

The United Nations and the Law of the Sea: Its Implementation and Agenda 21

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Fisheries: A social system perspective

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Prolog

Theory is when one knows everything and nothing makes sense.

Practice is when everything makes sense and nobody understands why.

In this presentation theory and practice are being united --

Nothing makes sense and nobody knows why

Getting to know each other

- Q: Why the need to get to know each other?
A: Because you know what a social system is, and I don't know what you know
- So, what do you understand with the word “system”?
- And, what do you understand with the term “social system”?

Introduction, I

- What are systems?
- Why are systems useful, or are they useful?
- Definition by content (absolute, what is), or by relationships to other systems (relative, what is not)
- Systems as models – but what is a model?
- General systems theory

Introduction, II

- Do systems exist, and if so, for whom, how and where?
- In relation to any one specific slice of reality, can one define more than one system?
- If yes, are such systems overlapping or not?
- If yes, do they represent different aspects of reality or the same?

Systems described

- Eco-system, Human system, and Management system
- Systems: From differences to similarities
- Primary focus on the Human system and its relationship with the Eco-system
- “Social system” instead of “human system.”
Why?

Social system described

Used generally to describe the orderly and self-perpetuating nature of social relations. A social system may thus be conceived of as a set of ordered relations within or between human groups or communities which tends to perpetuate itself over time. The notion of social system is however not a static one, but implies the possibility that social systems also adapt and evolve over time as a response to internal or external changes and contradictions. The delimitation of a 'social system' by attempting to define the boundaries of a social unit may however pose problems, since interactions and influences often cut across any arbitrary division which we may establish

Elements of a social system

- Groups or communities
- Relations within and between them
- Content of the relations
 - History: past in present, present in past
 - Ecology, Economics, Politics, Religion, Kinship, Social organization, Norms, Values, Do's and dont's
 - In short: culture

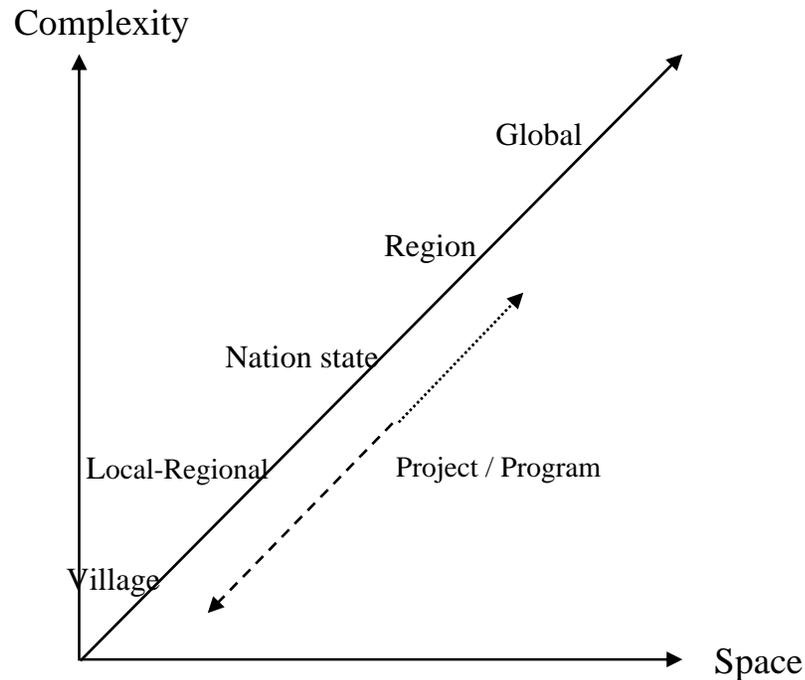
Social system and eco-system

- Repetition: in relation to a specific location, area and/or group of people, what is the relation between a social system and an eco-system? Overlapping, synergetic, symbiotic, conflict, or no relation at all?
- Nature versus Culture
 - An unresolved, evolving relationship
 - Netsilik igloos & Javanese irrigated rice fields

From social system to community

- On which level is a social system located?
- Is this changing today? If so, how and why?
- Expanding the model
 - Complexity and levels
 - “Communities” and social systems
- What is a community?

A typology of communities



New problems and new solutions

- Scale problems
 - From village to nation-state and beyond
- Differentiation and integration
- New social systems created, with different content, function, rationale, logic
- From internalized values, norms to external enforcement and control

Linkages

- Linkages between systems, character and purpose
- Property rights as a fundamental link
- Property rights defined
- Property rights and levels of communities
 - Then
 - Now

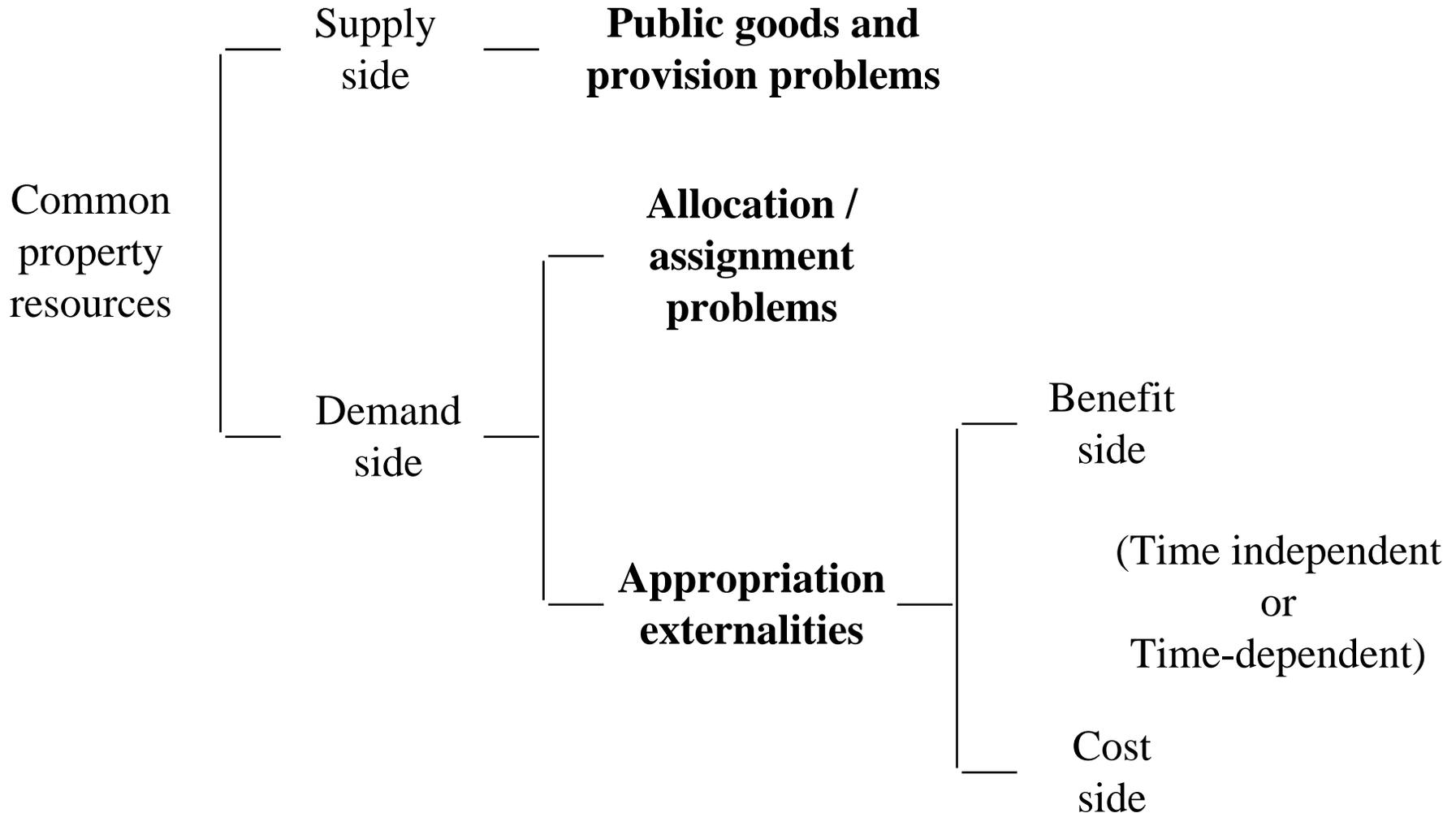
Property rights and levels

- Traditional rights regimes, on local levels
 - Common & private property rights
- Modern rights: on emerging macro levels
 - State property rights regimes
 - EEZ; Straddling stocks agreement, etc.;
 - UNCLOS; UNCED / Agenda 21
- Collective action problems

Systems and collective action

- Collective action on the local level
 - Has its own set of problems
- Collective action on the macro level
 - A very different logic, rationale and level of problem

Collective action problems



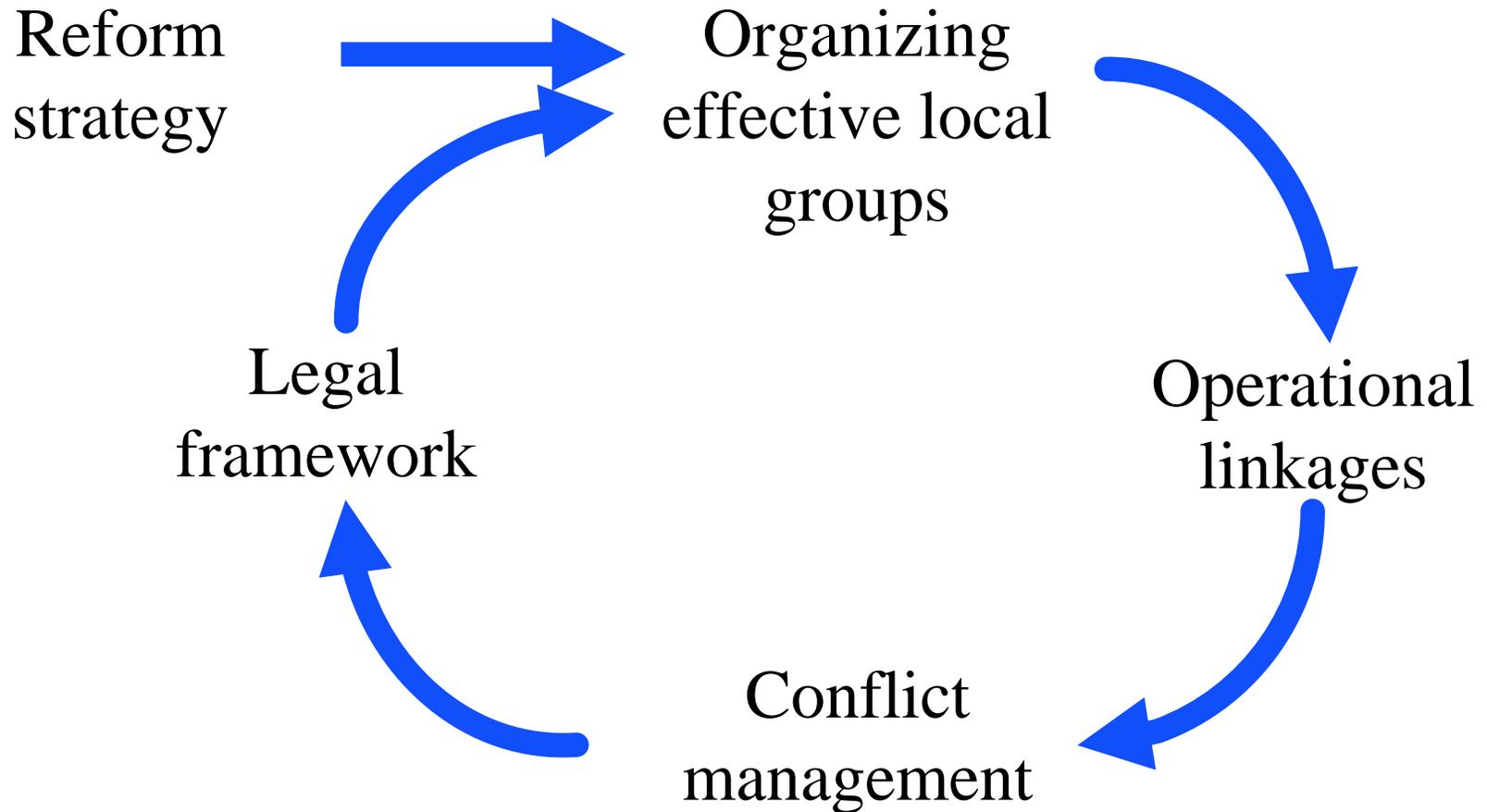
Systems integrated

- Taking the watch apart – and putting it back together
- Parts, systems and holism
- Systems as models

Case: Bangladesh

- Designing and creating new systems, on various levels, with new rationales
- The Bangladesh fisheries sector, overview
 - Initial situation
 - Reform / change process
 - Outcome
 - Lessons learned

Process and sequencing



Your input

- Social systems and community levels around the world
- Drawing concentric circles
- Property rights as integrating systems on various abstract levels
- Systems and human interaction with – and sustainable mgmt. of – the environment