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Title of paper: Challenging the capacity of the environmental state: Corruption and compliance in the fisheries of sub-Saharan Africa

Abstract:

The capacity of the environmental state is seriously challenged in a context of widespread corruption among its administration responsible for enforcement of regulations in natural resource management. This study explores this issue by investigating the institutional failures driving the degradation of fisheries in sub-Saharan Africa. Building on theories that depict enforcement and compliance for government and resource users as a sequential prisoner’s dilemma game, this paper examines whether perceptions of corruptibility of the enforcing authority shape resource users’ willingness to comply with regulations. To provide an answer to this empirically under-explored question, this paper presents findings from scenario experiments carried out among small-scale fishermen in sub-Saharan Africa.