

The Challenge of Managing Artisanal Fisheries Embedded in Protected Areas – Valdes Peninsula (Argentine Patagonia) as a Complex Commons

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- The theory of the commons was initially constructed on the basis of relatively simple cases, with strong emphasis on local dynamics
- Is it still applicable in more complex situations? What challenges emerge?

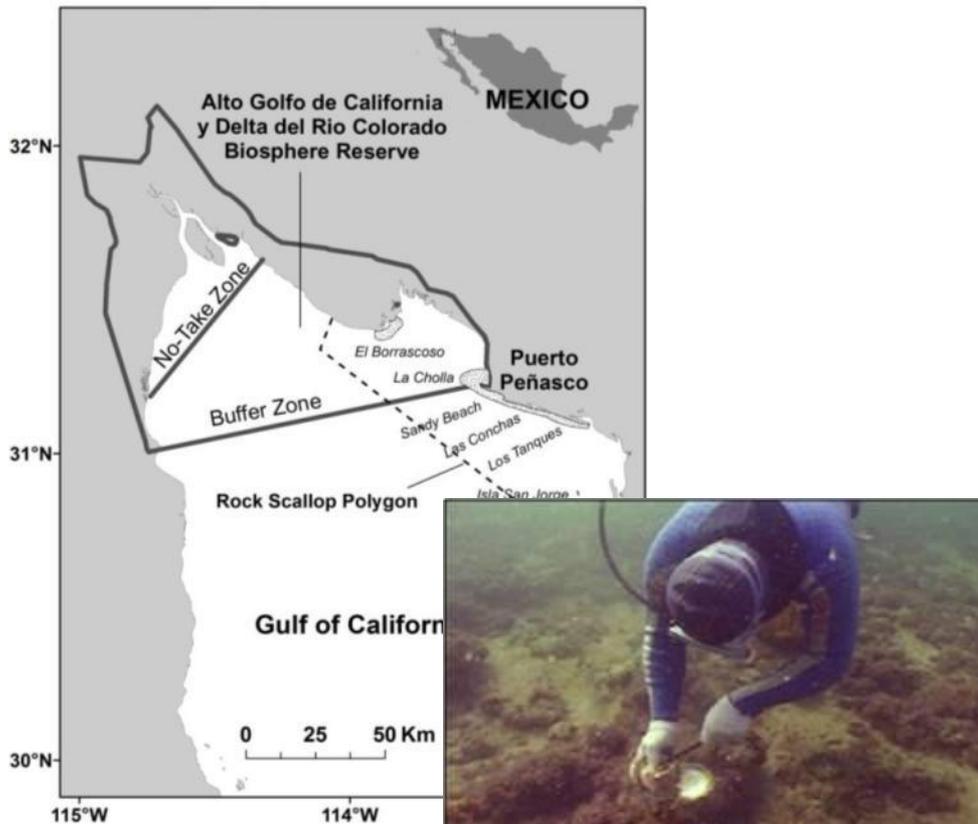
Valdes Peninsula : tourism & fisheries



**Multiple user groups,
CPRs, and legal
frameworks**

- Small-scale fisheries occurring inside protected areas are typical examples of complex commons
- Frequent in Latin America: differing objectives and design

Biosphere Reserves in Mexico



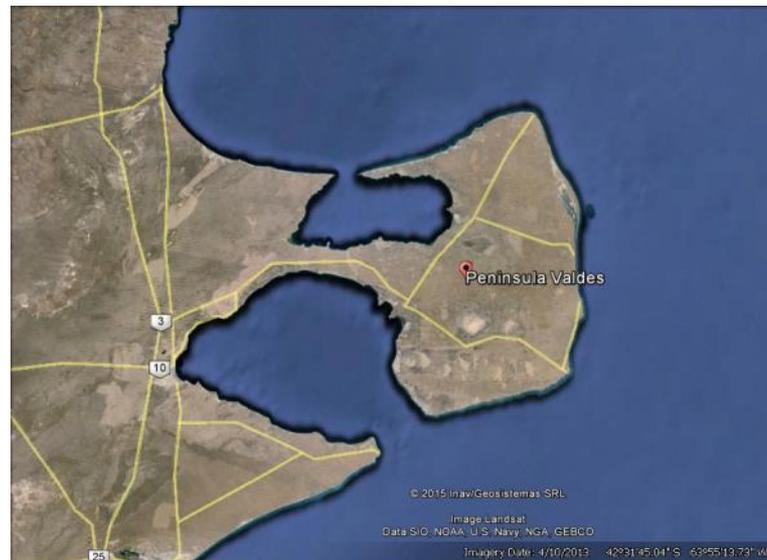
Reservas Extrativistas in Brazil



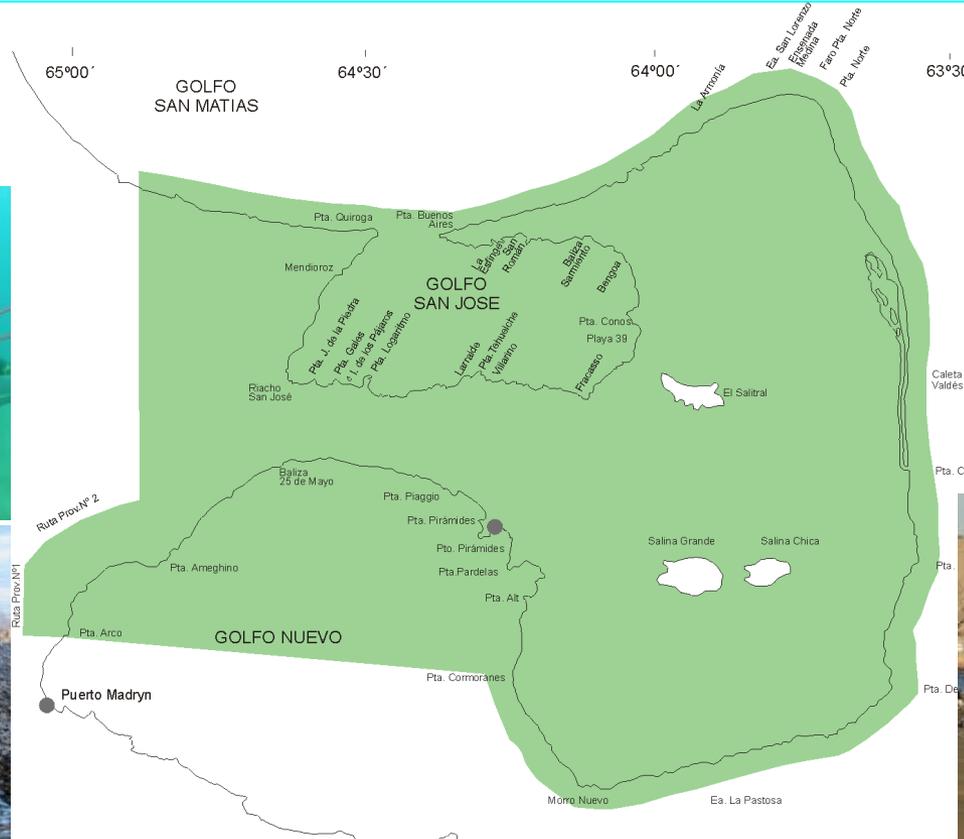
- Our case study: diving and hand-gathering shellfisheries that operate inside the multiple-use Valdes Peninsula Protected Area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site



Peninsula Valdes, Argentine Patagonia



Protected Area Category VI (IUCN): “with sustainable use of natural resources”



- Maintain ecosystems and natural processes
- Protect the natural, landscape and cultural heritage
- Promote sustainable activities compatible with conservation, like tourism, artisanal fisheries and cattle ranching

These fisheries exhibit many conditions conducive to sustainability, from a simple CPR's perspective:

[i] clearly bound region: $\sim 800 \text{ km}^2$



[ii] geographical setting that facilitates enforcement: remoteness, few landing spots, only one exit road

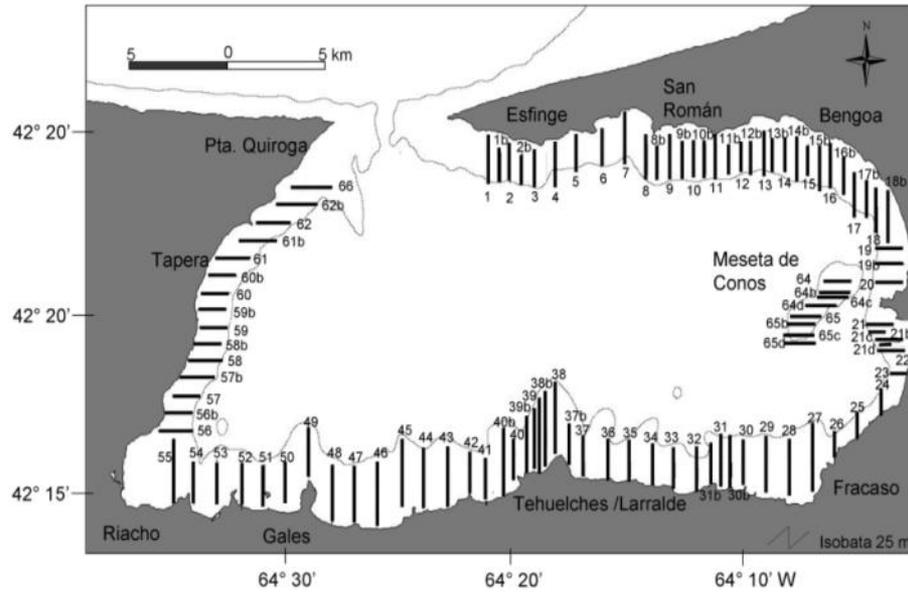
[iii] small number of users (~100 active fishers)

[iv] constructive relationship between technical staff of management agencies, organized fishers and scientists consolidated over the years

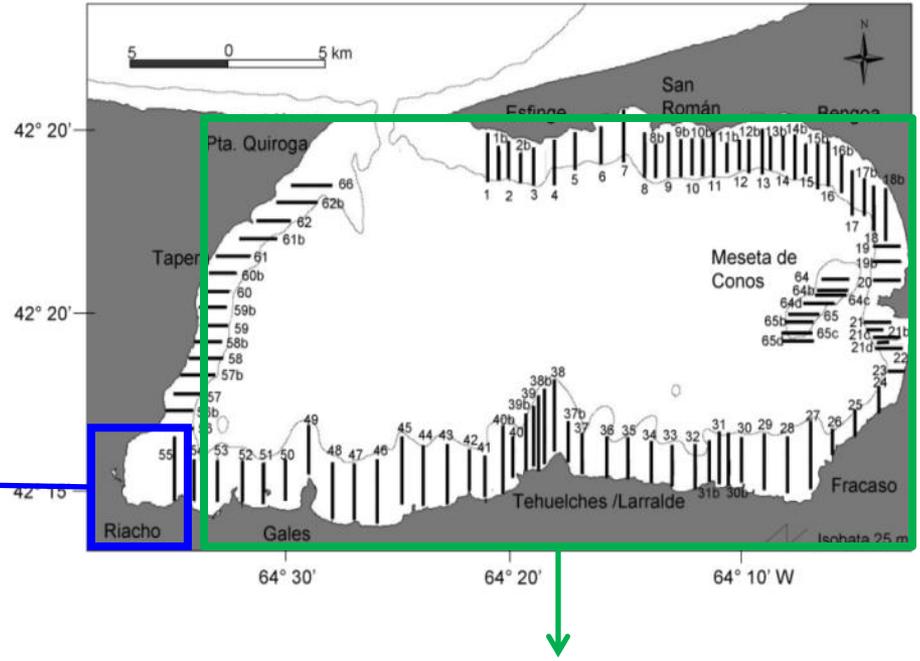
[v] collaborative monitoring and design of management regulations, including exclusive access rights

Collaborative resource monitoring

...& design of management regulations



...including exclusive access rights



Yet, achieving biological, economic
and institutional sustainability has
proved elusive

Protected Area

Discrete Fauna Reserves

1960

1970

SJG Marine Park

Scallop dredging

Dredge ban & diving trials

Re-opens as diving



Scallop fishery



Open access

Fishers' Association



Integral Reserve

1980

1990



CLOSURE

Declared World Heritage Site

Participatory MP development

2000

RE-OPENING

Fishers' proposal for sustainable use (limited entry, participation, MP)

**Fisheries Technical Committee
Scallop survey and catch quota**

Reserve re-categorized: VI (IUCN)

Protected Area Agency joins FTC



FTC debilitated



FTC interrupted

Exclusive access rights

2010

Failed participatory revision of MP



Participatory development of Fisheries Management Plan and Regulatory Decree



**MP process interrupted
Regulatory Decree unimplemented**

World Heritage Site ratified

Revision of MP through consultants

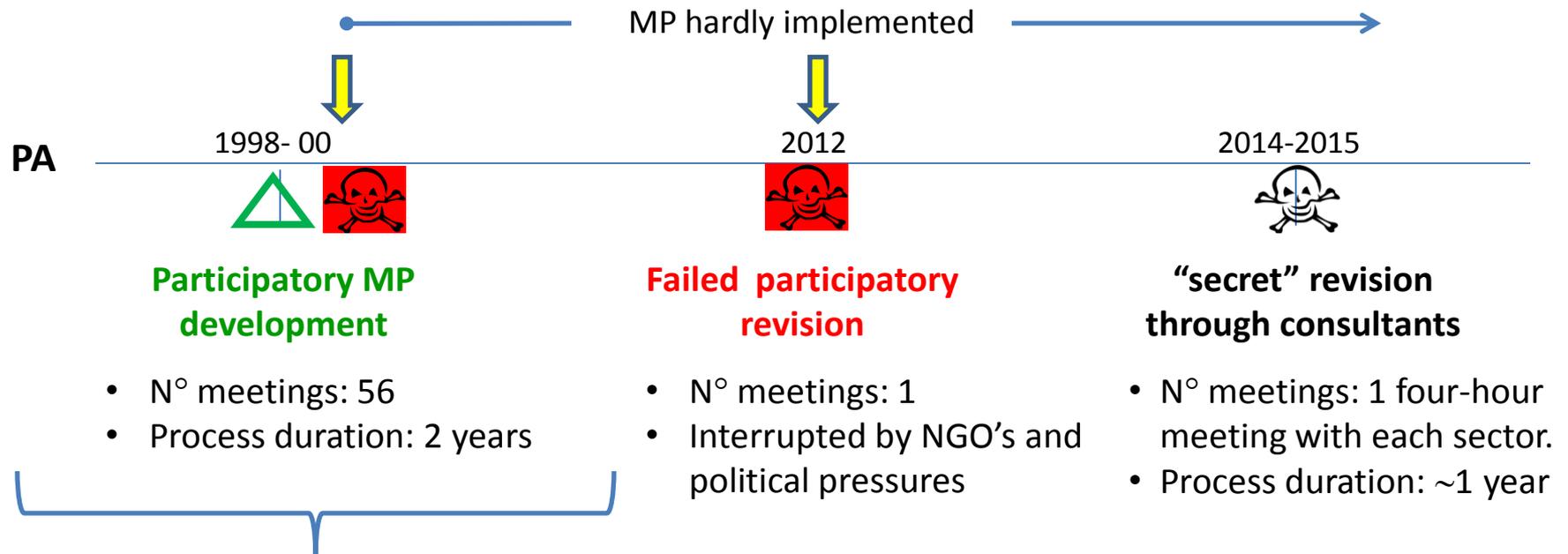
2015



Collapse and closure of diving fishery



Protected Area MP development and revisions



PA GOVERNING BODY COMPOSITION

Change in State Government

Decided by consensus during MP dev.

Permanent members:

- PA and Tourism Agency (presiding)
- Municipalities
- Land owners association
- **Artisanal fishers association**

Elected members (in Assembly):

- Universities, research institutes and NGOs

Implemented under the new government

Permanent members:

- PA and Tourism Agency
- State (Ministry)
- Municipalities
- **Land owners association**
- **Industry and commerce chambers**

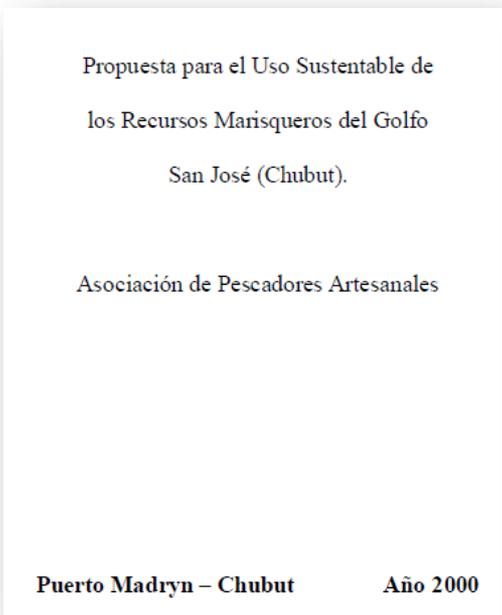
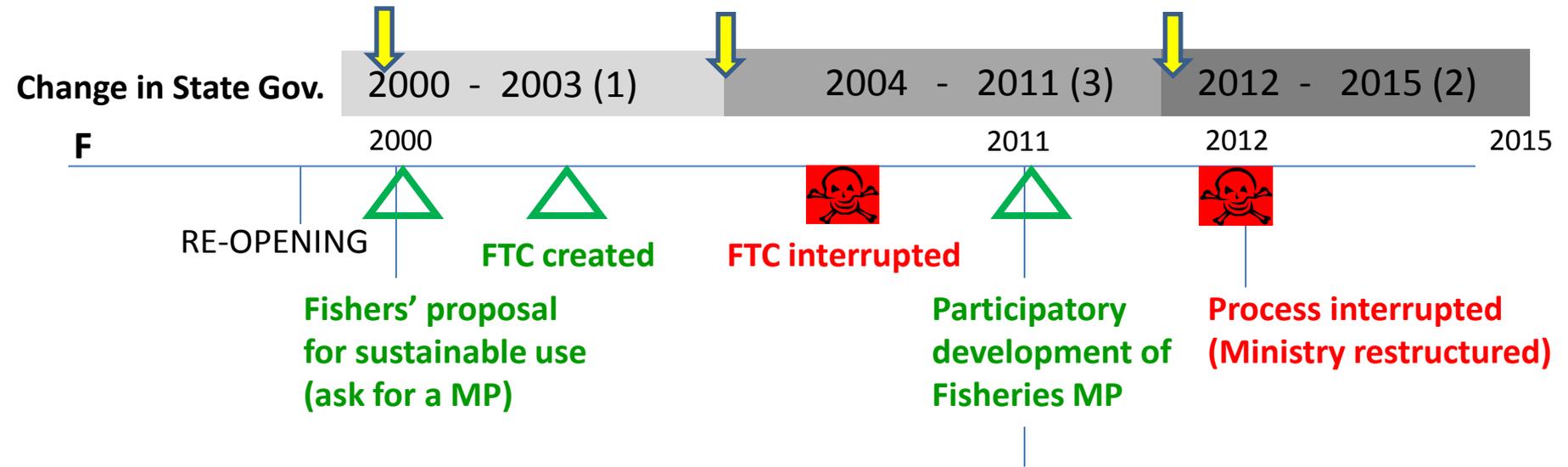
Advisory committee:

- Universities, research institutes and NGOs, and tourism operators



Development of Fisheries Management Plan

(developed independently from PA Agency, by initiative of fishing sector)



9 meetings, exhaustive document (17 chapters)



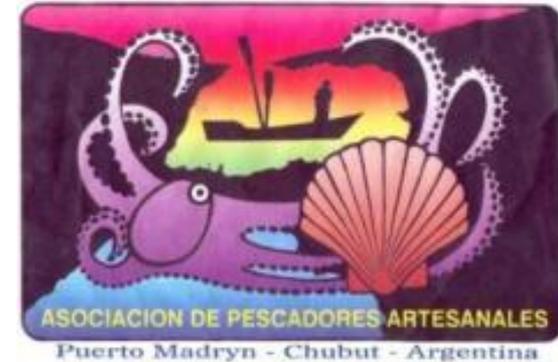
- End result: dilution of responsibility and lack of political will to address the fisheries issues identified, felt mostly in politically costly aspects of implementation, like enforcement



In 2008, the Fishers' Association filed a complaint to the State Prosecution Service against the Fisheries Agency for "the poor performance of their duties in reference to enforcement in the SJG".

How did the fishers respond?

- Organization emerged spontaneously due to perceived threats to livelihood when the PA was established
- Was once strong and very active (~100 newspaper notes released to claim recognition and State support), but progressively debilitated by the inconstant and failed state calls to participate
- Leaders are frustrated and reluctant to continue participating

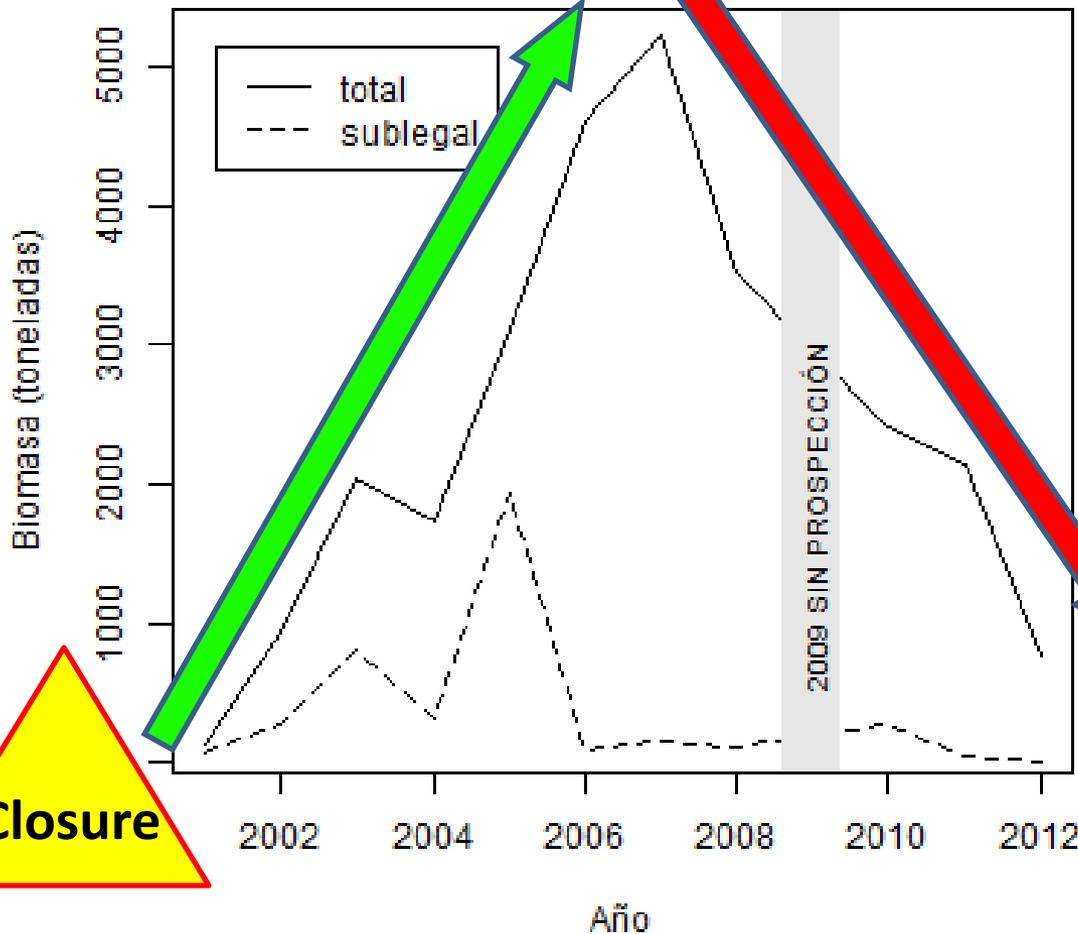




Livelihoods and resources seriously compromised

Crisis

- Biological
- Socio-economic
- Environmental
- Sanitary (red tide risks)



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Decomisaron 200 kilos de vieiras

Fue en el puesto de control de "El Desempeño" en Península Valdés. Se constató incumplimiento de la legislación pesquera. El operativo fue realizado por representantes del Ministerio de Desarrollo Territorial y la colaboración de la Policía del Chubut.



April 2015: Confiscated scallop muscles, processed at the beach

Conclusions

- Conditions potentially enabling sustainability are disabled by the dilution of responsibility on the side of the multiple management agencies, and the erosion of incentives for self-organization of the users, as the government retains authority but is incapable to exercise it
- Without true commitment of the State, or significant devolution of management authority (unlikely), the future is unpromising

Thank you!

To the giant Lobo

