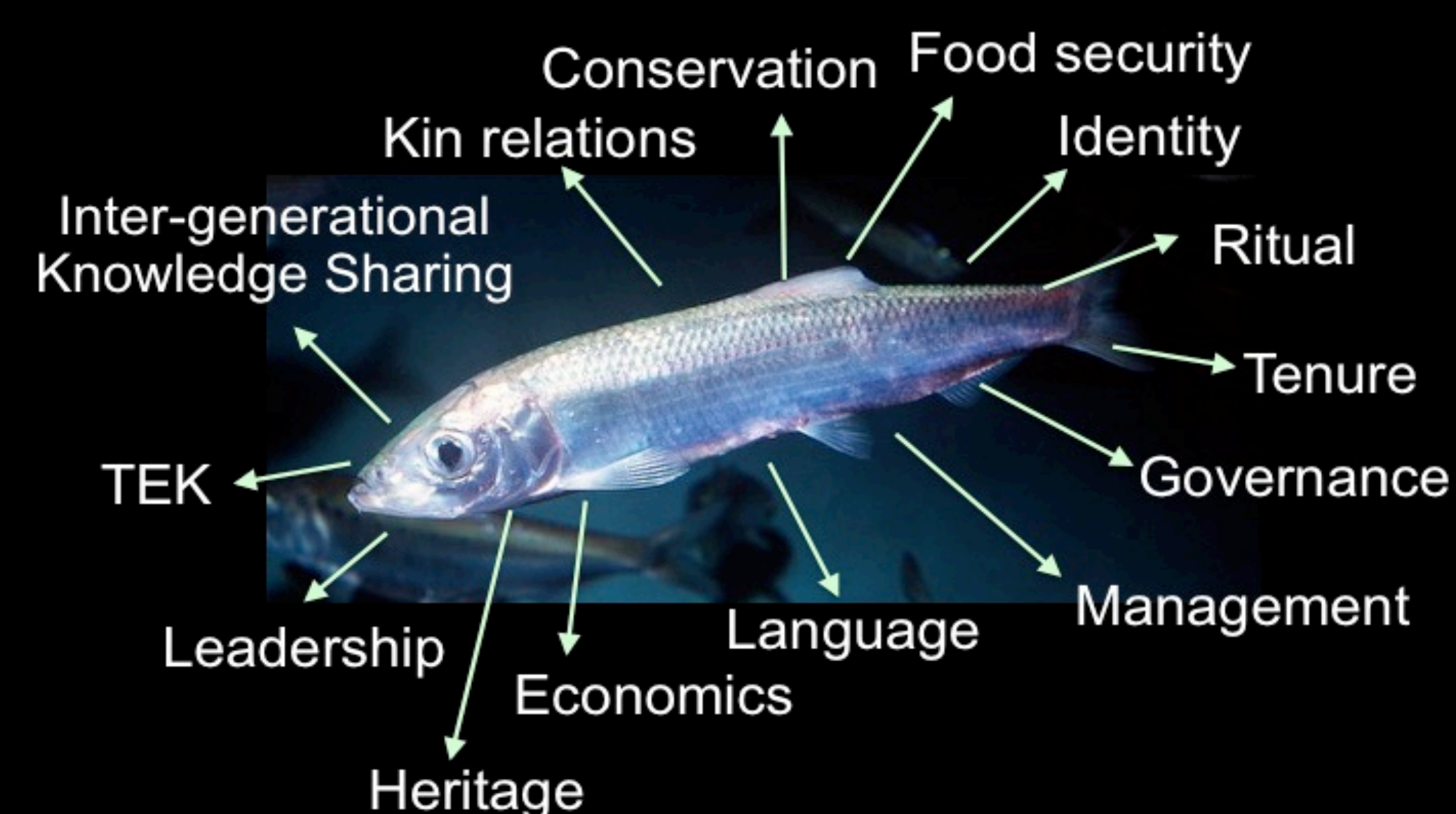


“Everything revolves around the herring”: Continuity and Transformation of the Heiltsuk Herring Fishery Through Time.

Alisha Gauvreau, MRM (candidate), Dr. Dana Lepofsky, Dr. Murray Rutherford
Department of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University

Pacific herring: a Cultural Keystone Species

- Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii* / wá'nái), are a critical part of the social-ecological systems of the central coast of British Columbia.
- For millennia, the Heiltsuk First Nation have depended on this forage fish for food, social, ceremonial, and economic purposes.
- In the last 30 years, dramatic declines in herring abundance and distribution have had lasting effects on the Heiltsuk community.
- Documenting Heiltsuk TEK and herring management strategies can mitigate some of these effects.



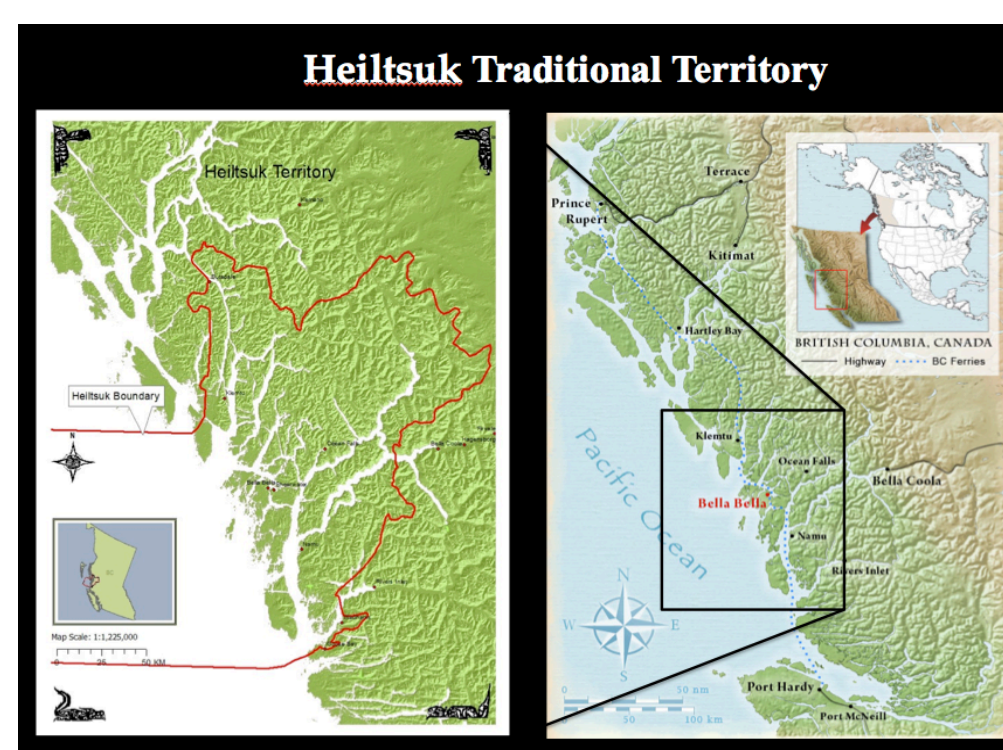
What are the components of the Heiltsuk traditional management system for Pacific herring, and how have they changed over time?

Objectives:

- (1) Document how the social institutions, traditional ecological knowledge, and aspects of Heiltsuk worldview informed herring management strategies in the past.
- (2) Document how changes in state-led herring management and other social and institutional developments in BC impact the role of Heiltsuk local knowledge and management strategies today.

Community Based Participatory Research

Based on the central coast of BC, and in close partnership with HIRMD, this study was initiated in 2011 following the identification of Heiltsuk community research needs during the Herring School Workshop.



Methods

1. A review of scientific and historical literature and archival documents
2. 23 structured and semi-structured interviews
3. Content analysis
4. Participation in potlatches, feasts, DFO-Gladstone reconciliation meetings, and Integrated Herring Harvesting Planning Committee meetings

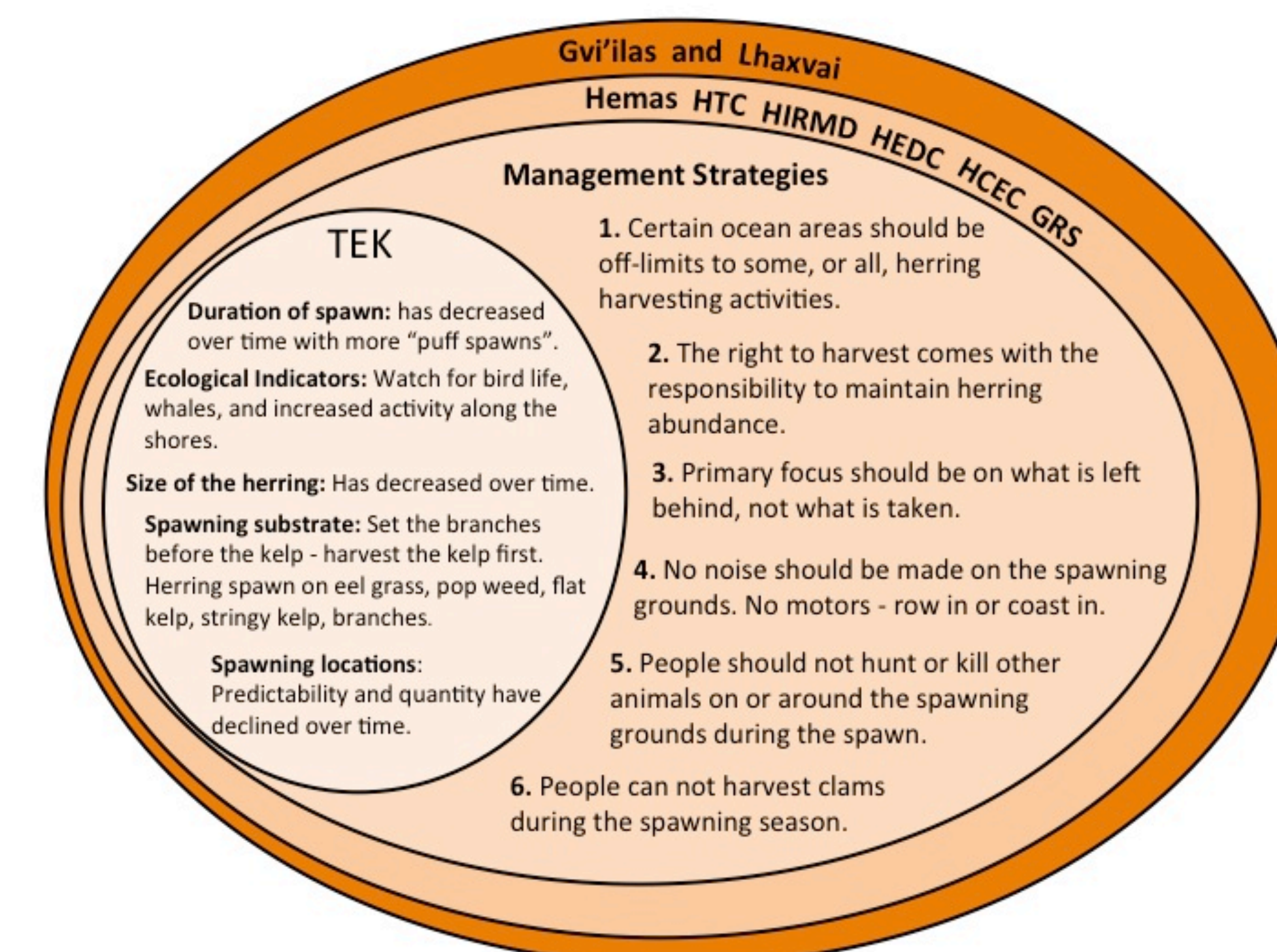
“Everything revolves around the herring...”

“...The little herring, from the day he’s dropped as an egg, to the day that someone, or something - a seagull or a fish - until he's gobbled, he's always got this huge struggle. And we're a part of it too. And we need to manage and control that.”



- Harvey Humchitt, Hemas (Hereditary Chief) and Research Liaison Coordinator at HIRMD

The Heiltsuk Management System for Pacific Herring



Some of the components of the “knowledge-practice-belief complex” that guide the Heiltsuk system...

Gvi'ilas, (a complex set of orally transmitted customary laws, values, and practices) and Lhaxvai (Heiltsuk authority or power over place) have informed the worldview of the Heiltsuk people since time immemorial, and continue to shape local strategies for herring management today. (Sources: Berkes 1999; Housty et al. 2014; LUP 2005, Interview data)

Moving Forward

Traditional Heiltsuk stewardship embodies:

- An integrated approach to herring management
- Manner, amount, and allocation of harvest regulated within the local community
- Geographic specifications (e.g. Tribal areas)
- Reliance on TEK and the guidance of hereditary chiefs and elders/knowledge keepers

Components of the system are being developed and applied in aspects of Marine Use Planning today.

Gayasixa / Thank you

Fish-WIKS, Hakai Institute, The Herring School, SSHRC, SFU-REM, HIRMD, HTC, HCEC, HEDC, and all of the people who have generously contributed their time and knowledge towards this study.

Timeline of the major developments that have affected the Heiltsuk traditional management system for Pacific herring.

