, the second on the 10\textsuperscript{th} day and the third on the 40\textsuperscript{th} day after the death. These are called soaem, daswann and chaleswanni, respectively, in local terms. On these days, religious persons come and recite the Holy Quran and pray for the forgiveness of the sins of the deceased person.

\textsuperscript{19} Azan is the call for the daily prayers, which takes place before each and every one of the five daily prayers. However, Azan does not happen during the festivals. Azan is also the ritual that takes place when a baby is born so the first words that the baby will hear are those of God.
Religion also plays a vital role in their fishing activities. Every time, before going fishing they pray to God and believe that they will get a good catch. They do not pray in any specific way. Prior to starting any activity of fishing they say ‘Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem’ (In the name of God, most Gracious and Compassionate). Whereas, one of them used to say ‘wathoo nawaan Allah jo hallo ho Allah’ (say Allah and pull out) while dragging the net out of water. Others, reply to this call by saying three times ‘Allah, Allah, ho Allah’ and, together pull the net out of water.

4.2.2 Dress Patterns:

Males in the community wear Shalwar (trousers) and Qameez (shirt). They also wear a Sindhi Topi (a cap) decorated with needle work. People consider the topi as important. It is considered unethical if anyone else try to touch it or take it without the owner’s consent. Moreover, it can result in a fight between individuals. Some of them wear a shawl on their shoulders, which is traditionally called Ajrak. I did not see anyone in the community wearing jeans or shirts. They wear slippers or sandals during the day; however, they wear boots or closed shoes on special occasions. When fishing, mohanas cover their lower body with ordinary shawls and do not wear a shirt. They never wear the Ajrak or Sindhi topi when fishing as it is considered inappropriate, as these garments are the most prestigious and important elements of Sindhi culture, moreover their economic status also does not allow them to buy new ones if they are ruined while fishing. Wearing only cloth helps them to move easily in the water. They also avoid wearing shoes while fishing and prefer to work barefooted. The boat and water are very sacred to them and going into the water or boat with shoes is considered unethical or sinful. The women in the community also wear shalwar and qameez, however their qameezs are excessively decorated with embroidery work called ‘gajs’. They do not go outside without covering their heads and even keep their heads covered with duppata or rao (a kind of scarf) while working at home.

Because I spent more than eight weeks in the community, I was able to note the physical traits of the people through participating in the fish catching process. Mohanas are industrious and hardworking people. They are not so tall but they are thin and slim. I have seen very few mohanas who are overweight. Owing to much exposure to the sun and working without shirts

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20 This is said in Arabic. They believe that by saying these prayers, they will be blessed by God.
while fishing, they are dark in complexion. Mostly all the males have small mustaches\textsuperscript{21} and some of them have short beards.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4.png}
\caption{(A) Showing the dress patterns during fishing, (B and C) daily life dressing}
\end{figure}

4.3 Oatak:

‘Oatak’ is a Sindhi term referring to a sitting place for guests; usually it is built a distance from living rooms where one cannot see the family members. People, according to their financial status, build and decorate it. It is a place used by only males – females cannot go there. If the guests are women then they can go inside of the house, though exceptions\textsuperscript{22} exist and in some

\textsuperscript{21} Some of my respondents told me that they do not consider it ‘good’ if anyone in the community is clean shaven.

\textsuperscript{22} In some places woman can also sit at oatak, but it varies and depends on the purpose of visit. For example, if any NGO or organization wants to conduct a survey somewhere in Sindh then they are allowed to sit at oatak along with other team members. However, it is rare that females from the community go to oatak – in that case visiting women can go inside of houses to meet other females.
cases women can also sit there. As I mentioned above, bhatar people hardly met their daily expenses and cannot afford to build the oatak separately. So, they use an open place beside the primary school as a common oatak. This is an undecorated place with no furniture, however they take their own kursi (chairs) or manji (a kind of bed used for sleeping as well as for sitting). During my fieldwork I often sat at oatak and never went inside their houses. It was really helpful for me to sit there as it was a common place in which I came to know everyone in the community. Further, it gave me the opportunity to participate in their normal discussions and observe their routine activities. People of bhatar community sit together at oatak to discuss their plans for fishing. Before the day of fishing mohanas sit together there and remain busy by fixing their nets and other fishing tools. They meet there before going fishing. They then go to their homes to take showers and eat after finishing fishing, and then meet again at oatak. They discuss the funny moments during fishing and sometimes serious issues regarding their profession.

Figure 4.5 (A) Mohanas sitting at Oatak waiting to go for Fishing (B) Mohanas are fixing the nets by sitting at Oatak.
4.4 Wadera and Social Organization:

Almost all sub-tribes of mir-behar have their own wadera and there is a supreme wadera for all sub-tribes. Bhatar community in Goth has a common wadera. He is the elder son of late Ghulam Muhammad who was a respected wadera in his time. As his position is inherited so he has to maintain justice in the community to keep alive the good name of his father. He solves different problems of people regarding marriage or divorce, theft issues, and small disputes between relatives. His decision becomes binding for the parties involved in any problem. In case he cannot solve a problem then it can be brought to the supreme wadera. In order to meet the financial needs of people the wadera of bhatar community has to keep good relations (which will be discussed in detail in next chapter) with the influential political person. The influential person can be businessman, landlord or religious person (in local term religious person is called Peer).

Mohanas of bhatar community get together every Friday evening at oatak. There they can discuss or solve their problems in front of wadera and it is called ‘kachari’. Usually the word kachari is used for normal discussion as well as what is carried out on Fridays. Machi mandi (mandi – market) remains closed on that day and mohanas do not do any fishing activities so they find lot of free time after Jumma namaz. Bhatar’s wadera remained in machi mandi in order to maintain good relations with influential people during all the week days except Friday. Therefore, they consider Friday as the best day for kachari.

Udhar is an unofficial system of borrowing money or things in the community. Mohanas can borrow money or anything from friends or relatives and later return them without paying any interest. These people have been following this practice for centuries. If anyone borrows gaddi for going to Chak or other places then he will not pay rent or money to the owner. But he has to pay for the fuel, and in case any damage happened to gaddi then either he has to pay for the damage or repair it. One can also borrow the fishing tools (net or boat) from other members.

23 Mostly the position of wadera is inherited. In case any wadera do not have a son then his authority can be transferred to his younger brother or any other relative. He can also nominate his successor or ask people to choose wadera for themselves after his death.

24 Muslims offer a special prayer on Friday and it is called Jumman namaaz. Friday is translated as Jumma and its prayer as namaaz.
without paying anything. In case of disagreements over the paying of the damages, *wadera* solve the matter during *kachari*.

### 4.5 Pond in Araien Block:

There is one big pond\(^{25}\) in the Araien Block owned by the Sindh Fisheries Department (SFD) and fed by the water of the Indus River. In summer water flow is very high in the river due to *monsoon*\(^{26}\) and also the melted snow from the Himalayas. To avoid flooding or any damage to the FPE the SID opens the gates of FPE. The water lasts in the pond for the rest of the year as its depth is more than 12 feet. The *Bhatar* community is living on the bank of this pond and they are not only connected with the pond for their livelihood but it also plays different roles in their daily life. Women in the community wash their family’s clothes by using the pond water. They always take clothes to pond and wash them by hand. It also serves as a swimming pool for the kids, they play on boats. Moreover, elders of the community arrange swimming competitions there. The pond is also a good habitat for its freshwater turtles, both soft- and hard-shelled turtles. These include the Indian Peacock Softshell turtle, Indian Flapshell turtle, Indian Softshell turtle, Indian Narrow-headed Softshell turtle, Black Spotted turtle, Red Crown Roofed turtle, Brown Roofed turtle, and the Indian Roofed turtle. These are all listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

#### Table 2. Different Kinds of Fresh Water Turtles Found in Araien Block Pond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name of Turtle</th>
<th>Local Name</th>
<th>Conservation Status (ICUN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian Softshell Turtle</td>
<td><em>Kanchoon</em></td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Flapshell Turtle</td>
<td><em>Rawal Roo</em></td>
<td>Least Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Peacock <em>Softshell</em> Turtle</td>
<td><em>Rawal Roo</em></td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Narrow Headed <em>Softshell</em> Turtle</td>
<td><em>Mohrah</em></td>
<td>Endangered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Spotted Turtle</td>
<td><em>Dhand walli kummi or Bherah</em></td>
<td>Endangered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Crowned Roofed Turtle</td>
<td><em>Dhand walli kummi or Bherah</em></td>
<td>Critically Endangered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Roofed Turtle</td>
<td><em>Kummi</em></td>
<td>Near Threatened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Roofed Turtle</td>
<td><em>Kummi</em></td>
<td>Least Concern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{25}\) In local terms it is called *Tallab*, which means fishing pond. But the expanse of water equates to a lake.

\(^{26}\) A rainy season is called *monsoon*. 

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Figure 4.6 (A) Indian Flapshell Turtle, (B) Indian Roofed Turtle, (C) Black Spotted Turtle, (D) Indian Narrow Headed Softshell Turtle found in Araien Block Pond.
Chapter 5 Fishing Resource: Access, Disturbance and Control

‘Ideas are never “innocent” ... [they] either reinforce or challenge existing social and economic arrangements’ (Schmink & Wood, 1987, p. 51).

Chapter one provided the aims and purposes of this study, which is to address the impacts of fishing license system to access the fishing resources. Chapter two described the strategies adopted to identify the locale and steps taken before starting the fieldwork. In the same chapter research methods are highlighted to collect the data during fieldwork. Theoretical framework for this study is explained in the third chapter based on the writing of Bryant, Bailey and Ostrom. Chapter four presented the community profile and social organization of the community. Here, in chapter five, I elaborate my findings and relate it to my discussion on policy and access in chapter three. In this chapter, the first part focuses on access to fishing resources in the past and important elements of change as well as how the transition took place over time. The next part deals with the provincial government license policy, which is “top-down” oriented and implemented without considering the contextual situation of the region. This further escalates a web of complex power relations to access the fishing resources. I explained the nature of these power relations and how it affects the bhatar mohanas.

5.1 Access to the Indus River for Fishing Past and Present:

The Mohanas of the bhatar community were fishing for decades in the Indus River without a contract with the Sindh Fisheries Department (SFD), but time has changed and they are not fishing there anymore at all. It is not the government that stops them, or implements regulations for fishing, but they no longer fish for many other reasons. The area close to the river where they were fishing is considered very dangerous because of security issues. Most of the people living along the sides of the river (which is called “kache ka ailaqa”) are involved in criminal activities. These criminals can either restrict the local mohanas to catch the fish or ask for their share. If anyone from the mohanas community resists, these criminals may physically harm28 him. According to my informants these criminals or robbers possess a great number of weapons,

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27 The area alongside the Indus River where the access is not possible by following any paved road called ‘kache ka ailaqa’.
28 During the pilot survey of different mohana communities I met a family whose member was killed by robbers in ‘kache ka ailaqa’. They tried to file a report against these criminals but police did not register it. According to the family these criminals are backed by local politicians.
which makes it impossible for police to enter. Further access to the river is also very difficult for the bhatar’s mohanas because there is not a road. In the past, they were able to walk there to catch fish and then sell them in the Sukkur fish mandi. However, for the last few years the high cost of fuel and transportation has caused problems for mohanas to access the fish mandi. Lastly, the dispute over water distribution for irrigation between two provinces, Punjab and Sindh, which has existed for many decades, continues. This reduced the flow of fresh water to the delta and threatened the livelihoods of Sindhi mohanas (Mustafa, 2010, p. 10; Palijo, 2011).

There was a contract system a few years ago which was only affordable for the wealthy wadera of mohanas communities, as well as other wealthy communities. The contract between SFD and the contractor was for a specific time period and the contractor distributed the areas for fishing between different mohanas groups of different mohanas communities. The contractor also paid a certain amount to SFD in return for obtaining the contract, which was dependent on the area. Any illegal activity that was to happen in a river or in government owned pond would be the responsibility of the contractor, who would be penalized. Mohanas were getting their share according to the terms of contracts. As mentioned above, the way that security concerns in ‘kache ka ailaqa’ leaves every wadera of the mohana community without a contract with SFD for that area. Only the people who have a strong hold in a particular region or a good political standing (these people are mostly landlords) can make a contract for that area or allow their people to fish there without a contract. Moreover, according to mohanas and many other people, the criminals and robbers in ‘kache ka ailaqa’ are backed by the local politicians or landlords. They believe fishing is a beneficial occupation; therefore, landlords or politicians support these criminals or robbers. To reciprocate, the criminal groups near the river stop the mohanas from fishing but allow the supporters of the landlords and politicians to do so. An old mohana spoke of these problems in the following way:

I remember the days when I went to the river with my father and other members of the community; it was a long distance from our home to the river, but we never felt tired and we always went to the river happily. We were not afraid of kache ka ailaqa, and no criminals were living along the sides of the river. We could go to

29 Some contractors hire mohanas on marti and at some places contractor, after keeping his expenses, paid half of the profit to mohanas.
Chak to sell the fish in a local mandi, we always got good money for our catch and we were able to afford everything. But, now there is not much fish in the Indus, water has decreased, non-professional fisherman or people outside of the mohana community use poison to catch the fish easily, many criminals come to kache ka ailaqa, and landlords who have agricultural land alongside the river stop the mohanas for catching the fish (Author's Field Material, 29th March 2013).

5.2 Contracts to License System:
The Sindh Provincial Government (SPG) took the initiative to introduce the ‘Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Fishermen Welfare Card System’\(^{30}\) in order to give fishing rights to all mohanas. It was to replace the contract or lease system, in which one can make a contract with the SFD for fishing. The price for a fishing card or license is not more than RS. 150, so that all can afford to buy it. These cards can only be issued to mohanas after checking their national identity cards and confirming that the person belongs to a fishing community.

The purpose for introducing this policy was to bring economic prosperity to mohana communities by providing basic facilities. Nevertheless, the objectives of this policy is failing to fulfill the needs of mohana communities, leaving them to be dependent on local politicians as well as resulting in more poverty. The stronger, more influential people did not get fishing licenses\(^{31}\) for fishing from SFD but continued fishing illegally. These influential people could be politicians, landlords, businessmen or Peer; and they hire people from outside of mohana communities to fish illegally on their behalf. The authorities choose not to stop them because of their strong links to different government departments (e.g. SFD, police, provincial parliament, courts etc.). Mr. Ahmed,\(^{32}\) one of my respondents, describes his views and experience about the license system:

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\(^{30}\) It is a form of fishing license, issued by Sindh Fisheries Department. This bill has been passed by Provincial Assembly of Sindh on 13\(^{1}\) January 2011. This license has three categories one is issued for fishing only with net, second if they use boats while fishing and third if they hire Khalasi and use boats during fishing. The prices of the licenses are 110 PKR (equal to 8 SEK or 1 USD), 250 PKR (17 SEK or 2.5 USD) and 550 PKR (38 SEK or 5.5 USD) respectively.

\(^{31}\) They do not belong to any fishing community therfore SFD cannot issue licenses to them. However, some of them use illegal ways to get a license or can bribe the people working in the SFD, whereas the rest of them use their power to fish and can threaten any legal authorities.

\(^{32}\) Not mentioning his real name.
The government issued us the license, but they do not have any check on it. They have no staff to monitor the implementation of the law or whether mohanas are getting their rights or not. Some places people are happy to have license system, but for us it has no worth and I consider the contract system much better than the license system (Personal Communication, March 2013).

The illegal access for fishing in the Indus River is not only threatening to mohanas but also the natural resources in the river. During my fieldwork I had the opportunity to meet officials from three state agencies: SFD, the Sindh Wildlife Department (SWD) and the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). According to them, whenever they catch a person carrying out an illegal activity in the river, they make a case against the offender and fined the guilty person. But, these people are able to use their influence to avoid sentences from the courts. One of my respondents said:

A few years ago I gave a list of people who were involved in illegal activities[^33] on the Indus River, but in response, the Government posted me in a different city. My promotion in the job was postponed as revenge for the complaint against the officials who were involved in illegal activities. The government is not interested in managing the natural resources (Author's Field Material, January, 2013).

Moreover, the mismanagement in issuing the cards involved people in the fishing profession outside of mohana communities. According to my informants they know many people who do not belong to any mohana community but SFD has issued a license to them. They went to report this issue in SFD, but no one heard their complaints. These non-mohanas people were able to obtain licenses through having a relative or friend in SFD or by bribing the employees of SFD to get the license.

5.3 Access for fishing in an Araien Block Pond, Past and Present:

As I mentioned, the bhatar community is living beside one of the biggest ponds in the region, and the contract for the ponds in the past was held by a chief (In local terms he is called ‘Saith’)

[^33]: Illegal activities include not only fishing in unethical ways, my informant mentioned that there is a black market of fresh water turtles, and these turtles have been exported to China for use in Chinese medicines. He believed the people involved in this unethical business have strong links to resource persons in government, and they have their support in case an inspector of the Fisheries Department or Sindh Wildlife were to catch them.
of the fish market who also belongs to the sub-tribe of the fishing community called larakh. He got a contract after an auction conducted by SFD. According to my informants and, few years ago a high flow of water in the Indus River brought a large number of fish into the ponds. At that time contractors did not need to cultivate the fish inside ponds, thereby saving the extra cost of cultivation. The Saith offered fishing opportunities to the mohanas of the bhatar community and paid\(^{34}\) according to their catch\(^{35}\). There were no extra major expenses for Saith except transporting fish to market or paying for a contract to SFD, so mohanas got a good marti of their catch.

Equal access for fishing has been made in recent years by the provincial government after introducing a license system. All bhatars were very happy about the introduction of this system and about getting a license from SFD. Unfortunately they could not fish independently in an Araien block pond for a single day, because they confronted the same problem as they had faced in kache ka ailaqa. The control of the pond had been taken illegally by one very influential wadera of Shikarpur who belongs to a Mahar tribe. The mahar wadera equipped his people with weapons to guard the pond and restrict the mohanas of bhatar from fishing without his permission. The chokidars – watchmen or guards – sat at different positions of the pond and provided a check on the pond for whole year. At night they also use search lights to check whether someone is in the pond. The number of fish has decreased for the last few years, therefore wadera cultivated the fish and arranged feed for them. For cultivating the fish, he sought the help of the saith who had a contract for the pond in the past and therefore could provide logistic support for fishing. He also asked the saith to hire the bhatar mohanas for fishing. The mohanas get marti according to their catch,\(^{36}\) whereas the saith keeps one third of the profit on total sales after getting paid for his services offered to mahar’s wadera.

\(^{34}\) In general marti rates are not fixed and varied from contractor to contractor. Every contractor fixed his rate of marti for mohanas and both actors could negotiate for it. However, the contractor did not share any profit with mohanas. He kept all the profit and mohanas got their marti, according to their catch, and the rate of marti remains the same regardless of the market value of the catch. In the past during the contract system the Saith also fixed the rate of marti for bhatar mohanas, but he did not keep the large share of profits and gave some to the bhatar mohanas in the form of bonus.

\(^{35}\) The catch rate includes the total weight of all kinds of fish. Whereas in the fish market the rates are different for each kind of fish.

\(^{36}\) Forty kilograms is called one ‘maan’ in local terms and fishermen are paid per maan. The normal wage for one maan is 800 PKR (equal to 55 SEK or 8 USD) or sometimes 900 PKR (equal to 62 SEK or 9 USD) getting by bhatar mohanas whereas in other areas it is not more that 600 PKR (equal to 41 SEK or 6 USD). For example, If the total
5.4 Relation of Bhatar’s Wadera with Mahar Wadera and Saith:

Earlier, I mentioned that the bhatar’s wadera had to maintain good relations with influential people to fulfill the financial needs of his people. There are many tribes in Shikarpur, and the area where the bhatar community lives. These areas are strongly influenced by the wadera of the ‘Mahar’ tribe. The wadera of mahar tribe owned a large area of agricultural land as well as a number of fish farms. Although he owned many fishing farms, there were some ponds which he held illegally (e.g. Pond in Araien block). He inherited the land, fish farms, and authority, and kept a strong hold on the area. He and his two sons actively participated in regional politics and held one seat in the National Assembly of Pakistan and two seats in the Sindh Provincial Assembly. According to my informants his strong financial background and active position in regional politics restricted the SFD from implementing any legal action against his illegal hold on provincial government ponds. The local people of his tribe as well as from other Sindhi tribes (including bhatar) take their problems to him to solve before filing reports at the police station or in a court. Problems within the bhatar people were handled by their own wadera but they could approach mahar wadera if there was problem or conflict with other tribes. Bhatars wadera approached mahar’s wadera through his munshee or saith. A young bhatar mohana who was working in a government department in another city as well as fishing explained to me:

It is not good that the mahar wadera took illegal control of Araien Block pond, but on the other side of FPE (Flood Protection Embankment) another dominant balochi tribe ‘Jatoi’ is living, and if mahar wadera did not take the control of the pond, then it could result in a large-scale conflict. Though our community is not happy with this, it is good to accept mahar wadera’s possession, because otherwise people of other balochi tribes would try to access the pond for fishing

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37 There are many tribes came from Balochistan province and settled in Sindh for last several decades. Jatoi is also one of these Balochi tribes and holds a dominant position in Shikarpur. But it is very common in Sindh that the people of Sindhi tribe take their problems to a Sindhi dominant tribe wadera, whereas, Balochi people go to the Balochi dominant tribe wadera.

38 Munshee is a term used for a person responsible to handle the matters assigned by saith or wadera mostly related with financial or business matters. Approaching mahar wadera is always done through munshee, it being an appropriate way to convey the message to him.
in his absence. It would never be acceptable for us if either wadera of Jatoi tribe or of other people interfere in it (Author's Field Material, April 2013).

Figure 5.7 Neighboring Goths of Goth Ghulam Muhammad Mir Bhar (Source Google Earth)

_Bhatar wadera_ has a very significant role in the community for getting political support for _mahar wadera_. During the time of local or provincial elections, he needed the support of the _bhatar_ community members. He asked the _bhatar wadera_ to knock on the doors of these people for votes, and ask them for support. The _wadera_ of _bhatar_ people can also call a _kachari_ for this purpose instead of door-knocking. All members of the community have to follow his decision and opposing him can result in a social boycott\(^{39}\) of the person. In response, _mahar wadera_ also provided work opportunities, especially in wheat-harvesting season, to _bhatar_ people along with fishing in the pond as well as on his fishing farms.

\(^{39}\) My informants told me it that it has never happened in their life that someone in the community refused or challenged the decision of _wadera_. But it is very common and it is an old tradition if someone tries to refuse him openly then it can be resulted in a boycott of that individual in a community. In that instance the vote of _bhatar mohanas_ are not secret ballots as they have to follow their _wadera’s_ decision to cast their votes in favor of the _mahar wadera_ in order to secure the fishing and other work opportunities. Furthermore, it is normal in the region to show any affiliation with a particular political party.
The relation of *bhatar wadera* and *saith* is based on mutual understanding for many decades, as the *saith* hired *bhatar* people for fishing in the past when there was a contract system. However after the introduction of license system, fishing in ponds was threatened by illegal control of *mahar wadera*. Yet, except controlling and cultivating the fish in a pond, he kept the same system of fishing and *marti*. *Saith* never asked the *mohanas* outside the *bhatar* community to fish, and also maintained the same relations with them. Nevertheless, he took their license which they got from SFD, and *bhatar wadera* also worked for him in a *mandi*. Mr. Shakoor, an old *mohana*, highlighted the relationship of *saith* and *bhatar wadera* as:

We respect our *wadera*, and it is shameful or insulting for us if we change his status or disobey his decisions, but when he is working for *saith* it seems unlikely that he could protect our rights. He is making good money by staying and working with *saith*, they (*saith* and *mahar wadera*) provide us fishing opportunities which are good, but they keep the same *marti* as it was in the contract system. They took our license,\(^40\) because they were afraid of us becoming united and staging a protest against the illegal control of a pond. Moreover if we go for fishing somewhere else, then we could not sell fish in *mandi* because they would ask how and where we caught it. I believe we can make more money if we fish independently in a pond – we would be able to afford the education expenses of our children (Author's Field Material, 7th April, 2013).

*Bhatar wadera* spent most of his time in the *mandi* along with *saith*. It helped him to find fishing opportunities for his people. There he kept the financial and fish-catch record of his people. If anyone in the community needed *udhar*, then he could also ask *saith* for it, who then would become a guarantor that the person would return it to him on time. He emphasizes:

I know some people in my community are not happy to work under *saith*, but having only a license does not mean that they are able to fish independently. They are unable to afford the nets and cannot even take their catch to the *mandi*. I am working in a *mandi* with *saith* and do not earn much money. Despite this, I

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\(^40\) As mentioned before about mismanagement of issuing the license, it is also common that people can take the license of others and can use it. The license is not computerized and made manually on one simple paper; however people can change the photo and details on it and can sale to others as well. But in the case of *bhatar mohanas*, all of their licenses are kept by *saith* so *mohana* cannot go for any complaint or protest against him.
respect our relationship, which is based on decades. It is worth more than money; my son and brother are also catching fish with all the others and get paid like them. I try my best to keep my people happy; saith always asks me to call them to fish on mahar wadera fishing farms. They get good merti compared to other mohanas. There are many mohana communities in Sindh, which are not fishing anymore because of security concerns in kache ka ailaqa, but we are lucky to have access to this pond and to continue our ancestral profession (Personal Communication, 5th April, 2013).

5.5 Summary:
Political ecology can provide a useful framework within which people can be directed to follow a desired path for positive, social change; provided that its implementation is fair and just and promotes equality. However, for a policy to become effective, it is important that it is properly understood and accepted by all stakeholders. According to Bryant et al., (1997, p. 6) the political ecology of the third world, must address the politics of all types of environmental change, and at various scales, in so far as they have an impact on the third world. However, the concept of political ecology is idealistic and is often hijacked by the powerful to subjugate the weak.

According to Bailey and Bryant (1997, p. 6), conflict arises when powerful coalitions restrict access to natural resources. This can be seen in the case study of the mohanas of bhatar community where the powerful mahar wadera restrict access to the fishing ponds by corruption and sometimes violent means.

This chapter describes how access to fishing resources have changed over time, from subsistence living to fishing contracts and now to fishing licences. The government implemented a contract system in an effort to control overfishing, but this resulted in contracts being held by a few powerful people. To counteract this oligarchy, the government changed the policy to a licensing system, whereby the fisherman would be licensed. However, bhatar mohanas cannot access fishing resources by having license and need to wait for the mahar wadera decision to fish (Decision to fish will be discussed later in the section 6.2). The bhatar mohanas have become a subjugated people who are reliant on the greed of the mahar wadera to continue fishing the ancestral lands, but in accordance to the rules of the mahar wadera. The mahar wadera holds on
to their power by paying mercenary *chokidars* to enforce his rules upon the *bhatar mohana* and to protect his borders from the encroaching *Balochi* tribes.

As described by Schmink et al., (1987, p. 51) ‘*ideas are never “innocent” … [they] either reinforce or challenge existing social and economic arrangements*. *Bhatar mohanas* could not enjoy the essence of the licence policy, but they are led to believe in their political structure to continue their ancestral profession. The new policy brings change in their social and economic setup. They strengthen their relation with *mahar wadera* and *saith* for their livelihood opportunities as well as protection from other *balochi* tribes.
Chapter 6  Fishing Practices

Chapter 5 outlined the provincial government license policy to access the fishing resources and the problem faced in the implementation phase. In this chapter, I will describe how the bhatar mohanas depend on mahar wadera to access the fishing resources. In turn, mahar wadera depends on saith to cultivate the fish in his farms as well for logistic and marketing support. The power to choose who is going to fish or not and the preparation for fishing are important discussions in this chapter. The cooperation among bhatar mohanas is highlighted in each activity.

6.1 Cultivating Fish in Farms and in the Araien Block Pond:
The bhatar mohanas are asked by saith to cultivate fish in the mahar wadera fish farms and in the Araien Block Pond. The beej fish – small fish or the eggs of the fish – have been brought from other farms. There are fishing farms in the region which only produce the beej fish and sell to other big fishing farms. Usually the water depth of these farms is not more than two feet whereas the length and width of the farms varies. These beej farms are owned by different people other than mohanas and mostly the small farmers. The mahar wadera pays saith for the beej fish for all fish farms and the pond in Araien Block. Saith arranges the beej fish purchase and provides transport to bhatar mohanas to carry the beej from the fish farms. But before implanting the beej, the mohanas clean the farms. The beds of the water bodies in the farms are soft, and they dig it out with big sticks. They use wooden sticks rather than a shovel to make small ditches on the beds of the water bodies. Their purpose is not to take out the mud to make the farm deeper but only to make small ditches so herbal seeds go well in the mud. The depth of all fish farms is not more than five feet, so mohanas do all digging by standing inside the water. After this, they put the seeds of natural herbs and buffalo or cow dung in the fishing farms in order to create a natural environment for the fish. According to bhatar mohanas, the herbal plants on the beds of the water bodies are important and help the fish to grow quickly. The dung is good for the growth of herbs as well as acting as food for the fish. Nevertheless, the pond in Araien Block does not need any cleaning, as the water comes in from the Indus River. In contrast, the water in fish farms comes from wells, which requires that these farms be cleaned each year. Moreover, the mahar wadera arranges the feeding of the fish for both the pond and
the farms. As mentioned earlier, it was fishing peak season when I did my fieldwork, so I had no opportunity to see how mohanas prepared the mahar wadera fish farms. But according to mohanas, mahar wader has many fish farms\(^{41}\) and they have always been called to prepare his farms. The cleaning and preparing of farms depend on the size of the farms; some farms are big and take three to four days, and some only one. They have been hired on daily wages (locally called ‘mazdoori’) and each mohana gets RS. 350/day. However, I saw the method of catching the beej which included using nets carried by mohanas of other communities. After catching, they put beej fish in plastic bags and pour water in it so the beej fish can move easily in it. Before fastening the bag, they fill it with oxygen and put it into a vehicle for transporting to different fishing farms.

\(^{41}\) Bhatar mohanas had no exact figure to give me about the number of fishing farms owned by mahar wadera. But they believed he owns more than fifteen fishing farms.
6.2 Call for Machi Maran – fish catching:

The munshee of the mahar wadera reports to him when the fish in the farms or in the pond are ready to catch. The wadera then decides on the day to fish and informs the saith. His decision\(^\text{42}\) for machi maran is based on the maturity of the fish – after six to eight months of putting the beej fish in farms and in Araien Block pond, the fish becomes ready for a catch. Then the wadera of bhatar is asked by saith to prepare his men to fish on specific days. As mentioned earlier, the

\(^{42}\) If there is rain, then wadera waits for it to stop and, if necessary, postpones the fishing for some days, until it stops.
**bhatar wadera** spent most of his time in Sukkur *machi mandi* (fish market) except Friday, so he can either inform his people on Friday in a *kachari* – formal and informal discussion – or inform his younger brother**43** – *Ustad* – to handle all the matters in his absence and remain in contact via telephone with him. Most of the time, messages are conveyed to the *mohanas* through their friends or relatives to arrive at *oatak for kachari* at a decided time. There *ustad* tells them about the day of *machi maran* and decides who will go and who will not. They do not allow the ill *mohana* to go *machi maran* with them, because fishing is their source of livelihood and they believe that taking an ill person affects their catch and results in polluting the water. In the case that a *mohana* cannot attend *kachari*, the message is conveyed to his home by sending someone to his home or by calling him on his mobile phone. A *mohana* who does not listen attentively and follow**44** the decisions of the *wadera* or *ustad* is not allowed to participate in *machi maran*. The *wadera* and *ustad* keep all the records of *mohanas* and try to give them equal**45** *machi maran* opportunities. This is also a result of the *bhatars* all being relatives – they strongly practice endogamy – as well as the general view that it is important for the *wadera* to keep equality within the community.

6.3 Preparation for Machi Maran:

The number of *mohanas* varies depending on the *machi maran* method as well as the size of fish farms. The big fish farms require more than fifteen people and smaller ones at-least ten to twelve. Therefore, experienced *mohanas* are preferred for that. However, for fishing in a pond, the two methods generally employed then – *Tumb* or *Ghai* – always require more than twenty-five people, and inexperienced *mohanas* and young adults can also participate in it. Before going *machi maran*, some preparation is required. The *mohanas* prepare their nets and tools, which depend on the method of *machi maran*. All the activities for the preparation are led by the *ustad*

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**43** The younger brother of *bhatar wadera* usually handles all the matters in the absence of his brother, and people called him ‘*Ustad*’. *Ustad* is a word commonly used for ‘teacher’ in Pakistan. The *ustad* can be academic teacher, automobiles mechanics or a person who teaches any kind of skills to someone. It is not important that *ustad* must be an older person, rather skills matter and one can be younger or older. The younger brother of *bhatar wadera* leads all the activities and teaches the fishing skills to young *mohanas* so people called him *ustad*.

**44** It does not happen usually – everyone follows and obeys the *wadera* or *ustad’s* decisions. It only happens when someone shows laziness or less interest in obeying *ustad’s* orders during fishing.

**45** The total number of households in a community is not more than 35, so *wadera* or *ustad* select one *mohana* from each household. If the head of any household is dependent on any other source of livelihood (e.g. one of my informants was doing a job in a police department), then he is not considered for the fishing.
and he calls all those mohanas who are going machi maran in the next days. Here below, I discuss the mohanas machi maran preparations I observed and in which I participated.

6.3.1 Fixing the Jaal and Bairi:
The word ‘Jaal’ is used for the fishing nets and ‘Bairi’ or ‘Kashti’ both are used for the boats. Every machi maran method requires a different kind of jaal, mostly all are provided by saith, and ustad keeps them at his home. However, some mohanas have their own jaal and ustad can ask them to bring it if it is required. The depths of the water in fish farms are not more than five feet, so the depth of all jaal (usually X feet) is sufficient enough to reach from the bottom to the subsurface of the farms. Nevertheless the length of all farms varies and in some farms mohanas need to sew two or more jaal together horizontally to cover the area. Usually this requires the narro machi maran method, whereas in ghai method – used only in a pond – the depth of the jaal is not enough to reach the subsurface of the pond so mohanas are required to sew together two jaal together vertically to reach the subsurface. According to mohanas, ghai method always needs a lot of work and time before beginning of machi maran as sewing the two jaal together must be done carefully. But their humorous and friendly working environment during this preparation period makes them able to finish their tasks quickly. After machi maran they put the wet jaal on wooden sticks to dry. It becomes easier for them to carry it later.

There are seventeen wooden bairi – boats – in the community and each is owned by different bhatar. The bairi are only required in the ghai machi maran method. Every mohana who owns a bairi is required to make sure his bairi is in good condition before machi maran in the pond begins. They clean the bairi from inside – the bairi are small and water comes inside when children play in it, so they must bail all the water out of the bairi into the pond with a small cup. They also use the bairi to collect firewood to take back to their homes, so they also must remove any remains of this firewood from the bairi before beginning machi maran. They make sure the chappo (oars) are in good condition – they must be firmly nailed into the wooden stakes. This is something that must be checked, as it is done at home by hand. Mohanas use fish oil for the

46 It is always necessary to sew two or three jaal together in order to cover the area and for better catch. The jaal can be sewed either way horizontally or vertically depending upon the machi maran methods and on the area mohanas are required to cover to fish. If some area is left open where the jaal cannot reach, then the fish can escape easily in the water which affects the catch.
47 The term “Bairi” is used both for singular and for plural.
protection and safety of the bairi, otherwise the wood of the bairi damages very rapidly, and it
starts breaking. Their economic status does not allow them to paint the bairi, and all the bairi
look similar; therefore, to avoid any kind of confusion, they engrave their names inside their
bairi.

Figure 6.9 (A) showing the mohanas fixing the jaal sitting at oatak and in (B) a mohana is bailing his bairi.

6.3.2 Arranging the Machi Maran Tools:
The mohanas use different kinds of tools according to the machi maran method. These tools are
owned by different mohanas, and they bring their tools to oatak before leaving for machi maran.
All the mohanas can use each other’s tools during machi maran without any conditions; since
they work together for one person, sharing the tools is common among them. Any mohana who
is not going for machi maran can be asked by ustad to lend his tools. Some of the important tools
which they require for machi maran are as follows:
• **Soa** is a kind of needle with a sharp point, a round eye and a length up to ten inches. *Mohanas* use it for different purposes depending on the methods of *machi maran*.

• **Thailla** is a kind of big woven bag, which *mohanas* use for keeping the *machi maran* tools and *jaal*.

• **Tub** is used for keeping the ice, which *mohanas* use to throw on the fish inside the van to keep the catch fresh before transportation to *machi mandi*.

• **Rassi** is the name of rope in local terms; *mohanas* need *rassi* especially in *narro* and *ghai machi maran* methods. They use a small and thin *rassi* (also called *dorri*) in the *narro* method, whereas in the *ghai* method they need heavy *rassi* (also called *rassa*) for dragging the *jaal*.

• **Steel Rod** required by *mohanas* to crush the ice blocks into small pieces in order to throw on the fish inside the van.

• **Wooden Poles** are needed to tie the *jaal* on the banks of the fish farms or in a pond. The lengths of all the poles vary. They needed strong and long poles for the *ghai jaal machi maran* method. However, in other methods they can use small poles.

• **Chakko** is a kind of sharp small knife. *Mohanas* need it for various purposes – cutting the fish in order to clean them before transporting to *machi mandi* or cutting the *rassi* – during *machi maran*.

• **Bailchaa** is the name of a shovel in local terms. It is required by *mohanas* to throw the crushed ice inside the van. Sometimes they need it to dig and throw soil around the wooden poles.

• **Paan and Dabba** are the words used for buoys. The *dabba* can be anything that floats, for example empty plastic bottles or polystyrene containers (mostly used in the *narrow jaal* method). *Paan* are a kind of ornamental grass or shrubs attached on top of the *jaal* to help to float (see in figure 4).

• **Ghass** is a kind of dry grass or hay that the fish are placed upon after they are caught.

All these tools are collected from different *mohanas* and then the *ustad* keeps them at home. Before leaving for *machi maran* these are brought to *oatak* by young *mohanas* where they wait to leave for *machi maran*. One *chokidar* (guard) of the pond remains at *oatak* during all these
preparation activities to monitor the mohanas. All the chokidars keep weapons while guarding the pond, but avoid keeping them when they come to oatak. Moreover, the chokidar does not disturb mohanas when they are working. But they participate with them in playing cards or different games when they finish with their work.

6.3.3 Time and Transport Management:
The time to prepare the jaal, bairi and machi maran tools is decided by ustad mutually with mohanas. Nevertheless, the time to leave for machi maran on mahar wadera fish farms is decided by saith as he provides his van for picking up and dropping off the mohanas. So everyone has to follow the time and should gather at oatak with all jaal and machi maran tools. The mohanas do not need to pay for the transportation; it is settled between mahar wadera and saith, as they share the profit. Usually, all the machi maran takes place early in the morning because the fish must be transported to mandi before it closes at three in the afternoon. But when mohanas need to fish at farms located far from their goth, then they need to leave very early in the morning – between five and six. Nonetheless, the machi maran’s plans might need to be changed on sudden or special events (i.e. marriage or death) occurring in the goth. Then the bhatar wadera informs the saith or mahar wadera’s munshee (a person keeps all the financial records) about these events or sudden death and they wait for mohanas to decide their availability for machi maran.

6.4 Machi Maran Method:
All the inland and farm fisheries follow the traditional machi maran methods. However, practicing these methods is different from region to region. Here I will discuss the traditional machi maran methods which bhatar mohanas are using.

6.4.1 Narro or Khairo Jaal Method:
Narro or khairo jaal method involves the Gill Net, and mohanas used this method mostly in the farms, lakes or in the different canals of the Indus River where the depth of the water is not more than six feet. The narro jaal is made of white nylon material – monofilament fishing line – and

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48 The chokidars sit at different positions of the pond and provide check on the pond all year round and restrict entry to fish there. It is also important for them to be there with weapons to keep the illegal control of mahar wadera on the pond and sometimes give friendly fire if any stranger comes close to it without mahar wadera’s permission. However, they do not bring the weapons to oatak whilst mohanas are preparing the fishing tools or jaal as there are many small kids and they can become scared of it.
has a mesh size between four and five inches. The length of the *jaal* varies between 70 meters and 100 meters, and it can easily stretch from the bank to the middle of the fish farms, and if it is necessary to cover the whole area of the fish farm, *mohanas* can sew two *jaal* together.

The *bhatar mohanas* change their dress when the *saith* van leaves them at *mahar wadera’s* fish farms. The *ustad* decides the area to put the *jaal* in the fish farm, and two or three *mohanas* (including *nakho* — an expert *mohana* — and *khalasi* — a *mohana* who does labor work during fishing) all cover their lower bodies with ordinary shawls, without wearing shirts and shoes, to enter the water while carrying the *narro jaal* in a *thaila*. The *narro jaal* is not heavy, so usually one carries the *thaila* and the other takes the *jaal* out of *thaila* (big woven bag used to keep the *jaal*) and makes sure the *dabba* on the top of *jaal* will float in the water. They start from one side by fastening the *jaal* to a small wooden pole and once reaching the opposite side, fasten it. When they have all completed their tasks in setting it up, they wait for fish to become trapped.

![Figure 6.10](image)

(A) Two *mohanas* standing in the water of a fish farm, taking out the trapped fish. (B) One is dragging the hanged fish on a *dori* in the water of a fish farm and on his right two people help to carry out the fish. (C) shows the *mohanas* cutting the belly of the fish and taking out the entrails.
The *mohanas* start to check the *jaal* after about an hour; they take out the fish from the *jaal* and, using the *soa*, pierce the fish so that the *dorri* attached to the *soa* will link the fish. This way, the fish are hanging on the *dorri*. Then one of them takes out the fish from the farm. It is easy to drag the fish into the water, but when a *mohana* comes close to the bank, he needs someone to help him to carry the fish. They throw the fish on a dry grass or hay, and two of the *mohanas* sit there to clean the fish so that they will not decay. Then one of them puts the fish inside the van, and the driver of the van or one of the farm *chokidars* throws crushed ice on them with a shovel. The *mohanas* stop *machi maran* around 1:00 pm and start to pack the *jaal* upon the *ustad’s* instructions. Meanwhile, the *ustad* writes down the names of all *mohanas* who fished. After changing their dress, they sit in one van to go back to the *goth*, while the fish in the other van are transported to the *machi mandi*.

### 6.4.2 Ghai Jaal Method:

The *ghai jaal* method involves the Dragnet, and *mohanas* used this method where the depth of the water is more than six feet. As mentioned earlier (heading 6.3.1), it is only used in ponds, and the *mohanas* need to stitch together two *jaal* to reach to the surface of the water. The two *jaal* are different; the upper *jaal* is called ‘*karachi walla jaal*’ with a 1.5 inch mesh size and with a fastening at the top to which is tied a strong and heavy *rassi* (rope) with which the *mohanas* can drag it. The lower *jaal* is called *ghai*, having a 2.5 inches mesh size. Both of these *jaal* are stitched by *mohanas* with a silk thread. The length of each the *jaal* is more than 100 meters and can easily reach both sides of the pond. The upper *jaal* – *Karachi walla* – is good for catching small fish, and the lower one – *ghai* – is good for catching big fish. The *paans* are attached on the top of *jaal* forming a *toorahi* which helps the *jaal* to float. There are small iron pieces attached at the lower part of the *ghai jaal* which keeps it on the bed of the pond. This way the fish cannot escape under the *jaal*.

The *mohanas* put the *jaal*, *paan* and other required *machī maran* tools in different *bairi* (boats) and move together in the pond to reach the part of the pond from which it has been decided that they will fish. The *jaal* is heavy and big so that they put it on two or three *bairi* and some of them contain *paan*. These boats are small, and because they are carrying these loads, it becomes difficult to move the *bairi* in the pond, so there are only two people in each *bairi* – one called *nakho*, the other *khalasi*. The *ustad* leads them all and *nakho* follows his instructions when
laying out the *jaal* in the water. The *khalasi’s* job is to propel *bairi* by use of a *chappo* – oar. One of them fixes a wooden pole in the water to which the *jaal* is fastened before they drag it. The *bairi* move far from each other slowly after the *jaal* have been thrown in water. Other *bairi* loaded with *paan* find a way to come closer to the *jaal*. Then two or three *nakho* role the *paan* at the top of the *jaal* – (forming a *toorahi*) – as it helps keep the *jaal* from sinking down into the water. Therefore, the fish are unable to jump over to the other side of the *jaal*. Meanwhile one or two *nakho* having some distance from each other at different *bairi* keep the *jaal* on the *bairi*. Other *mohanas* do the same once they have finished throwing the *jaal* in the water and fixing the *paan* on top. The *rassa* of the *jaal* is taken out from both sides and then the *mohanas* are asked by *ustad* to drag it. The *nakho* and *ustad* remain in the water and they keep the *jaal* on *bairi* very carefully. They move slowly in the water and *ustad* gives the instructions to *mohanas* to drag the *jaal* from both sides in certain intervals. It is important to provide more than twenty people from each side to drag the *jaal*. However, in the intervals *mohanas* can do different things for entertainment – they can joke with each other, sing *Sidhi* songs or wrestle each other. Every time they drag the *jaal* one of them says ‘*wathoo nawaan Allah jo hallo ho Allah*’ – say Allah (God) and pull out – and the others reply to the call by saying ‘*Allah, Allah, ho Allah*’. Some of the *mohanas* sit close to the water on one side and as soon as the *jaal* comes out of the water they arrange it and then they are able to take the fish out of *jaal*. When they drag the *jaal* a lot and the *mohanas* from the other side come to the same side then few of them – sometimes including *ustad* and *nakho* – jump in water to make sure the *jaal* will remain at the bottom of the pond.
The *mohanas* from both sides come closer to each other on the same side, and then the *nakho* standing on the *bairi* pick the *jaal* as high as they can so the fish cannot jump to the other side. Some of them start to take out the fish from *jaal* and throw on the grass, and some of them take away the *paan* on the top of *jaal* as soon as it comes out of the water and put it back in an orderly way into the *bairi*. The *bairi* which are full with *jaal* or no longer required for fishing are brought to the edge of pond and are fastened to the soft, muddy bank with small *rassi soa* so that they are anchored to the bank and will not, float away. When all of this has been done, then they start to collect the fish – from the *jaal* as well as on the grass – and put the catch together to carry it to the van after the fish have been cleaned. The fish, covered with-crushed ice, are then transported to *mach mandi*, and *mohanas* head back to their homes either by foot or in the *bairi*. 

Figure 6.11 (A) Showing *mohanas* movement in water and *ustad* jumped into the water. (B) *Mohanas* are dragging the *jaal*.
Figure 6.12 (A) the mohanas from both sides come to the same side while the nakho are picking up the jaal. (B) Young mohanas are putting back the jaal and later will take the bairi to the bank of the pond.

Table 1. Traditional and Scientific Names of the Fish Catch by Mohanas Using All Machi Maran Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Names</th>
<th>Scientific Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morakhi</td>
<td>Cirrinhus Mrigla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khagga</td>
<td>Rita Rita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhambra</td>
<td>Labeo Rohita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singhar</td>
<td>Aorichthys Aor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malhi</td>
<td>Mystus Sinhala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakir</td>
<td>Channa Marulius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thali</td>
<td>Catla Catla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni</td>
<td>Cirrihinus Reba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass Carp</td>
<td>Ctenopharygodon Idella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulfam</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4.3 Kurri:

*Kurri* is a traditional fishing tool, especially used by young adults when they are fishing with their elders. It is comprised of six wooden sticks, each about a meter long, with their ends tied together so to emanate radially from a common point. There is a circular piece of wood that sits on the inner side of the point, to strengthen the tool. A *jaal* is attached on the inner side of the pyramid shape that is formed by the sticks. The *jaal* is fastened on the wooden frame at the opposite ends of the sticks to where they are tied together in a point. This enables the *jaal* to be lowered down on fish when the tool is in the water, with the apex of the pyramid shape above the surface of the water. Sewn to the upper parts of the *jaal* are small pieces of iron, which increase the speed that the *jaal* will fall onto the fish, near the bed of the water, when released. The mesh size of the *jaal* is between 1.5 and 2 inches long. They are made at home by elders and used by the younger boys. It gives the younger people the opportunity to learn about the fishing techniques with their elders as well as to get paid (in the form of fish) separately for their catch. They stand in the shallow water close to the bank and throw *kurri* again and again. As the water is not so deep at the bank they can see easily if fish get caught in the *kurri jaal*. They make it easier to take the fish out of the water by piercing the fish with *soa* so that they can thread them all onto *rassi*. 
Figure 13.6 (A) homemade kurri. (B) Young boys are using Kurri.

6.5 Machi Mandi:

Fish are brought to Sukkur machi mandi for a waak – auction – after fishing. There are many fish brokers in the market; the word ‘waparri’ is used for a broker, but usually their shops are entitled, ‘Fish Commission Agent’ or ‘Fish Traders’. However, people use the words fish commission agents, traders or waparris interchangeably for the fish brokers. Even people from other cities come to Sukkur machi mandi to buy fish. Some shops also distribute the fish in other cities of Sindh and Punjab province independently. The machi mandi is not so developed, is plagued by insufficient hygiene conditions and faces a lack of cold storage facilities. There are open sewage holes, and water flows all around the shops in mandi. It is not easy for drivers to get their vehicles inside the mandi, as the road is not good, water stands in the ditches or potholes, and a lot of people are walking around. The shops are furnished with only a few chairs, rubber hoses which are used to clean the floors, and weighing scales. Electricity is provided in all the shops, but the mandi operates in the day time, and natural light is enough to brighten the shops;
however they can turn on the lights if it is needed. They use electricity to run the water pumps, fans in summer and to charge their mobile phones. The floor of the shops is made with cement, as it is easy to clean by just hosing it down with water. The floor should be cleaned with water before the fish are brought in mandi.

Figure 6.14 (A) Shop in the machi mandi. (B) A van is coming in the machi mandi.

6.5.1 Waak:
The fish from mahar wadera farms and Araien Block pond have always been taken to saith shop for waak. Saith has hired the people on daily wages, and they often work for him at his shop. He asks them to clean the floor before the fish arrive at his shop for waak. When the fish van comes to the shop the workers unload it by using bailchaa, and some of them stand at the van carrying fish to other areas of the room, so the fish are spread out. After unloading the fish the workers at first start to separate the different kinds of fish and then further divide each kind of fish
according to its size – small, medium and large. This way it becomes easier for the people to see the different kinds and sizes of fish for *waak*.

Figure 6.15 (A) Workers are separating the fish. (B) People are attending the *waak*.

When the workers are done separating the fish, then the *saith’s munshee* or *dallal* call the people for *waak*. The *Saith* has more than one *munshee*, and *bhatar wadera* is also among them, as he works for him. So, when the fish from the *mahar wadera* farms and Araien Block pond come to his shop, then the *bhatar wadera* calls for *waak*. Along with that, he also keeps the record of his *mohanás*’ catches, because they get paid according to it. The *munshee* of *mahar wadera* will also be there and maintain a separate record. Therefore, at the same time two or three people are keeping fish records. The word *dallal* used for a person who calls for *waak*. It can be a *saith’s munshee*, the worker or the seller of the fish to *saith*. In some cases other than fish from Araien Block pond or *mahar wader’s* fish farms, the person who brings the fish from the river or fish farms can also act as a *dallal*. It depends on his relation with *saith*. First he sells the fish to *saith*, and then he calls for *waak* on it and gets RS.8 commission on every 100 rupee (e.g. he sells 10kg
fish to *sait* at the rate of RS.150 per kg and then he calls for *waak*. If he gets the price RS.190/kg or more after *waak* then the *sait* pays him total commission RS.152 (11 SEK or 1.5 USD) i.e. 19*8=152). There is also one more way for selling the fish in *mandi*, in which *sait* as well as other *wapparis* take the catch of fish from the river or farms. They pay the cost of the fish at the river or farms and then bring it in *mandi* for a *waak*.

People including *wapparis* and shopkeepers come inside the shop for bidding. The fish are put on the ground, so people walk on them which is also very unhygienic. People make their offers – per kilogram of the fish – and when it is done then the *munshee* or *dallal* asks the workers to put a note in writing of the price and name of the bidder on the pile of fish that they wish to purchase. Their bidding depends on the quantity of the fish and how much they can buy and sell it for in their shops. The buyers also do not have any cold storage and lots of chances to face a loss if they cannot manage to sell all the fish. So, it is important for them to buy a sufficient quantity of fish which they can sell completely at the end of the day. However, people prefer the freshwater fish over marine fish, and constant demand for the freshwater fish does not let the sellers face a loss. The workers put the fish on the weighing scale and count the quantity. Then the buyer put the fish in a big woven bag. Within two hours all the fish have been sold, and the *sait* workers clean the floor once again for the next van to come. All the fish coming to *sait* shop are regularly sold before the closing of *mandi*. It is the people who come to his shop to purchase the fish – he does not provide the fish to other cities or shops other than to his friend in Karachi who has been in business with him for more than thirty years.

### 6.5.2 Wasooli:

After the fish are sold, the buyer pays the amount to *munshee*. Receiving the payment is called ‘*wasooli*’ in local terms. All the payments are made in cash to the *munshee* and he writes all these *wasooli* in a record book. Some of the buyers purchase the fish and pay the amount after selling the fish in their shops, or they can pay a half-installment at the time of buying the fish and pay the remaining later on. Therefore, the *sait*’s *munshee* keeps these records in different record books. Once the money for a sale has been collected and counted by *munshee*, it is given to *sait*. He pays the wages to his workers on the same day and deposits the remainder in the bank before it closes. However, his *munshees* including *bhatar wadera* get paid after a few days, and they get paid more than the other workers.
6.5.3 Hissa for Saith and Mahar Wadera:

The next day of the waak or on the evening of the same day (if they are not tired) saith, bhatar wadera and mahar wadera’s munshee sit and calculate all the expenses which they have borne for the whole course of fishing: cultivating the fish in mahar wadera’s farms and Araien Block pond, the cost of feed for them, mazdoori and mohanas marti, the transportation of both the fish and the mohanas, etc. When the calculation is done and all the expenses are paid, then saith and mahar wadera share the profit. The mahar wadera get two thirds of the profit, and saith keeps the other third of it. The saith pays his share in cash to his munshee. Either he can visit mahar wadera, or wadera can visit him to take his share. However, mahar wadera never comes to visit the mandi. He gets all the information about mandi from his munshee or saith.

6.5.4 Machi Marti:

People use the word, marti, for the fishing wages. However, besides marti, some people also use the word, maari for both wages and for a person who fishes. So, one can understand easily according to the situation when someone uses marti or maari. There are two ways to pay marti to the bhatar mohanas, either they get paid in cash or in the form of fish (fish quantity must be equal to cash). It depends on the total number of mohanas who participated in fishing. For example in the ghai fishing method, the total number of mohanas is more than twenty-five and it becomes difficult for mahar wadera’s munshee as well as ustad to keep the record. In that case khalase including young adults who participated in fishing get paid in the form of fish. The chokidar of the pond follow the munshee instructions and distribute the fish among them, whereas the ustad and nakhho get paid in cash after the fish have been sold in mandi.

The saith pays the mohanas marti to their wadera in a mandi after two or three days of waak. Then the bhatar wadera can give it to mohanas on Friday evening at oatak when he comes to goth for kachari. Sometimes, if the ustad visits the mandi or Sukkur, he may also collect the mohanas marti from his brother – bhatar wadera. If anyone in the community needs udhar then bhatar’s wadera or ustad can lend him some, and if they cannot help, then wadera can ask saith

49 Mahar wadera is taking care of many other things as well: political meetings, many problems at his oatak, agricultural activities, real estate business etc. With all these all activities, his cultural status does not allow him to go in a mandi.
for *udhar*. The *mohana* who took the *udhar* can also pay it back in installments or they take half of their *marti* and pay the other half back to the *udhar*.

### 6.6 Unethical Practices:

Though all the *macho marran* methods are traditional and do not pollute the water, there are some practices considered unethical and not environmentally friendly. The killing of fresh water turtles was one of those practices followed by *bhatar mohan* a year before my fieldwork. I saw many shells of dead turtles around the Araien Block pond and inquired why and how the *mohan* kill these turtles. I found out the *mohanas* killed these turtles with a specific technique in order to maximize fish numbers in the pond. Moreover, when they use the *ghai machi maran* method the turtles get trapped in the *jaal* and some of them cut themselves free with their sharp teeth while others remain in it when they pull out the *jaal*. So, to avoid these situations the *mohanas* mixed a special kind of poison in wheat flour and put in the pond before putting in the *beej*. Their intention is to cause the death of freshwater turtles only, so that they could catch a great number of fish next year. However, the results were opposite to their expectations and they caught less fish than in previous years. Then the *mahar wadera* advised them not to do this again and instead to throw the turtles back into the pond if they get trapped in the *jaal*. Further, the *mohanas* do not have any mechanism to dispose of the remains of the fish. I saw when they cleaned the fish; they just left the entrails beside the pond or the fish farms. Some of the people went there to take the fats which they can use to make the oil, but the other remains were left for the birds or for the street dogs.
6.7 Summary:
This Chapter has described in depth the fishing practices in the Sindh province during a fishing season. It has described how the ustad chooses bhatar mohanas to harvest the various catches; whether in large or small ponds. The tasks are allocated according to a hierarchy of experience and the tools are distributed as needed. Finally, it described the issues of transportation the catch to mandi, sharing the profit, paying the fishing wages and some unethical practices such as killing turtles in order to increase the fish harvest.
Chapter 7  Political Stakes and Marginalization of Mohanas

In previous chapters, I discussed how access to fishing resources have changed over time for the bhatar mohanas as well as described their current fishing methods. This chapter discusses the political aspects of the fishing industry in the Sindh province. It highlights the problems faced by the government agencies to monitor the fishing resources as well as the perceptions of the bhatar mohanas.

7.1 License System to Gain Political Support:

The license system seems to bhatar mohanas as a means to get the political support of the people without giving them true fishing rights. The bill for fishing licenses was presented by the ruling political party of the province – Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)\(^\text{50}\) – and the Sindh Provincial Assembly passed it on 13\(^{th}\) January 2011. The name of the license program - Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Fishermen Welfare Card System – was given in commemoration of the party head (Benazir Bhutto) who was assassinated in 2007. By doing so, they aimed to get the people’s sympathy for the next elections and make it one of the political campaign slogans of development. Secondly, they wanted to keep the name of the late party head in the minds of the people. However, according to bhatar mohanas and some government officials, nonprofessional people involved in the fishing profession and the present government tried to secure increased political support by awarding fishing licenses to others who had previously no fishing knowledge or traditions. These supporters do not belong to any mohana community and it is against the law prescribed for issuing the fishing license. Moreover, some officials told me that the Sindh Fisheries Department (SFD) and law enforcement agencies are facing obstacles to control the illegal issuing and use of the license, as these supporters are backed by politicians and any action against them can affect their relations, and many politicians use their contacts with the authorities\(^\text{51}\) to manipulate the system.

\(^{50}\) PPP is the leading party in Sindh after the 2008 and 2013 general elections, and it now runs the provincial government.

\(^{51}\) It is very common in Pakistan especially in the Sindh Province that the officers and people in district management offices are directly appointed on the recommendation of the wadera or influential political or religious personalities, instead of following any merit or legal procedures.
The *bhatar mohanas* do not favor the license system over the contract system. However, they have not recorded any of their protests in the SFD or in any provincial courts. One of my respondents explained it to me this way:

The license system is not bad at all, we have relatives in other cities and they are happy to have it. They faced some problems at the start to access fishing resources, and then they complained to the authorities and asked for a solution. They solved their problems and now it is only the *mohanas* rights to access the fishing resources there. They were successful in getting their rights because they were supported by the ruling party – PPP – politicians. But here, the *mahar wadera* has a political affiliation with Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) party, and he would not like to see the success of the license system especially in his area introduced by his opponent political party. Although, our fishing gives us a much better economy than that of the *mohanas* who are no longer involved in the fishing profession, I believe we could earn more money if we were free and could fish independently. We know if we register any complaints against the license system or against the *mahar wadera*, there will be no action on it, and the ruling party politicians will not revise their policies, as this would affect their political support in their regions. Secondly, if *mahar wadera* came to know about it, then he would likely cause many troubles for us; nor could we succeed without the support of our *wadera* (Author’s Field Material, 19th April, 2013).

According to *bhatar mohanas*, other than security and access issues to the Indus River, they also cannot go there because the area alongside the river belongs to a landlord[^52] who is a member of the ruling party. He does not let them to go to the river for fishing purposes, as they are supporters of his opponent. But he does not stop the people who support his party or hire them for *machí maran*. The *bhatar mohanas* believed that the license system made the situation more complex and has divided the *mohana* communities. Some of them have migrated to other areas, while others remain dependent on these strong political actors. They have to support these politicians. Otherwise they will not be able to find alternate sources of livelihood. They have to work on according to their conditions (e.g. *machí martí*, fishing timings etc) and cannot take

[^52]: He owns a large area of agricultural land alongside the river.
their complaints anywhere, because their voices and protests will not be recorded. By introducing the license system, the government was also trying to show that their policies are for the progress and betterment of mohana people. The government believes that these policies were developed after considering mohanas full fishing rights. Many politicians during their political campaign use this policy as a tool to get support from mohanas as well as non-mohana people. Politicians represent that they are fighting and working for the people rights and fishing license is one of them. According to my informants and representatives of different provincial departments these policies are practically nonexistent. Many fishing communities are marginalized because of the license system and the bhatar community is one of them. Nonetheless, it has good outcomes where mohanas support the ruling politicians and in response, politicians facilitate their access to the fishing resources.

7.2 Control the Resources in Order to Control the People:
The bhatar mohanas believed their dependency on mahar wadera for their livelihood is used as a way to control them. Mostly, the landlords, wadera and influential political people control the resources (agricultural land, industries, fishing farms or illegal control of fishing resources etc.) in the region, and, especially in rural areas, they use the people as they want. People have to follow them\(^5\) to access the resources. Their work conditions and demands put upon them do not allow the people to make enough money for better education, health facilities and food. The mohanas think that if their children are educated, and therefore know about their rights, they will then be able to avoid working for these influential people, and seek work elsewhere. They avoid discussing their concerns in any open or public debate, but they discuss these and all issues with their close friends or relatives. One of my informants told me:

> We gained independence in 1947, when Pakistan came into existence, but still we are slaves to these feudal hierarchies and landlords (wadera). We also want to enjoy our life and give better education and health facilities to our children; they

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\(^5\)The economic and social status of the mohanas does not allow them to oppose these influential people. Firstly, they could lose the fishing opportunities and it would be difficult to find an alternative source of livelihood. Further, even if they had access to the fishing resources (mostly it is not possible without the support of influential people) their economic status does not allow them to afford the means of production (e.g. logistic, market access, fishing tools etc.). Secondly, it could result in that person being ostracized by the community or in worse scenario forced him to leave the goth. Although, this has not happened to any bhatar mohana, such cases have happened in the region frequently. To avoid any unpleasant incidents bhatar mohanas follow the instructions of those in power.
cannot go to a good school or hospital, because no one in the community can afford it. But the children of these landlords and feudal elites enjoy their life and can have anything they want. They all have remained active in politics and when they came to power they tried to avoid providing us with these facilities, making these things more complicated, as you are here and you can see how we are fishing, though government issued us fishing licenses but we cannot fish independently because of the strong political leader, his people always keep an eye on us and we are fearful of saying anything about his illegal control of the pond. The government is also not trying to solve these problems. However, tomorrow if our children get better education and knowledge then we can stand for our rights against them. We will ask for equality and then they will not be able to hold onto us as slaves (Author's Field Material, 27th March, 2013).

The mohanas do not think their future is secure under these circumstances and consider themselves surrounded by uncertainty. Any single mistake during fishing or disagreement with saith or bhatar wadera can result in losing fishing opportunities. This can also affect their position and relations within the community. For instance if a young mohana showed immaturity or a lack of interest towards fishing then people in the community will not trust him until the bhatar wadera allows him to fish with others. Some of the young mohanas tried to find other work opportunities in the Chak or in other cities, but they were not successful. It is also difficult for them to afford their expenses if they stay there more than a week without having any work. Even if they find work there they cannot save money after paying for accommodation, food and other expenses. Limited livelihood opportunities for young mohanas leave them no choice but to accept the decisions of saith or bhatar wadera. Some of the young mohanas believe that getting some share in the profit can enable them to establish a small scale business (grocery, fruit, vegetable or bike repair shop) in the Chak or in other city, but unfortunately they get only machi marti (fishing wages) which hardly meets their basic needs. My informants told me that mahar wadera and saith do not share the profit because they want to keep the young bhatar mohanas

54 I discussed in the last chapter that bhatar mohanas depends on mehar wadera to access the fishing resources. Their preparation and fishing activities are observed by mahar wadera chokidaar (watchman or gaurd). The bhatar wadera’s relation can be affected with saith and mahar wadera if any bhatar mohana complain about their decisions. To prevent such situations bhatar wadera does not allow anyone to participate in fishing activities who disagree or complain.
dependent on them for fishing. It is limiting the wealth of these young mohanas as well as their ability to make independent fishing decisions.

7.3 Many Actors: Roles, Problems and Management:
I met various people from different departments and got information from them about the management of natural resources in Sukkur and Shikarpur districts. Though most agreed about security concerns in both regions and problems faced to implement the laws, I have experienced and observed many other issues of fishing and management of natural resources. I will discuss all of these roles and problems of three departments (i.e. Sindh Fisheries, Sindh Wildlife and Sindh Environmental Protection Agency) separately, on the basis of my interviews, observations and the rules prescribed by each department under its ordinance.

7.3.1 The Sindh Fisheries Department (SFD):
According to my informants from the SFD, the fishing license scheme not only created problems for mohanas but also for the department. The SFD provides rules and regulations for accessing, catching, marketing, handling, transporting, processing and storing of fish resources. The Sindh Fisheries Ordinance 1980\(^{55}\) mentioned in its first section that to catch the Rohu (Labio Rohita), Mori (Cirrihina), Thaila (Catla catla) and Calbasu (Labio calbasu) less than 12 inches is prohibited, and if anyone were to be caught doing this they would be penalized according to rules and regulations. Moreover, section 7 of this ordinance states, ‘No person shall use dynamite or other explosive substances or put any poison, lime or noxious material in any waters with the intention of catching or destroying fish or aquatic life therein’ and section 21.1-A confirms that ‘whoever contravenes any provision of section 5, 7 or 8 shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with a fine which may extend to ten thousand rupees or with both’. In the past, fishing areas were auctioned by the SFD which got good prices for a contract. My informants mentioned, it helped the department to have a sufficient budget for monitoring fishing activities as well as fish resources. It is the duty of the SFD to implement these rules and monitor all the activities, but during my pilot survey and fieldwork I saw these rules being broken many times. I observed many times that people were selling fish less than 10 inches in the machi mandi and there was no check on it. In some places I also found people using poison to catch the fish, which as a consequence destroyed the local ecology. Furthermore, the

transportation, processing and storage facilities (discussed in chapter 6) were also not satisfactory according to the specifications in the ordinance.

In the license system, the department is not able to generate enough money for its budget to monitor fish resources or fishing practices, as the license price is only RS. 150. Prior to the license system, it was beholden on the contractor to keep in mind the amount of fish resources in different waters (be it in government owned ponds, canals or in the Indus River) to hire the right number of people for fishing. However, in a license system, there are no rules regarding distribution of fishing resources (quota or number of fishers). Anyone who has a license for some mentioned area can catch fish and there is no limit on the number of fishers. The people working for the SFD told me that they received many applications and complaints from the mohanas as well as other people to change the license system. The SFD department proposed reforms to the system, including other problems concerning the implementation of policy rules. However, the policy division has taken no action on their proposal. The SFD representatives believed that the people working in policy division are highly influenced by the powerful politicians and without their permission and recommendations they would not be able to revise it.
Figure 7.17(A & B) showing how people use poison to catch fish. (C) Undersized fish has also been caught by *bhatar mohanas* and transported to *machip mandi* for auction; it is very common that people like small fish a lot for the taste.
7.3.2 The Sindh Wildlife Department (SWD):
Earlier I mentioned the pond in Araien Block is a good habitat for soft and hard shell turtles, all of which are listed in the IUCN. The names of these turtles are not included in the Sindh Wildlife Protection Ordinance 1972, but a bill is under consideration to amend policy. According to my informants from the SWD, illegal activities not only include fishing in unethical ways, but, as they also mentioned there is also a black market for freshwater turtles. These turtles have been exported to China for use in Chinese medicines. They believe that people involved in this unethical business have strong links to resource persons in government. They have support should any inspector of the Fisheries Department or Sindh Wildlife catch them. Mr. Ali\(^{56}\), a representative of the SWD states his experience this way:

> A few years ago I gave a list of people who were involved in illegal activities in the Indus River, but in response the Government posted me in some other city. My promotion in the job was postponed as revenge for my complaint against those who were involved in illegal activities. The government is not interested in managing these natural resources (Personal Communication, 22nd April 2013).

When I asked him about the dead fresh water turtles in the Araien Block pond, he said no action could be concerning these dead fresh water turtles. He added further that many other reports and recommendations have been sent to policy division and soon the name of these turtles will be included in the revised Sindh Wildlife Protection Ordinance. Then one will be able to take action against these incidents. According to him and other officials, the provincial government takes much time to pass any bill or recommendations against these activities. The slow process seems to them as giving cover to the illegal business with fresh water turtles.

7.3.3 The Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA):
The SEPA is responsible for protecting the provincial environment according to the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA) 1997. The act provides guidelines for the protection and conservation of species, habitats and biodiversity in general\(^{57}\). However, the department is lacking sufficient and competent staff, as well as facing the problems to implement the National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS). My informants told me that officials claim the

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\(^{56}\) His real name will not be mentioned.

\(^{57}\) Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA), 1997. 3 December 1997: 4.)(1)(d)
success and achievements of the department in annual reports, which in reality do not exist. They mentioned that officials also restrict and threaten the media if they report any environmental issues in the region. During my pilot survey, one teenager told me a story of his relative who is working for a provincial media group:

My cousin was a student of animal sciences in a university and did his research on biological diversity in the Sindh. Later, he got a job in local newspaper agency and reported many unethical practices (hazardous industrial waste disposal, agrochemical runoff, chemical spills in the river) in the region. But highlighting these issues in the media caused lot of threats for him and his family. Few weeks ago one representative of SEPA with his armed guards stopped him when he was in his way to home. They warned him to stop reporting the environmental issues and talk to us before highlighting them in media (Personal Communication, 9th April, 2013).

The evidence shows that the proper reporting of environmental issues remain a big problem. The representatives of SEPA said that media reporting is mostly based on false information and they do it to make higher rating of their channels or sell more newspapers. I also experienced this problem during my fieldwork, when one private channel reported that someone put the poison in the canal and caused death of all fish including Indus blind dolphin in the water. However, it was later discovered that the untreated city sewerage water directly flows into the canal and no dolphin was trapped or died there.
Figure 2 shows the untreated city sewerage water directly flows into the canal and caused the death of small fish. People are collecting the dead fish to sell in the marker which is used to prepare the poultry feed. This has been wrongly reported in media that someone put the poison in the water. Photo accessed from WWF-Pakistan Sukkur office on request.

There is no doubt that the incident has been reported wrongly without verifying the facts, but it raised many questions for implementing the regulations defined by the PEPA. The act section 6 defines to 'establish systems and procedures... to prevent and control pollution and to estimate the costs of cleaning up pollution and rehabilitating the environment in various sectors'\(^{58}\) and 'taking measures to promote research and the development of science and technology which may contribute to the prevention of pollution, protection of the environment and sustainable development'\(^{59}\). In reality none of these rules are implemented properly. I experienced this when I went to the fish market to see how the bhatar mohanas catch are auctioned. There I saw people bring in the fish for auction which were caught in the polluted water. I asked about this issue to one of the inspectors of SEPA in an interview and he replied by laughing that "you are here for more than four weeks and I hope you understand the conditions here". However, I insisted to know the details and then he expressed the same problems as mentioned by the representatives of

\(^{58}\) Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA), 1997. 3 December 1997: 6.\(^{1}\)(i)

\(^{59}\) Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA), 1997. 3 December 1997: 6.\(^{1}\)(j)
SFD and SWD. According to him security and lack of provincial government interest to manage the natural resources are the main problems to protect the environment.

7.4 **Mohana Perception:**

Every *mohana* has a different perspective and world view about life, but when it comes to the fishing and regional political structure, they all possess the same perspective. Here, I will discuss some of the common words and perspectives which they always used during the interviews and the explanations they gave me.

7.4.1 **All are Corrupt:**

The word *corrupt* or *corruption* was used frequently in all the interviews when it came to discussion about the government policies or *machi marti*. They use it for all those who are not working properly or who, despite having the authority, are unable to give them justice. According to the *mohanias* viewpoint, anyone involved in policy formation or working in government institutions is corrupt. They show fake ‘records’ to media and public. A young *mohana* expressed his distrust for the government officials with these words:

> They will show in records that every *mohana* has got a fishing license, but in reality the number of people who have got one, and the number of people who actually go fishing, would be totally different (Author's Field Material, 21st March, 2013).

The government officials made the policies and rules by sitting in their drawing rooms and with no consideration about realities on the ground. They know very well about the role of influential people (i.e landlords, feudal lords, *peer, wadera*) in the Sindh region, and they know that ordinary people cannot do anything to oppose their will. An experienced *mohana* explained this:

> I cannot trust our government; they came into power for themselves, not for us. Most ministers in provincial governments are landlords or feudal elites – why should they attempt to change this system? (Author's Field Material, 13th March 2013)

According to *mohanas*, should justice and peace be the prioritized in the region, then any policy can be beneficial for them. But what they see now is that no one is interested in providing peace, because if established, then they would not be able to make money. These influential people can
also bribe the judges or the law enforcement agencies to maintain social injustice. The *mohanas* shared that these people buy luxurious vehicles and houses from public funds. They become corrupt when they come into power and get a high position. The *mohanas* claimed that no elected representative is honest; they employ favoritism and offer jobs to their relatives. Merit is not honored in present government. All jobs are provided through illegal and unfair means. Hence they can control the resources and in turn gain control of the people.

### 7.4.2 They Need Votes:

The general elections (national and provincial assembly) were scheduled in May 2013, just one month after my fieldwork. Therefore political campaigns and meetings were at their peak in the region. It was a good opportunity for me to observe the different political activities and to learn the *mohanas'* perception about it. The *mahar wadera* and his two sons were again participating in the elections (national and provincial assembly) and he asked the *bhatar wadera* to support them in the elections. My informants told me after being successful in the last elections, the *mahar wadera* constructed the paved road from *Chak* to the *goth*, but after this he had not done anything or visited them to know their problems. An old *mohana* shared his experience of elections in this way:

> In elections times, normally after every five years, election candidates come to the village and ask for votes. They come to us in large groups of people to display their strength and power. They just appear for one day in five years and never care to solve our real problems (Author's Field Material, 5th April, 2013).

The *mohanas* have no other choice to support the *mahar wadera*, because there are only two prominent political parties (i.e. PPP and PML-F) in *Shikarpur*. The representative of the PPP belongs to the *Jatoi* tribe (*balochi* tribe) and if he wins over *mahar wadera*, then *mohanas* possibly can well face many other problems, since tribal affiliation plays a very important role for protecting people and providing their rights. Therefore, despite being dissatisfied with the *mahar wadera*, *mohanas* casts their votes for him.

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60 There are many tribes that come from Balochistan province and settled in Sindh for last several decades. *Jatoi* is also one of these *Balochi* tribes and holds a dominant position in *Shikarpur*. But it is very common in Sindh that the people of *Sindhi* tribes take their problems to a *Sindhi* dominant tribe *wadera*, whereas, *Balochi* people go to the *Balochi* dominant tribe *wadera*. So this division is actually on the regional basis.
7.4.3 We are Always Threatened:
Tribal conflicts in the region always threatened bhatar mohanas. The conflicts in the region have been running for many years, a small dispute between two people of different tribes about the ownership of agricultural land or about access to the water coming from canals for agriculture or about access to fishing resources can result in a big conflict between tribes. The victimized tribe will take revenge in the case of any injury or harm caused by the person of another tribe. It can result in the death of many people on both sides, and the conflict might continue for many years even if it has been solved for the time being. If the conflict is between two dominant tribes, then poor people of other tribes including bhatar mohanas will also be affected, because they all are dependent (e.g. bhatar mohanas are dependent on mahar wadera for their livelihood) on landlords, businessman or peer from dominating tribes. Most of my respondents told me that it is always the poor people who die – not even a single landlord or wadera in these conflicts dies. Mohanas cannot complain about the injustice they face because of mahar wadera, because if they do, then they will have to face false charges made against them. Although none of the bhatar mohanas has faced any such situation, this is their general perception, because it happens quite often in the region.

7.4.4 No One Listens to Us:
The most common thing I heard from most of my respondents was that the poor have no voice, and no one listens to them. This is said in relation to politicians and law enforcement agencies, for in the mohan’s experience, when any politician or rich person has a problem a solution is found and bribes made. The mohan not only have to face injustice and problems, sometimes they are also blamed for things they never did. I understood from interviews that this was the general perception of every mohana. To reflect their perceptions, I present below an incident in which the ustad were talking to other mohanas while preparing the jaal for fishing. Their discussion was in Sindhi, but I recorded it and was able to ask some of my informants about it later. A few days previously the bhatar mohanas went fishing at mahar wadera’s fishing farm, whereupon the fish were transported to the machi mandi. Some quantity were missing, and the mohan were blamed for that by mahar wader’s munshee. The ustad was angry at the munshee (because he had spread blame us without any proof, and he did not even bother to ask the mohan about the incident). The munshee did not report this issue to mahar wadera, but my
informants told me that this form of intimidation was used to crush their spirits and maintain his authority over them.

7.4.5 My Vote is not for Him:
Some of the mohanas told me that during elections they do not vote for any politician. Nevertheless they participate in elections and go to polling booths on election day, but it is only to pretend that they are casting their votes according to the advice of wadera. In reality they do not cast votes. The mohanas who were not happy with their wadera and who were not fishing with other mohanas in the community were also planning not to vote for anyone in upcoming elections. They believed that the government had issued fishing licenses to them, while other people were occupying government ponds illegally. They therefore decided to abstain from voting in the upcoming elections. When I asked someone who they would vote for, one of my respondents told me:

I will not vote for anyone, at least not for mahar wadera. I would validate that he is the right person for us if I were to cast my vote in his favor. I would be certifying his illegal control of the government owned pond. I cannot say openly that I will stand against him or not vote for him, but whenever I find a chance to stand against him I will stand, and voting is the best chance for me (Personal Communication 2013).

While interviewing many bhatar mohanas, I found that they wish to vote for the person who fights for the rights of the poor, not for the one who came into power with the votes from people he then ignores and whose rights he takes. They did not believe any political candidate had the moral fiber to work for equal rights. It is commonly experienced that after elections when mohanas or other people go to the elected person, he does not solve their problems. They have to wait for hours to meet these elected people, and sometimes they have to come back without meeting even if the meeting was scheduled between them. Therefore in the coming elections, most of the mohanas informed me that their votes would not be for anyone who was running for office.

7.4.6 We do not know:
With regard to future prospects of young people or about the political structure of the community, the responses of my informants (especially young people and women) were always
‘we do not know’. The young people fish with elders and have no basic amenities of life. They lack education and income-generating facilities, therefore leaving each young mohana uncertain about his or her future. Further, the conditions under which they are working causes them to say ‘we do not know’ what will happen to us if we ask for any rights or give any suggestions. So without knowing about good prospects or alternate income-generating facilities, they adhere strictly to the fishing profession, because if they lose fishing opportunities, then they do not know what will happen to them. The bhatar women always remain at home\(^6\) taking care of household matters and do not take part in any fishing or political activities of the community. Therefore the response of my female respondents were negligible. Whilst they believe that women can play an important role in politics, in reality they raise their concerns at home and the issues are resolved by the males due to cultural norms. For example, if there is a problem for a women then it is also solved by the males (wadera) after discussion in which women have not taken part. The decisions of the males must be followed by the women even if both sides are not agreed upon it. My female informants told me that they avoid these circumstances – the women mostly settle their problems themselves and avoid discussion in the presence of any male. An old woman who is a wife of bhatar mohana and mother of five kids explained her experience about fishing and political structure as:

My husband has been fishing for many years, I am happy because my father, brother and all relatives are also fishing with him. It is good that we all are together and living very close to each other. They all mostly talk about fishing and the smell of fish remains in their bodies even if they shower, this really frustrates me sometimes. However, I consider myself lucky because some of our relatives are no longer in the fishing profession and when they talk about their problems after leaving fishing then I praise to God and thanks for His blessing that my family is still fishing […] our political system did not allow any female participation in it and it is practiced for many decades, but they allow us to cast

\(^6\) Once, when I was interviewing a mohana by standing at the bank of the pond, at some distance few bhatar women were washing clothes by using the pond water. As they saw me with a bhatar mohana they all went inside and left the clothes there. I asked my informant why they went inside, and he told me it is normal when their women see a stranger with a community member in goth then they have to cover their heads with a short cloth (duppata in local terms) and go inside the house. If a woman does not cover her head or go inside the house it is consider disrespectful for the males as well as for the prestige of the community.
votes in general elections. I do not like this and I wish they would realize that woman can also play a good role in politics (Authors Field Material, 2013).

7.5 Summary:
As discussed in my theoretical framework, power is a key concept when describing a political environment. This chapter has presented the issues faced by the government agencies in managing natural resources including fishing stocks. One method was to provide fishing licenses to the mohanas, but the government agencies did not taking into account the restricted access that these moahanas faced to their natural fishing grounds. The government lack of consideration or consultation with the local communities have left the mohanas suspicious of 'top-down' government policies.
Chapter 8  Conclusion

Poverty is a major source of social tension and creates inequalities in society which range far beyond inequalities of wealth. In the area of my fieldwork in the Sindh province of Pakistan, we can say that most all the money is owned by a tiny minority. Poverty is a dangerous factor that can destabilize the economy. Middle Eastern governments have been overthrown due to high poverty rates and income inequality. Miseries and troubles are passed on from one generation to another, creating a vicious circle. Some of these problems accompanying poverty are lack of health and education in adequate means of communication, problematic infrastructure, transmission of serious diseases, and child labor. Poverty and inequality cause a high rate of social and health problems like mental illness, obesity, and low life expectancy.

It is evident from human history that for better health, longer life, and high standard of living, access to clean water and good health facilities are necessary. According to Haan and Zoomers (2003) an increasing trend of inequality and poverty harms economic growth.

Among different significant sectors of the economy, fisheries play a vital role in the social and economic development of numerous countries. It has been recognized that this sector is a powerful generator of income and employment, as it fuels the growth of a number of subsidiary industries. Besides being a foreign exchange earner, the fishing sector is a source of cheap and nutritious food. Fisheries development faces various challenges requiring the assessment of the resources of the fishery industry, the potential of sustainable fish production, the development of modern technologies, and the improvement in the social and economic status of fishermen.

Due to excessive exploitation and other violence, fisheries of the world are in the state of crises, and, as a result, fisheries continue to be characterized by the often-cited example of the “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin, 1968) which can be avoided by adopting “local level management” or “co management” schemes. This dissertation not only addresses the social–economic impact of political process but also explains how the poor bear the cost of environmental changes and how these changes in turn create further social-economic inequality. It defines the circumstances for the modification of political process. According to Bryant (1992) the paradigm of political ecology, it is vital that leaders and governments make decisions taking into account the current political and economic environment of local people before handing down some edict from on
high. The thesis presented three other examples where top-down policy decisions had devastating effects. If political ecology was used in determining policy in these cases then the governments could have put in place contingencies to deal with the emergent issues. For example, in the case of the Brazilian Kayapo people, the government could have scaled back deforestation and allowed the Kayapo traditional farming methods to flourish. Pharmaceutical companies rather than the beef industry could have been a less intrusive industry to satisfy. In the case of the Mexicans from La Boquita, if political ecology was used to inform decision-making, then the government might have chosen a different spot to launch a tourist resort. One that kept the sustainable fishing communities intact and helped to encourage eco-tourism. Finally in the case of the bhatar mohanas, political ecology would have informed the government that the local fishermen no longer had access to their traditional fishing grounds, rendering the provision of fishing licenses obsolete. What was required and requested was safe passage to their fishing grounds.

Particularly this study brings to light the social and economic problems of the fishing community in Sindh province (Pakistan) that is highly influenced by government policies. The community is surrounded by problematic uncertainties and social issues – insufficient law and order, tribal conflicts and corruption – which impact upon access to the fishing resources. To overcome these problems, bhatar mohanas use their strong political wadera structure, which is an old system practiced in the region for many centuries. Tribal affiliation is very important in the Sindh province and each tribe is recognized by its regional basis (e.g. the tribe from Baluchistan province is called Balochi tribe and tribe from Sindh province recognized as Sindhi tribe). All tribes are further divided into sub-tribes (see Chapter 4, Table 1) and each has its own wadera. Maintaining good relations with strong and dominant tribe is a necessity for the people of weaker tribes. Therefore, bhatar’s wadera established good relations with the influential wadera of Mahar tribe and saith (both are from Sindhi tribes). Mahar wadera owns a large area of agricultural land as well as fishing farms and provides working opportunities to bhatar mohanas. However, it is saith who has always hired bhatar mohanas for fishing and who is responsible for all the wages of bhatar mohanas. Every tribe has its own wadera. Establishing good relations with influential people out of the community is necessary for bhatar’s wadera. Tribal affiliation is common, and different Sindhi and Balochi tribes exist in the region.
In Shikarpur the protections of law and order are pathetic, and security problems especially along the riverside force the bhatar mohanas to abandon fishing in the river. The landlord who owns the agricultural land near the river belongs to the Balochi tribe – Jatoi. The people of this tribe are supported by the landlord to restrict any other group to go to the river for fishing. That’s why it is important for the bhatar’s wadera to maintain good relationships with two influential persons – saith and mahar wadera – of Sindhi tribe. The Jatoi landlord and the wadera of the mahar tribe are two dominant figures in the region and peoples’ relation with them is based on reciprocity. Most of the people living near the river are involved in various criminal activities and are backed by the Jatoi landlord. As a result bhatar mohanas cannot fish without the permission of the landlord. The mahar wadera owns many fish farms and the pond of fish. Saith not only provides logistic and marketing support to mahar wadera but also cultivates the fish in his farms and pond. On the basis of the long relationship of bhatar wadera with the saith, he always hires bhatar mohanas for fishing in the pond. Problems of the bhatar people were handled by their own wadera, but they could approach mahar wadera if there was a problem or conflict with other tribes. Mahar wadera not only resolves the problems of the local people of his tribe but also resolves different issues of Sindhi tribes, (including bhatar mohana).

Even though the bhatar mohanas have the necessary fishing license and equal rights for fishing by the provincial government, they are unable to fish independently. The mismanagement and corruption in issuing the license affects many non-mohanas people in the fishing profession. There is no control on the number of fishermen or any quota mentioned on the license, only a definition of the area where mohana can catch the fish. The law and enforcement agencies are crippled by corrupt politicians, because if they highlight any illegal activities, then either the culprit uses his political links to get out of it, or the police officers receive life threats from them and get transferred to other regions. Bhatar mohanas do not have open access to the river for fishing, because the area alongside the river belongs to the landlord of the ruling politician party. He does not allow mohanas to use his area for fishing as they are supporters of his opponent. According to the bhatar mohanas, peace and justice should be the first priority for the government to make any policy successful.

Despite the fact that bhatar mohanas are against the government policies, they cannot speak against them until their wadera allows it. Therefore, they did not record any strong collective
protest against the license policy of the provincial government. To put pressure on the provincial government to change its policies, it is important to protest collectively. A single complaint is not sufficient to change the policy at all, even though some of my informants claimed it has brought successful results in other areas. As discussed, some informants believe that their wadera is getting a good commission from saith and that he always tries to force his community people not to speak against government policies, saith or mahar wadera. Others need no coercion, for they believe it is their tradition to follow the decision of the wadera. Besides facing penalties for not listening to their traditional “guardians”, to protest will also be considered a shameful act within and outside the community. The mohanas of other communities and many relatives of bhatar mohanas left the fishing profession because of security concerns as well as the injustice they faced when trying to access the fishing resources. The bhatars are still fishing, though not independently, as they have to wait for saith or mahar wadera’s instructions and are always observed by the mahar wader’s chokidar (guard) whilst preparing the fishing tools. Due to this social and economic injustice, many fishing communities are abandoning their ancestral profession. They are significantly affected by the dynamic social and natural environment leading them to seek other professions.

It is very important to understand the role of fisheries in economic development, so that it can gain due attention from government. My research provides strong evidence that, to be effective, government policies must be far more fully aligned with all stakeholders’ interests. There is a need to give sufficient attention to the sustainable development of aquaculture operations by adopting appropriate management practices, and intensive efforts must be made for the development of economically viable and socially acceptable technologies. The theoretical approach to community-based natural resource management or “ground-up” decision making advocates sustainability and resource justice as described by Siry (2006), and such a view inherently opposes the burden of inequality among people with regards to resource distribution. Besides poverty reduction and indigenous knowledge recognition, this approach supports as well the priorities of biodiversity conservation (Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997; Agrawal, 2001). Lack of justice while promoting policies, of privatization, may consequently be catastrophic both for environmental stability and people’s sustainability. Many researchers are of the view that acknowledging the local people's rights to decision making powers as well as sharing management responsibility and power inspires their active participation rather than a passive
role, thereby helping to avoid the so-called Tragedy of the Commons (See, for example, Berkes & Colding, 2000; Armitage, 2003; Ferse et al., 2010). However, the findings of this research illustrate that such powers can play a very negative role in achieving environmental sustainability, for justice is seldom given due priority.
References:


## Glossary

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ajrak</td>
<td>Shawl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allah</td>
<td>God</td>
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<td>Azan</td>
<td>The call for the daily prayer.</td>
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<td>Bailchaa</td>
<td>Shovel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bairi or kashti</td>
<td>Boat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balochi</td>
<td>Balochistan is a province in Pakistan and on regional bases people, tribe or language are called balochi.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beej</td>
<td>Small fish or the eggs of the fish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhatar</td>
<td>Name of the sub-tribe of Mir-behar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhatte</td>
<td>Oven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem</td>
<td>In the name of God, most Gracious and Compassionate</td>
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<td>Chak</td>
<td>Town name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chakko</td>
<td>Sharp small knife</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chappo</td>
<td>Oars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chokidar</td>
<td>Watchman or guard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dabba</td>
<td>Plastic bottles or polystyrene containers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallal</td>
<td>Person who calls for waak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorri</td>
<td>Small or thin rassi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duppata or Roa</td>
<td>Kind of scarf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid-ul-Azhaa</td>
<td>Islamic festival Muslims celebrate on 10th of Zill Hajj – the Islamic month when Muslims pilgrims perform the Hajj to Mecca.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid-ul-Fitar</td>
<td>Islamic festival Muslims celebrates after the holy month of Ramadan – Fating.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gajs</td>
<td>Embroidery work on female shirts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garri or gaddi</td>
<td>Motorbikes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghass</td>
<td>Grass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goth</td>
<td>Small village</td>
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<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hajj</td>
<td>Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hisa</td>
<td>Share</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imam</td>
<td>A person responsible for the masjid and leads the prayers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaal</td>
<td>Fishing net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jumah namaz</td>
<td>The second prayer of the day on every Friday.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jumma</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kachari</td>
<td>Used for formal and informal discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kache ka ailaqa</td>
<td>The area alongside the Indus river where the access is not possible by following any paved road called ‘kache ka ailaqa’. Kacha means unpaved and ailaqa means area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khalasi</td>
<td>A mohana who does labor work during fishing.</td>
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<td>Kursi</td>
<td>Chairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maalik</td>
<td>Owner of the boat or anything else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machi</td>
<td>Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machi Maran</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandi</td>
<td>Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manji</td>
<td>A kind of bed used for sleeping as well as for sitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martii or maari</td>
<td>Fishing wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masjid</td>
<td>Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazdoori</td>
<td>Wages for the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohana or Mir-behar</td>
<td>Fisherman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monsoon</td>
<td>A rainy season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munshee</td>
<td>The person who keeps all the financial record or personal assistant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakho</td>
<td>Boat operator or an expert mohana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namaz</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namaz e Jhanaza</td>
<td>Funeral prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikkah</td>
<td>An Islamic ritual authenticates the marriage between male and female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatak</td>
<td>A Sitting place for guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paan</td>
<td>Kind of an ornamental Grass or Shrubs category</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
_Paiti_  
Box

_Peer_  
Religious person.

_Pur_  
A living place

_Qameez_  
Shirt

_Ramadan_  
Fasting month

_Rassa_  
Heavy _rassi_

_Rassi_  
Rope

_Saith_  
Chief of the fish market or rich person

_Shaheed_  
Martyred

_Shalwar_  
Trouser

_Shikar_  
Hunting

_Sindhi_  
Sindh is a province in Pakistan, and on regional bases people and communities are called _Sindhi_.

_Soa_  
Needle

_Thaila_  
Bag

_Toorahi_  
The attached _paan_ at the top of _jaal_ called _toorahi_.

_Topi_  
A cap

_Udhar_  
Borrowed things or money

_Ustad_  
Teacher who teaches any kind of skills to someone

_Waak_  
Auction

_Wadera_  
Community leader, chief or head of any tribe.

_Waparri_  
Broker

_Wasooli_  
Receiving the money

_Wathoo nawaan Allah_  
Say Allah and pull out

_Zill hajj_  
Islamic month
Interview Guide

- What is the political structure of the community?
- How did it evolve and how did they choose their leaders, what roles and responsibilities were assigned to the leader?
- What do people think and perceive about their political structure?
- What is the role of females in this political structure?
- How does their political structure facilitate and marginalize the people?
- How does this affect their daily lives in regards to the access of basic needs?
- What possible threats they can face if they discard or try to change this political structure?
- How do the political structures help the fisherman community to play their role in government policies?
- How was your social organization influenced by fishing?
- How do you expect the adoption of new professions to affect your kinship and social organization?
- What is more important for you: social relations or productive activities?
- Are you giving fishing knowledge to your kids?
- What do your women think about your profession?
- Are they supporting you to change the profession or do they want you to protest?
- Do you think that your future is secured by fishing or are you uncertain?
- How can the contract or license system be in your favour?
- What do you think about the other fishermen who are leaving this profession?
- Which policy do you think should first be changed to bring prosperity in your life?
- What is your perception about the government on whether they want to help you through these policies or is it only for political support?
- What about the young people – are they keen to connect with their ancestors’ profession or are they afraid to choose this profession?
- If they are not keen then what do they want to do and what difficulties may they face by engaging in their ancestors’ profession?