

HOOKED!
Fish for
the Future

HOOKED! Fish for the Future

By John van der Sanden

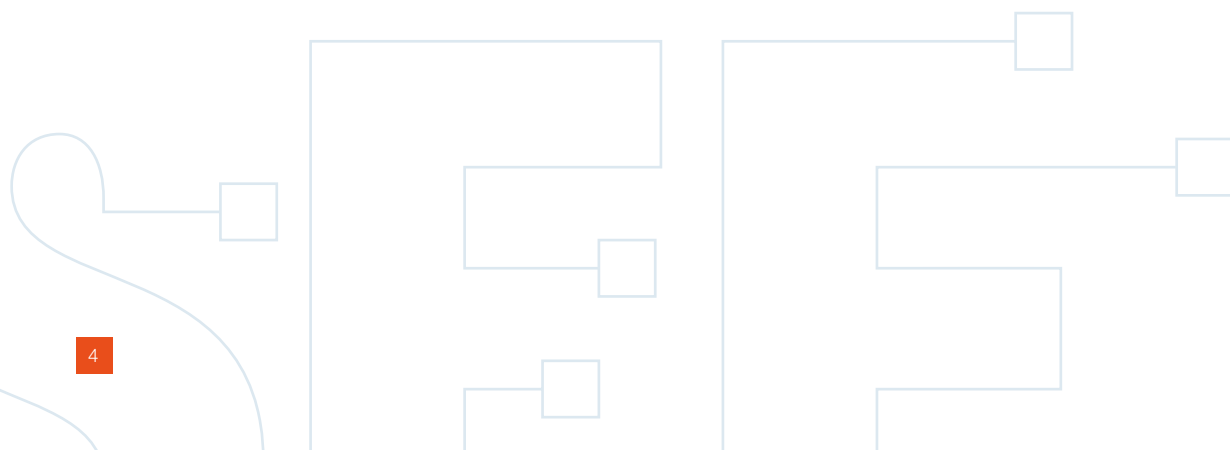
Editing: Frits Blik, Maarten van Blijderveen,

Petra de Boer and Marcel Volkerts

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Introduction

This is the story of Blue Haven, an ordinary town that could be just down the road. Blue Haven isn't large, and it isn't small, and it isn't far from here. A river runs into the sea there. The town lies nestled along a wide beach with a view all the way to the horizon.

The town is prosperous, just like the rest of the country. Daily life has been swimming along smoothly for as long as anyone remembers. By local custom, everyone in Blue Haven eats fresh fish every evening at six o'clock. Large companies make

sure that freshly caught fish is on everyone's plate within two hours. At six o'clock sharp, and not a minute later! But how much longer can Blue Haven keep eating fresh fish this way? The town is on the cusp of major changes...

1

An ordinary town

That Sunday afternoon, a bright sun shines down on peaceful Blue Haven. Above the calm sea, a pleasant breeze keeps the seagulls aloft against a vivid blue sky. In the distance, two people are walking along the dike. They come closer. It's Grandpa Tim and his granddaughter Lisa. For the past three years, Grandpa Tim has lived in a nursing home; Lisa lives in the city, where she's attending college. She's come home to visit her parents and is glad for the chance to walk along the dike with her grandfather. As they walk, Grandpa Tim tells her stories about when he was young. Back when the whole town lived off the fishing trade. He tells her about the fishing boats, and about the hustle and bustle of the fish market.

These days, there's a SuperFish in the nearby city of Southport: a giant fish processing and storage complex. Two brothers from Blue Haven took the plunge about forty years ago: from small-scale to large, from modest tradesmen to industrial giants. Along the way, they split up the original company. One company now does all the fish processing work, and the other takes care of all the transport through his company Fish2Dish. From Southport, they deliver fish throughout the country. Every day, an unending stream of trucks leaves the SuperFish complex, headed for every corner of the land. Including Blue Haven.

Both companies have already been passed down to the next generation. Because the demand for fish is still growing and more fish is being caught in sustainable ways, the management at each company has decided to expand capacity by building a new plant and buying more trucks. Blue Haven

is happy about this plan, because that way at least the fish will continue to be delivered on time. Because at six o'clock sharp every day, the entire town sits down to a fish dinner. And why change a good thing?

Lisa and her grandfather stop to rest on a bench in front of a pretty little house on the dike. There's a "For Sale" sign in the yard. They look out over the sea. Neither of them speaks. The seagulls race brazenly low over their heads, looking for food.

"How's college going?" Grandpa Tim asks with interest. "What are you working on now?" Lisa tells him about her major in Applied Futures Research, about the trends and developments that will shape life in the future. "Hang on a minute," Grandpa Tim interrupts when he hears the passion in Lisa's voice. "You've lost me. I'm just a simple fisherman, you know."



"It's like this," Lisa starts again. "We can't see into the future. We don't know what to expect. But if we analyze the way we live today in terms of expectations and costs, we'll be in a better position to take advantage of future developments and make sure that our well-being and prosperity don't decline." Judging by the look on Grandpa Tim's face, he isn't following her. "Grandpa, listen. All of Blue Haven eats fish every day at six o'clock. What do we need to do to make sure we can still eat fish in ten years? That's what I'm learning about."

"Well, I don't even know if I'll be around to see that," Grandpa Tim laughs. "Speaking of fish, shouldn't we head over to your mother? It's almost time for dinner, isn't it?"

"I think so, Grandpa. By the way, Alex will be joining us."
"Alex? Hmmm, there's a name I haven't heard before."
Grandpa Tim smiles. "Aha! My granddaughter has a boyfriend."
Lisa turns red.

"So his future is going to be applied to you?" Grandpa Tim teases her. Lisa laughs. "Yes, and he's studying International B Science. He's writing his thesis now. About linking small markets together and scaling them up."

"Right," Grandpa Tim says with a look that seems to say he understands completely. Lisa sees his look and laughs. And then their peace and quiet is over. A long procession of white trucks from the city comes rumbling down the road. It's an impressive sight, there on the narrow little dike. They're all bringing fish to Blue Haven.

"All fish from SuperFish," Grandpa Tim says. "They do this every day. Right at five o'clock. Fresh fish from Southport. Because that's what people want. And on Sundays, they send a couple of extra trucks, because all the day-trippers want to eat fresh fish, too."

Lisa and her grandfather watch as the drivers wrestle their trucks through the chicanes and curb extensions along the dike. Especially when someone approaches from the other direction, traffic nearly grinds to a halt and the long line of vehicles only inches forward. "That dike is much too narrow; I've been saying it for years. It's an accident waiting to happen," Grandpa Tim murmurs.

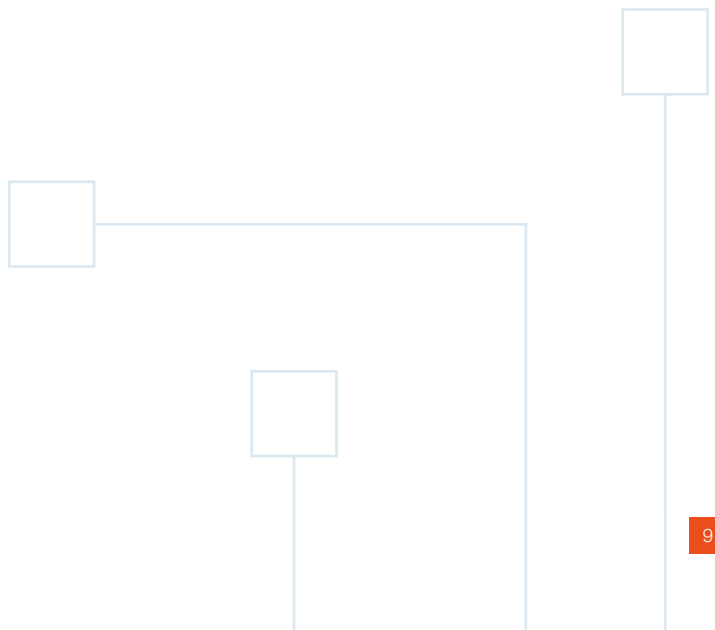
They haven't noticed Lisa's father come up behind them. He's biked to the dike from Blue Haven - against the steady stream of trucks. "Your mother's gone to the store to buy fresh fish. I was wondering where you two had gotten to." Father joins Lisa and Grandpa Tim in watching the many trucks inch their way along the narrow road. "The town council is working on a proposal to widen the dike," he tells his daughter. "The town's going to buy this little house to make room for the new road."

"They're going to tear this house down?" Lisa looks indignant. "What a shame." "Your dad and his Modern Blue Haven Party want to make sure the trucks can keep up a good pace," Grandpa Tim says, "so that the fish is always on time and there are fewer traffic jams."

“But it may be a while before we have the money to widen the road,” Father says. “We haven’t quite figured out the financing yet.” “Well,” Lisa thinks out loud, “will widening the road even solve the problem?” “What do you mean?” Father asks. “Of course it will. Because once we widen the road, a whole bunch of trucks can all drive into Blue Haven right at five o’clock. And they do it every day, so it’s worth the investment. Only the Blue Haven General Party is against it. Instead of widening the road, they want to install traffic lights. Something to do with the access rate. But I don’t think that will solve the problem.”

“But the dike is barely used the rest of the day. So some of the trucks could come earlier, say at three o’clock,” Lisa says. “But then you won’t have fresh fish on your plate at six o’clock. No one in Blue Haven wants that fish.”

“I still think there’s a better way.” Grandpa Tim laughs at his persistent granddaughter. “Come on, I’m hungry. It’s time to eat some fish.”



2

Widen the road, or...

At her parents' home, Lisa introduces her grandfather to Alex. Her father sets the table while her mother cooks fish in the kitchen. Lisa hears her mother complain to her father about how crowded the fish shop was. How hard it was to find the best fish with so many other customers in the store.

Once they're all seated at the table, her mother keeps complaining, now about how expensive the fish is. "And you'd better get there early, or all the good stuff will be gone." Alex raises his eyebrows, and Lisa explains Blue Haven's fish problem to her boyfriend. She tells him about the long lines of trucks filled with fish that she and her grandfather saw that afternoon. Lisa's father adds that his party is trying to widen the dike to solve the problem. Because traffic just keeps on growing, and the demand for fresh fish along with it. That's why they're building another fish plant in Southport with greater storage capacity.

Alex listens, swallows his bite of food, and says it sounds like an expensive solution to him. "Widening the road on a dike costs a lot of money. And besides, can you finish it in time? Before a big fish-truck gridlock happens?" "I suggested spreading the trucks out over the day," Lisa says, "and then you don't even need to widen the dike." "Yes," her mother says, "but if the people in Blue Haven want to eat fresh fish every day at six o'clock, then there has to be enough fresh fish at six o'clock. A truck that brings fish to Blue Haven at two o'clock is worthless, because that fish won't be fresh anymore at six o'clock." She returns a fishbone to the platter.

"You could find a way to store the fish in Blue Haven until dinnertime," Lisa says. "You could build a storage unit here in town. Aquariums. That would keep the fish fresh, and make sure there's always enough."

"And that solves another problem, too," says Grandpa Tim, who so far has kept quiet and listened carefully. "Here in the village, fish is a daily staple. Everyone wants to be able to eat fish whenever the mood strikes them. But two months out of the year, it's almost impossible to eat fish. No fish are being caught here in those months. So if you insist on eating fish, you pay twice the regular price." Mother sighs.

"But if you could store fish in Blue Haven," Lisa says with growing enthusiasm, "you could buy fish and store them and eat them all year round!" The table falls silent. Then Father nods. "It sounds so logical. Why haven't we thought of it before?" "Maybe because Blue Haven keeps focusing on the current situation: the fish plant in the city, the dike the trucks have to drive across. People want more fish? We'll build another plant. Traffic getting jammed up? Widen the road. But now you're approaching the problem from the other side," Lisa says.

"And that makes a whole lot of expensive investments unnecessary," Alex adds. "There are smart, easy-to-implement solutions that mean you don't need a new plant and wider roads."

"But if we need somewhere to store fish, does that mean we have to build a big warehouse here in town to keep all the fish in?" Father wonders.

"That's one option, but we can also look at what resources we already have for storing fish, and what simple changes we could make to use them even better," Lisa says.

"Well, I don't know." Mother hesitates. "The important thing is that there's always fresh fish. I can't begin to guess what else I would serve. And I think lots of people in Blue Haven feel the same way."

"Maybe we need to build several ponds where the fish can swim until you want to eat them," Lisa suggests.

"Every street or every neighborhood could have a shared aquarium, for example," Alex adds.

"Okay," Mother says, "but who's going to guarantee that there's always fresh fish?" "You can do that with a good information system," Lisa answers. "So you know how much fish you have available, and how much fish is being consumed, so that Fish2Dish knows how much it needs to deliver."

"And they can deliver it at times when traffic on the dike is low," Grandpa Tim adds. He looks around the table triumphantly. He understands his granddaughter's idea. But Lisa's mother is still unsure, so Grandpa Tim explains it to her.

"For you, that means you always have fresh fish, but the fish remains affordable. That's because you don't have to buy it between five and six o'clock, when it's scarce; you can buy fresh fish the whole day long."

"Exactly! If this town makes sure it knows how much fish gets eaten when, then it can make sure there's always enough fish and that the fish doesn't have to be expensive," Lisa says.

"And SuperFish and Fish2Dish don't have to invest in extra storage or mega-trawlers and trucks," Alex continues. "Those investments don't have to be recouped. They can use their capital for something better."

"And we don't need to build an expensive new road along the dike," Father adds, "so we can spend that money on something completely different."

Lisa nods happily. Alex smiles at her and savors his last bite of fish.

3

A smart fish network

“Fish will keep getting more and more expensive,” Alex says later, as he and Lisa drink coffee with her parents on the patio. Grandpa Tim is inside, watching sports on TV. “If everyone eats a lot of fish, we have to worry about overfishing. That means you have to catch fish in less suitable places, with trawlers that are better equipped. The fish consumer will ultimately have to pay for those investments.”

“The neighbor behind us built a large pond in his back yard six months ago,” Mother says. “He grows his own fish in it. It’s actually kind of pretty, a pond in the yard - and you know what? He grows nearly a quarter of the fish he eats himself.”

“Well,” Father says, “there are already several initiatives in Blue Haven that could provide an alternative to large-scale fishing. Several residents have taken up fishing again. Just going out on the river with a fishing pole. It’s a different person’s turn each day, and at the end of the day, the fish are divided among them. The town is even giving them a subsidy for boat maintenance and buying hooks and floats.” “More and more people think it’s important not to be solely dependent on the white trucks for their fish. What if flooding makes the dike impassable, for example? Or construction work?” says Lisa. Her father frowns. He’s still hoping that his Modern Blue Haven Party has found the solution for Blue Haven’s future fish consumption in widening the road. “You know, local fish is already on the menu at our town’s one and only restaurant with a Michelin star. At Chez Roe, you can order delicious dishes made with fish caught right here in town,” Mother says.

“That’s great! We’re already on the right track here in town!” Lisa looks at her father as he takes a sip of coffee. “But you know,” she continues, “it’s all good and well to have people catch their own fish, but is that all the town needs? Or is there another way to attack the problem?”

Lisa’s mother has to smile when she hears that; her husband is always “attacking problems” in his political speeches. Lisa is definitely her father’s child.

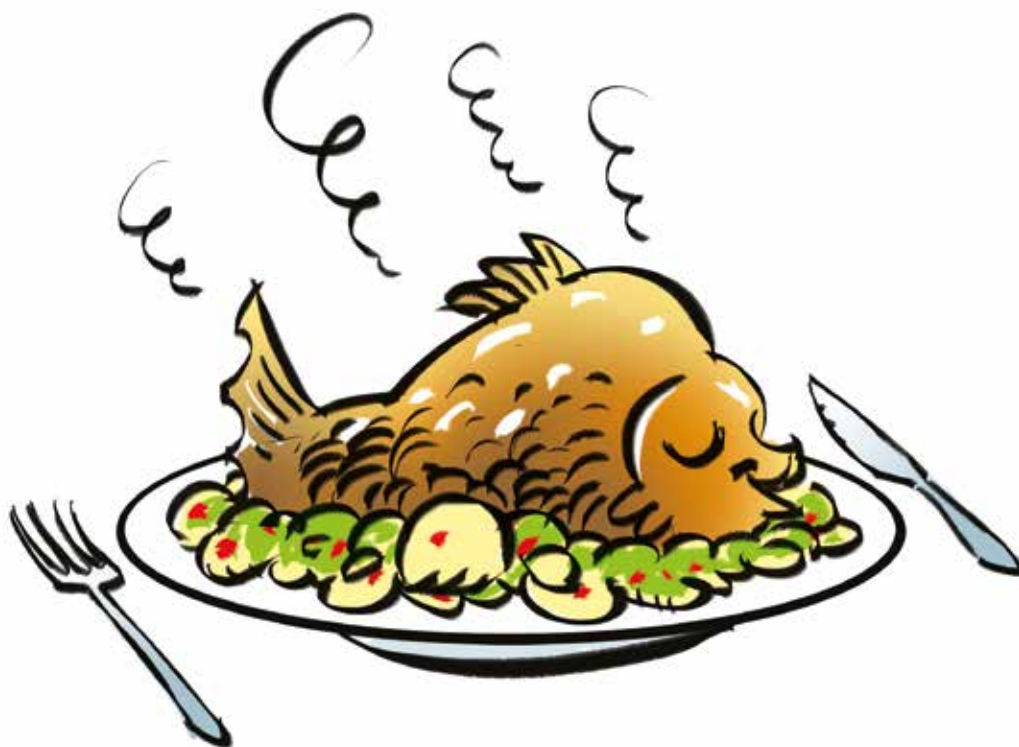
“What do you mean?” Father asks.

“The catch depends on the season, which means there’s a lot of variation in the amount and types of fish that are available. Sometimes you have too much. What do you do then? Can you give it back?”

“That would be fantastic,” Alex says. “Everyone who catches fish puts what’s left over in an aquarium. Every day, he checks whether he can get a good price for his fish on the market, so he knows when the best time is to sell his surplus fish.”

“So you wouldn’t need SuperFish anymore?” Father asks.

“No, that’s not the right way to look at it. If you’ve caught more fish than you can use, you put it in an aquarium. All the



fresh fish is kept there. If you can get a good price for your fish on the market, you sell it," Alex explains. "And if you don't have enough, then you buy what you need from SuperFish." "So you just have to make sure that the trucks can take the extra fish with them," Lisa says. "Okay, but not everyone has time to spend a whole day fishing," Mother says.

"And not everyone wants a huge pond in his back yard," Father adds. "Some residents of Blue Haven don't even have a yard." Alex nods. "That's true, but there will always be days when the town catches more fish than gets eaten. If you can sell that fish to SuperFish, none of it goes to waste."

"So you aren't turning fish consumers into fish producers," Lisa laughs. She understands what Alex is trying to say. "Every resident of Blue Haven can be a prosumer: both a producer and a consumer!"

Mother looks confused. Lisa explains it to her. "Sometimes you're a consumer: you eat fish that you've bought from the aquarium. And sometimes you're a producer: you sell fish from your own pond, because right then you've got too much." "And one person feels more like a fish producer than the other. One person tries to provide his own fish as much as he can, and when he's got some left over, he sells it to SuperFish. Another doesn't have the time or interest to catch or farm his own fish, so he just keeps buying what he needs." "So you're saying that what we need to do is make sure that there's always enough fish to eat in town, but not

too much fish, because then we have to throw it away," Mother says. "Almost," Lisa answers. "But we're not going to throw away the leftover fish anymore. We're going to sell it back to SuperFish."

"Exactly," Alex says. "And we have to make sure the fish transport across the dike is spread out over the day, so we don't have to widen the road." "And if we also make sure that lots of other people produce fish, then we don't need a big, new fish plant," Lisa adds, "and fish will stay affordable."

"But we have to make sure we make clear agreements," Father says. "Not only everyone in Blue Haven, the town council, the local fish shop, and Chez Roe, but also SuperFish and Fish2Dish have to embrace the idea. We have to create a kind of network."

"Supply and demand definitely have to be matched," Alex agrees. "That's the only way the idea can succeed. And the network has to be a smart one."

They realize that Grandpa Tim is standing in the doorway. He's heard the last part of the conversation. "Well, it all sounds super-smart to me."

That night, Lisa and Alex take the bus back to the city. There's no light on when they pass the pretty little house on the dike. And there's no other traffic, either. "Plenty of room for Fish2Dish's white trucks." Lisa smiles at her boyfriend, and with a finger, draws a fish on the foggy window.

4

Meet blue haven's new fishmonger

Lisa wakes up early the next morning. She thinks back on yesterday's conversations. All kinds of thoughts are running through her head. The other half of the bed is empty; Alex is already downstairs. Lisa smells fresh coffee and gets up. She finds Alex at the kitchen table. "Want some coffee?" he asks, already getting up to pour her a cup. Lisa kisses him. "Are you working on your thesis?" she asks as she looks over his shoulder.

"No," Alex says, his thoughts already drifting back to his notebook. "I had this idea last night, and I'm trying to work it out. I've been down here since four o'clock, because I realized our plan for Blue Haven's fish system is missing something." Lisa is suddenly wide awake. "What's that?"

"Here's the thing. The consumers will take care of catching some of the fish; they'll become prosumers, as we've christened them. But what does that really mean? Will they keep selling their own fish? Will they walk down to the fish

market every day with whatever fish they have left over? Will they have to haggle over the price for their fish? And do they want to? Or have the time to?"

Lisa doesn't have any answers for him.

"The fish prosumers have the opportunity to sell their extra

fish. And to buy fish when they don't catch enough. But to do that, you have to set up a few things right. The prosumer doesn't want to spend all day on it, haggling over the price he can get for his extra fish and taking it down to the market. If you can set up a system to handle that, then you keep prosumers from giving up because of the hassle." Alex looks at Lisa as if it's all completely obvious. "But it's more than just a question of who wants to sell fish and who wants to buy it. I think we have to take it a step further. You can also negotiate the time of day when people eat fish. Why not eat fish at twelve o'clock, for example?"

"Because no one in Blue Haven does that," Lisa says. "No, Alex, I don't think that's going to work." "But I think some consumers are price-sensitive, Lisa. And if we can sell them



the same fish cheaper if they eat it at twelve o'clock, they'll buy it then," he answers. "And if demand gets spread out across the day, then you get rid of the peak, and people don't always have to pay top dollar. If they decide to eat fish at some other time of day, then the fish they buy will be cheaper. And not just on the buying side. You can also offer fish producers a good price for their fish if they sell them at the right time. You can tell them when they'll get the best price for their fish, so they know when the best time is to produce them."

"So you want to actively regulate supply and demand on the fishing market," Lisa says. "Not just consumption, but also production." She nods in understanding.

"Exactly! That's very important. Because you can't keep fish forever, so you want to sell them as quickly as you can. It's very expensive to build several aquariums, or very large ones. If you make sure that fish production is demand-driven, you can avoid a lot of extra expenses," Alex says. "Right now there's just one large fish provider; soon, there will be hundreds. There need to be very clear agreements on how things work, or it will be a mess. Everyone wants to eat fresh fish exactly when they want it for the least possible time and effort. So someone has to bring producers and consumers

together and manage market supply and demand."

"That person would remove a lot of the workload for consumers and producers. They would make the process easier for everyone," Lisa says.

"That's right. He or she would bring local supply and demand together and make sure fish prices are optimal. That means fish production and storage have to be flexible and tailored to demand. In addition, this person would maximize profit when he or she sells the local surplus of fish on the wholesale market where companies like SuperFish are active."

"So what we need to do - " Lisa is getting more enthusiastic by the minute " - is breathe new life into the old fish market in Blue Haven. I'll become the fishmonger, and match the local supply and demand for Blue Haven fish at the fish market."

"But that's not enough," Alex responds. "We may have great plans for Blue Haven, but so far we've forgotten about two important market players:

SuperFish and Fish2Dish. Will they insist on widening the dike road, or will they see promise in our plans?"

"We'll find out when we talk with them. I'll make an appointment," Lisa declares resolutely. She's not wasting any time in her brand-new role as Blue Haven's fishmonger.

5

Fish in every color

Three days later, Lisa and Alex are gathered around the table with the directors of SuperFish and Fish2Dish, plus the Blue Haven town council member responsible for the fish situation and one of her assistants. Apparently Lisa and Alex's plan has piqued their interest. All it took was a few phone calls from Lisa. SuperFish's corporate sustainability manager was very interested, and he put her directly in touch with the company's director. She listened to Lisa's story and then contacted Fish2Dish's director.

Lisa's father did a little asking around at the town hall, and now they're all sitting together in Chez Roe: Alex, Lisa, the directors of SuperFish and Fish2Dish, Anne Coddington and John West, and Blue Haven council member Edith Harrison and her assistant.

Lisa stands up, looks confidently at Alex, and begins. "We've been thinking, and we have what we think is a good idea for Blue Haven's fish consumption." She explains that there's no need to widen the dike road into Blue Haven, and that SuperFish and Fish2Dish don't need a huge new storage facility or new trucks and mega-trawlers.

"The important thing is that we can use the existing road into Blue Haven throughout the entire day, thereby avoiding traffic jams," she concludes.

"But we've already installed chicanes and curb extensions," Councilor Harrison says. "Do you mean we should add traffic lights at every intersection, too?"

"Not at all. The measures to control the traffic access rate should only be used in emergencies in the future," Lisa

answers. "By aligning supply and demand, we eliminate peaks. That means we can use the same road capacity to transport a greater volume of fish."

"Yes, but everyone in Blue Haven wants to eat fish at six o'clock. How will you keep the fish fresh?" pipes the worried voice of Councilor Harrison's assistant.

"We need to create new storage areas in Blue Haven: at the fish market and in the shops, but also in every neighborhood and in people's yards," Alex answers. "If we build enough aquariums, we can make sure Blue Haven always has enough fish."

"And how will we know that there's enough fish?" asks Anne Coddington, SuperFish's director.

"Thanks to an information system that keeps track of exactly how much fish there is, how much is being eaten, and how much needs to be delivered. So we won't throw fish away any more; instead, we'll make sure there's always exactly the right amount." Lisa looks around the circle and sees thoughtful expressions.



“Another question,” says John West, the director of Fish2Dish. “Now I understand why you don’t think the road needs to be widened and why we don’t need to invest in a large new fish plant, but why doesn’t SuperFish need to buy new mega-trawlers? The demand for fish keeps on growing.” “Because,” Lisa answers, “in addition to managing local fish consumption better, we’re going to produce fish locally, too. Some people in Blue Haven already do that; in fact, some of them are already pretty much self-sufficient. But sometimes they have more fish than they can eat. And there’s nothing they can do with it now. And that’s a shame, isn’t it? So we’re going to better align the fish supply with demand. The goal is to make sure that consumers always have enough fish. And moreover, those consumers will also become producers. Alex and I are calling them prosumers: consumers who farm or catch their own fish.”

“And if lots of Blue Haven residents start doing this,” Alex continues, “then you won’t need to invest in mega-trawlers even if demand keeps increasing. The fishmonger will make sure to collect enough fish locally to be able to play a useful role in the wholesale market. That makes that person an interesting partner for SuperFish. And that makes a large, centralized fish storage facility in Southport unnecessary. Fish2Dish’s trucks can make better use of the existing dike road. SuperFish will supplement the local catch and buy up any temporary surplus of fish. By using a fishmonger, the fluctuations in supply and demand on the local market will be reduced.”

Councilor Harrison nods. Not only does she understand Lisa and Alex’s plan; she also thinks it’s a good one. Lisa sees that Anne Coddington and John West still have some doubts. She decides to confront those doubts directly. “I’ve made a list of additional reasons why this plan is advantageous for SuperFish and Fish2Dish. Like every company, you’re focused on cost effectiveness, and our plan helps you achieve it. First of all, you don’t need to make large investments that you have to earn out. Second, the fishing market will become more democratic, because there will be more fish producers.”

“I think it has merit. Let’s talk again soon,” says Fish2Dish director West.

Alex plays his last trump. “And what works well in Blue Haven can work well in other places, too.”

“Exactly what I was thinking,” says SuperFish director Coddington. “This plan only becomes truly interesting for us if it can be applied at a larger scale. I want to discuss all this with my management team.”

6

A versatile piece of fish

A few days later, Lisa gets a phone call from Barry Carp, the owner of Blue Haven's fish store. He asks if Lisa and Alex would drop by sometime soon. "Alex, what do you think he wants?"

"No idea, but we'll find out soon enough." When they walk into the shop on a Wednesday morning, they see that Kenneth King, the owner of Chez Roe, is also there. After saying their hellos, King dives in.

"Recently, you were in my restaurant with Councilor Harrison, Anne Coddington, and John West, and I heard you talking about your fish idea. Since then, I've been thinking. I think all of Blue Haven will benefit from it!"

Lisa and Alex nod in satisfaction. Lisa explains that she wants to breathe new life into the old fish market. That she's going to match local fish production and consumption.

"Yes, but such a large surplus of fish in Blue Haven will send prices plummeting, and I won't be able to charge a decent price for my fish," says shop owner Carp.

"If there's too much fish, Fish2Dish will come pick it up. They'll take it to Southport in their white trucks. Soon, you'll be able to buy and sell fish all day long for a reasonable price. But there are also all kinds of opportunities for other entrepreneurs. Once the new fish system is up and running in Blue Haven, more people will be catching or farming fish.

That means they'll need quality equipment, such as poles and nets. The sporting goods shop could sell those, for example. And the building supply store can sell what you need to build a breeding pond."

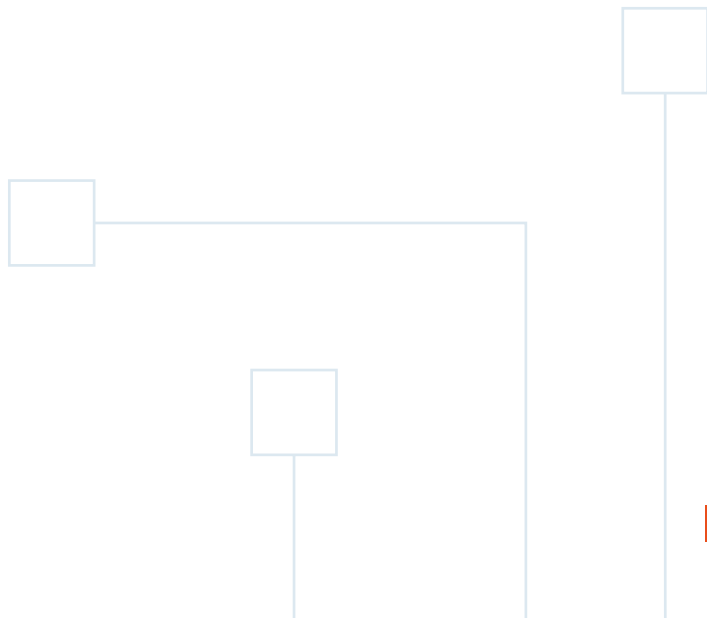
Kenneth King nods. "I've been thinking about publishing some recipes: how to make a delicious fish lunch, for example, and other cooking tips."

"And maybe there's someone in Blue Haven who'll introduce a new line of cooking pans, or other cooking accessories," Lisa adds. Inside, she's smiling; this is exactly what Alex suggested would happen yesterday. Alex was hoping other entrepreneurs would pick up their initiative and run with it. That they would create new products that align with developments on the fishing market. And those entrepreneurs could even be the traditional players in the market. "We've already talked with SuperFish and Fish2Dish about

that," Alex answers. "They're particularly interested in opportunities to provide services to Blue Haven's prosumers. Automatic registration of incoming fish, for example, or helping people optimize their breeding ponds for the best results. And there are even more ideas, but those still need to be fleshed out."

A short while later, Lisa and Alex are walking through Blue Haven. They bought some freshly fried fish from Barry Carp, and Lisa suggests they sit on the bench on the dike to eat their lunch. They look out over the sea. A seagull perches on the "For Sale" sign in the little house's yard, waiting to see if there's anything left for him. "Here's where it all started," Lisa says, "that afternoon with Grandpa. And just look how the whole thing has grown."

Alex laughs. "Yep. And this is just Blue Haven."



7

A universal fish network

Two months have passed. Lisa and Alex are in the bus, riding along the dike out of Blue Haven. They're on their way to visit Alex's parents, who live five towns over; it's his mother's birthday. It's a long bus trip.

"Whew, finally a day without questions, discussions, or interviews. Just kicking back with the family, eating birthday cake," Alex says, looking at Lisa.

She smiles. "It has been hectic, hasn't it? But I'm still having a lot of fun. Did you see the TV interview with Anne Coddington yesterday?"

"I did, and I have to say that she tells our story really well.

She keeps repeating that this plan is sustainable, and that it's important that fish stays affordable."

"When the presenter asked her a critical question at the end, about food security, she emphasized once again that the fish network is reliable."

"Yep; we can definitely leave that to Anne Coddington. I think it's great how she keeps explaining, over and over, that there will always be enough fresh fish. That SuperFish and Fish2Dish are essential for the continuity of fish delivery. As

cornerstones of the revamped fish network, they make sure that everyone can eat as much fish as they want, whenever and wherever they want it, even if not enough fish is caught or farmed locally. They'll deliver the amount that's missing."

Over the past two months, Lisa and Alex have been working hard, together with the people at SuperFish and Fish2Dish. Blue Haven's new fish network is gradually taking shape. Storage aquariums have been built in several streets and neighborhoods. Many Blue Haven residents have taken the initiative to install breeding ponds, and the first fish have been released. Now Blue Haven can't imagine doing it any other way. And tonight's the night when the town council will make a final decision on whether to widen the dike road.

Meanwhile, a number of other problems have been resolved. People at SuperFish and Fish2Dish have been burning the midnight oil for weeks to analyze the whole plan. They've

searched for potential pitfalls and, of course, calculated the financial side of things down to the last penny. That's how they determined that Lisa and Alex's plan is only advantageous for the two companies if it's carried out on a large scale. So SuperFish and Fish2Dish have already started talking with other towns and cities throughout the country. They keep emphasizing that it's important to set up the fish networks so they all link together efficiently. That kind of universal network is what makes the system interesting for the heavy hitters on the fishing market.

For Fish2Dish, it's also important that scheduling and distribution are standardized. That means there need to be managed information systems. Alex has proposed that they record the roles, tasks, and agreements, but that each party make its own decisions on how to set up the IT side of things. With the right investments into the IT system, other capital-intensive investments will become unnecessary.

Since becoming Blue Haven's fishmonger, Lisa has had a steady stream of residents come by the fish market with

questions about her new plan. "Soon you'll be able to see exactly when I eat fish and how much I eat, and I don't want you to be able to see that. Everyone has a right to privacy." Lisa is always able to allay their concerns. She tells them that as the town's fishmonger, she takes an active role in influencing prosumer behavior, but everyone is free to decide how much or how little information they want to share. "The more you share," Lisa tells them, "the better the fishmonger can serve you. But you can decide not to use the fishmonger's services, if you prefer; in that case, you'll have to do more work yourself, and it might cost you more, too."

"I saw Barry Carp yesterday in a detailed report in one or another magazine," Alex tells her.

"What did he say?"

"He was very enthusiastic about their plans, and he shared a couple of recipes for a delicious fish breakfast."

"No doubt with photos of his new fish frying pans?"

"You bet! He was pushing the pans hard. I've got one of them with me now, for my mom. I think she'll be very happy with it. Oh, here's our stop."

Lisa and Alex get off the bus. Alex is carrying the present, wrapped in bright, flowery paper, under his arm. His mother opens the door and they hug as he says "Happy birthday!" Other guests are already there, eating cake and drinking coffee. Alex's mother eagerly opens the present. "Oh, a real CarpKing fish pan! But you know what? Your father already gave me one, Alex. Now I've got two. Can you still exchange it for something else?"

Lisa and Alex discover that Alex's hometown is busy investing in the new fish network, too. His aunts have already bought fish pans for themselves, and two uncles are busy installing a breeding pond. "The whole street is chipping in, and we've hired an expert company to do the work," one of them says. "By building one big pond together, the total cost is lower."

"The important thing," says Alex, "is that that expert company installs the pond according to our guidelines. That preserves the universal character of the network. To make it even simpler, we're looking into a system to certify installation companies."

Lisa and Alex had thought they'd be able to escape the subject today, but everyone keeps asking them about their idea. Just before lunch, Alex's father takes him aside. "I'm thinking of starting my own company. I know a lot about fishing poles, hooks and floats and all. I could use that knowledge to advise people on what to buy and how to use it. What do you think?"

Alex hadn't expected this from his father. He's worked for the Water Authority for nearly twenty-five years. Alex knew he was a fanatical fisher, but that an entrepreneur was hiding inside him? That's a surprise.

"Do it, Dad! You should definitely do it. I think there's plenty of opportunity. Have you already got an active fishmonger in town? He or she should be able to give you some good advice."

Alex's father nods. Then his mother calls everyone to the table for a delicious lunch filled with fresh fish. Several family members stay to join them, and the meal is filled with laughter and good conversation. Lisa feels completely at home and for a moment, she forgets the mountain of work she's done in recent months. Around two o'clock, she gets a tweet from

her father: @Lisa1991: road won't be widened; money goes to new music hall! Lisa shows the message to Alex with a smile. "Not that there was any doubt about that."

It's late in the evening before Lisa and Alex head back to Blue Haven. Alex has the CarpKing fish pan with him.

"We'll go right down and exchange it for something else tomorrow," Lisa says.

"Or just keep it ourselves," Alex counters. "Now the road isn't going to be widened, that little house on the dike won't have to be razed."

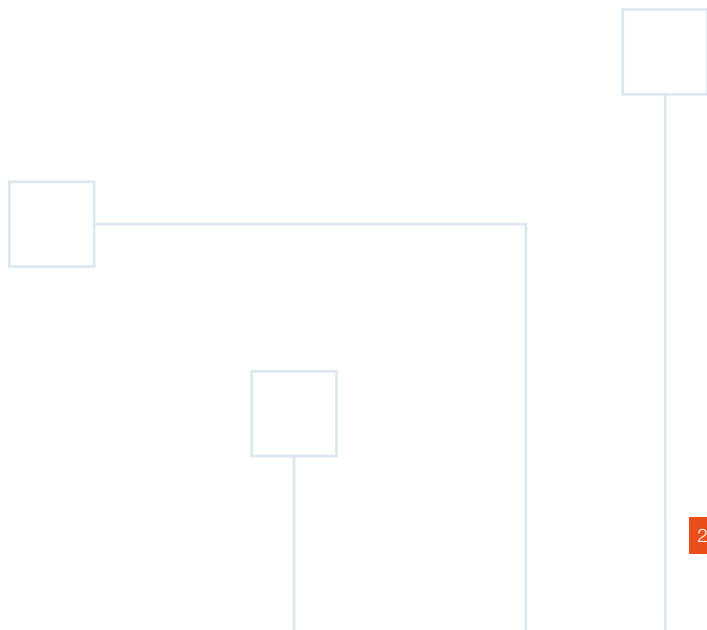
"No, but what does the house have to do with the fish pan? I don't get it."

"If the house is staying, then it needs new occupants.

Suppose that you and I..."

"You mean... together... ?" Lisa gives Alex a long kiss.

There's no one to see it; there are no other passengers in the bus. No one at all, except the driver. He looks in his rearview mirror and smiles.



Epilogue

This is the story of Blue Haven, an ordinary town that could be just down the road. Blue Haven isn't large, and it isn't small, and it isn't far from here. A river runs into the sea there. The town lies nestled along a wide beach with a view all the way to the horizon.

But the town has changed. Everyone still eats fresh fish - cleaned and on the plate in less than two hours - just not always at six o'clock anymore. There's more variety in the types of fish and the dishes they cook, better reflecting what Blue Haven fish consumers want.

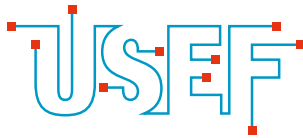
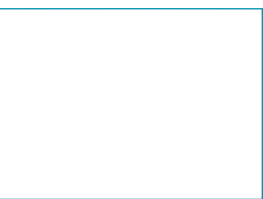
Nor is all the fish delivered to the town by Fish2Dish's large trucks. Some of it is raised locally in the many breeding ponds that have been installed. Many residents are playing an active role in fish production, eating fresh fish from their own ponds.

They share the surplus with their neighbors or sell it through the fishmonger at the fish market. Other clever entrepreneurs have jumped into the market, too.

And information systems make sure there's always enough fish to go around. Many other towns and cities are starting to follow Blue Haven's example, copying the town's successful approach. The same fishing equipment and services are being used in large numbers, which makes the whole system appealing and affordable for everyone. Even other countries are starting to show interest.

Blue Haven lies at the base of a major fishing transition. Thanks to the new approach, Lisa and Alex's grandchildren will still be eating fresh fish well into the future.





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