



Sea Change: Unlikely Allies and a Success Story of Oceanic Proportions

by James Workman and Amanda Leland

Discussion Questions

1. The book deals with international issues and tells stories of many people in all parts of the United States, yet it is organized around the life of a single Texas fisherman. Why might the authors have chosen to orient the issues around one person? Is this approach effective?
2. The table of contents indicates that the book is organized as Personal, Local, Regional, National, Global. Do you think this is an accurate description of the contents? Why do you think the authors chose this organization? How does it affect the way you read the book?
3. The authors say that “no fisherman ever felt *he* was the one overfishing. Blame invariably fell on others” (p. 19). Do you think this is a common way of looking at problems? Why might people tend to think in this way? Can this way of thinking be overcome?
4. There are thousands of oil and gas rigs in the Gulf of Mexico (p. 99). These rigs can cause extensive environmental destruction, yet can also serve as the foundation for habitat rehabilitation. Do you favor removing these constructs, or allowing them to remain in place? How might this dichotomy of harm and benefit be true of other aspects of environmental damage and preservation? Might it be true of other aspects of life?
5. Chapter 13, Smart Boat Technology, describes the development of monitoring systems for commercial fishing boats. Privacy is an important issue in our technological world. How do you balance the outcomes in maintaining privacy as opposed to gains realized from increased monitoring, such as increases in income, health, and safety?
6. One issue that comes up again and again in the book is the deep distrust felt by nearly every participant toward everyone else. And yet, solutions to complex problems require cooperation. How did the implementation of catch shares affect trust between

stakeholders? How can we begin to build trust between people, as well as between people and institutions?

7. The authors say that “ultimately, there is no impact-free lunch” (p. 254). Do you agree? What might this mean for our choices?
8. Throughout the book, we are shown the many competing interests, not easily compatible needs, and potential impacts from all the options. How do we ethically balance that reality when making choices? How can we develop programs when facing that reality?

Suggested Activities

1. Participate in a citizen science project that promotes sustainable fisheries.
<https://fishrulesapp.com/citizenscience>
2. Help reduce marine debris. <https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/how-help/water>
<https://blog.marinedebris.noaa.gov/host-your-own-community-cleanup>
3. The National Fish Hatchery System is one method used to maintain fish populations in the United States. Visit a fish hatchery near you. (Many states have additional hatcheries.) <https://www.fws.gov/program/national-fish-hatchery-system>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_national_fish_hatcheries_in_the_United_States
4. There are more than 80,000 dams in the U.S., and many of them have some kind of fish pass. Some are very elaborate, while some are very simple. Is there a dam near you? Does it have a fish pass you can visit? The Bonneville Lock and Dam on the Columbia River is an example of a complex system, with tours and windows into the water for fish viewing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPJdkIAuCb0>
5. Many environmental issues require government action or agreement. If you care about issues, contact your elected representatives.
<https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>
<https://5calls.org/>