

Aquarium Project Questions

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2017-10-05

Question 1

How effective are trade regulations in controlling aquarium export? Compare aquarium exports from countries with strong vs weak regulations/governance, based on CITES membership, n. years since joining CITES, and GDP (CITES information: <https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/parties/chronolo.php>).

Data: CITES (need to get), UN human development indicators, World Bank Governance Indicators

Expectation: countries with poor governance have higher trade export volume + diversity (standardised to reef area/coastline/regional richness).

Consider temporal aspect here as well - does good/bad governance in year 1 reduce/increase fish trade in year 2?

Caveats How to use the governance indicators when they are yearly and the data is from multiple years and months within certain years?

Question 2

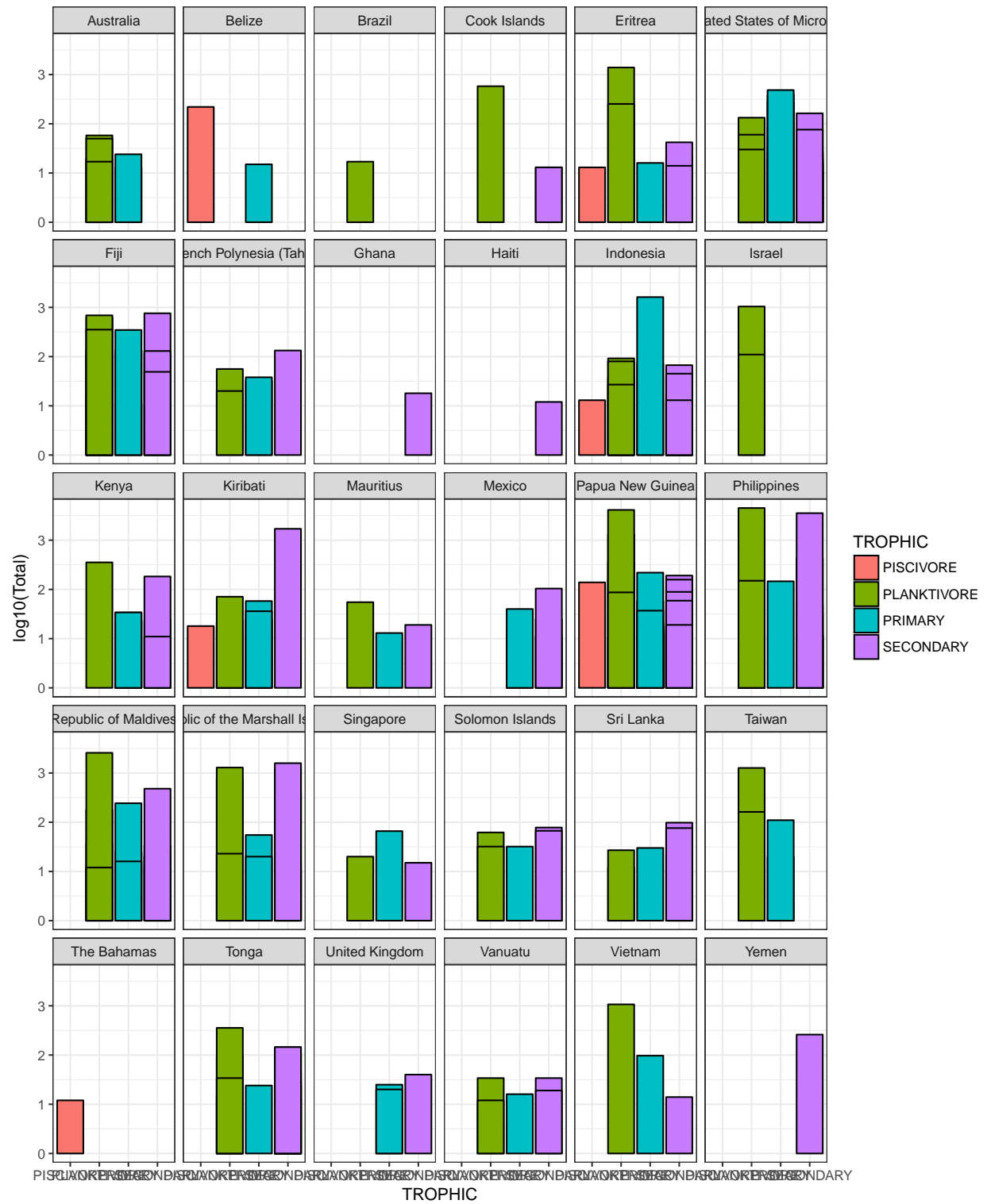
Are certain trophic levels or functional groups disproportionately targeted by aquarium trade, and does this pattern vary regionally? Examine size, diet, and functional group structure of exported species by country.

Data: Requires functional group data. James has this for Indo-Pacific fishes. What about size data?

Expectation: planktivores are primarily targeted. Are there 1) countries that export more herbs/piscs than expected? 2) Which non-planktivore species are exported in high volumes?

Caveats: 1) Standardise countries by estimating proportional volume of functional groups for each country; 2) determining the baseline community structure is very difficult, probably impossible.





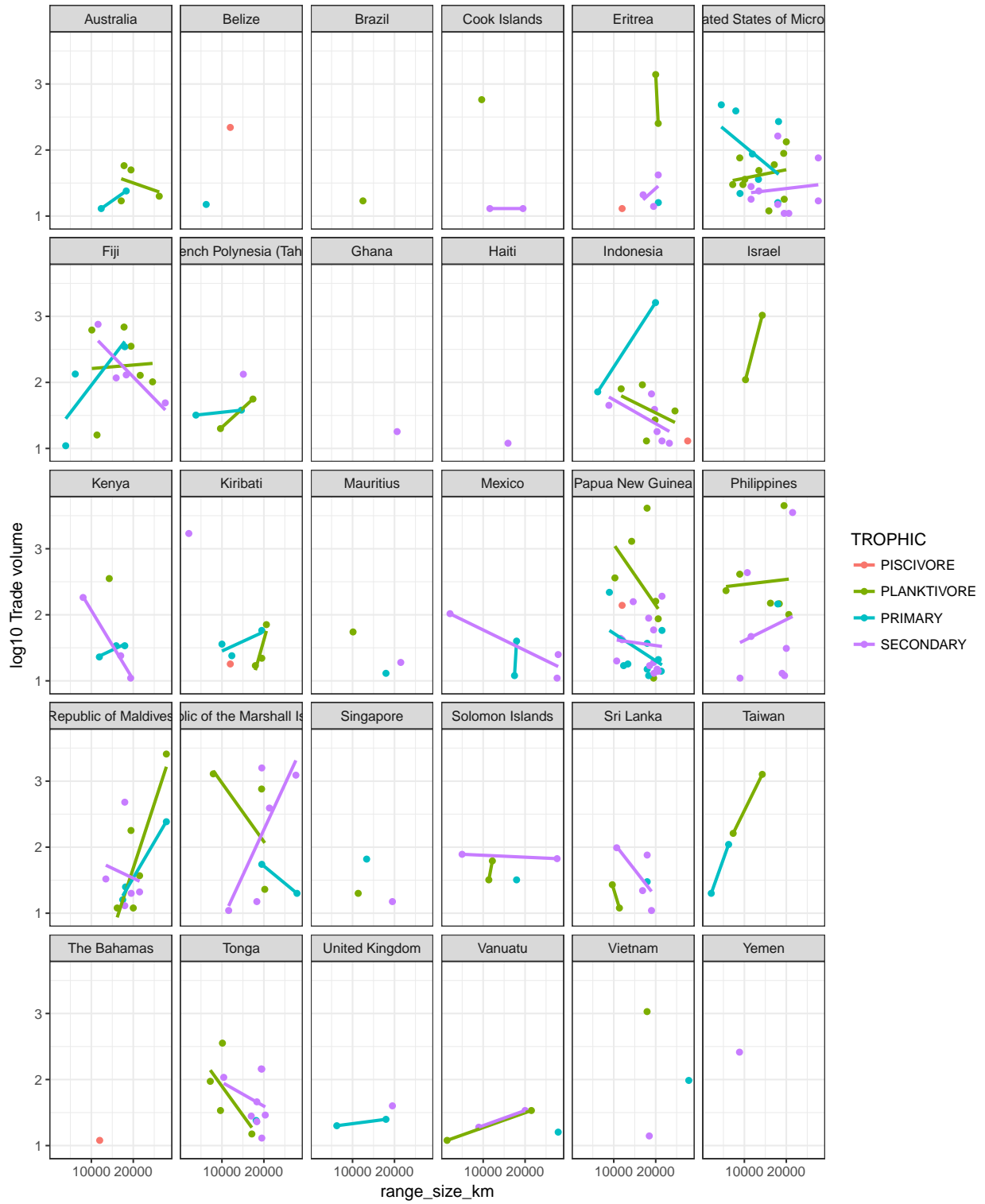
Question 3

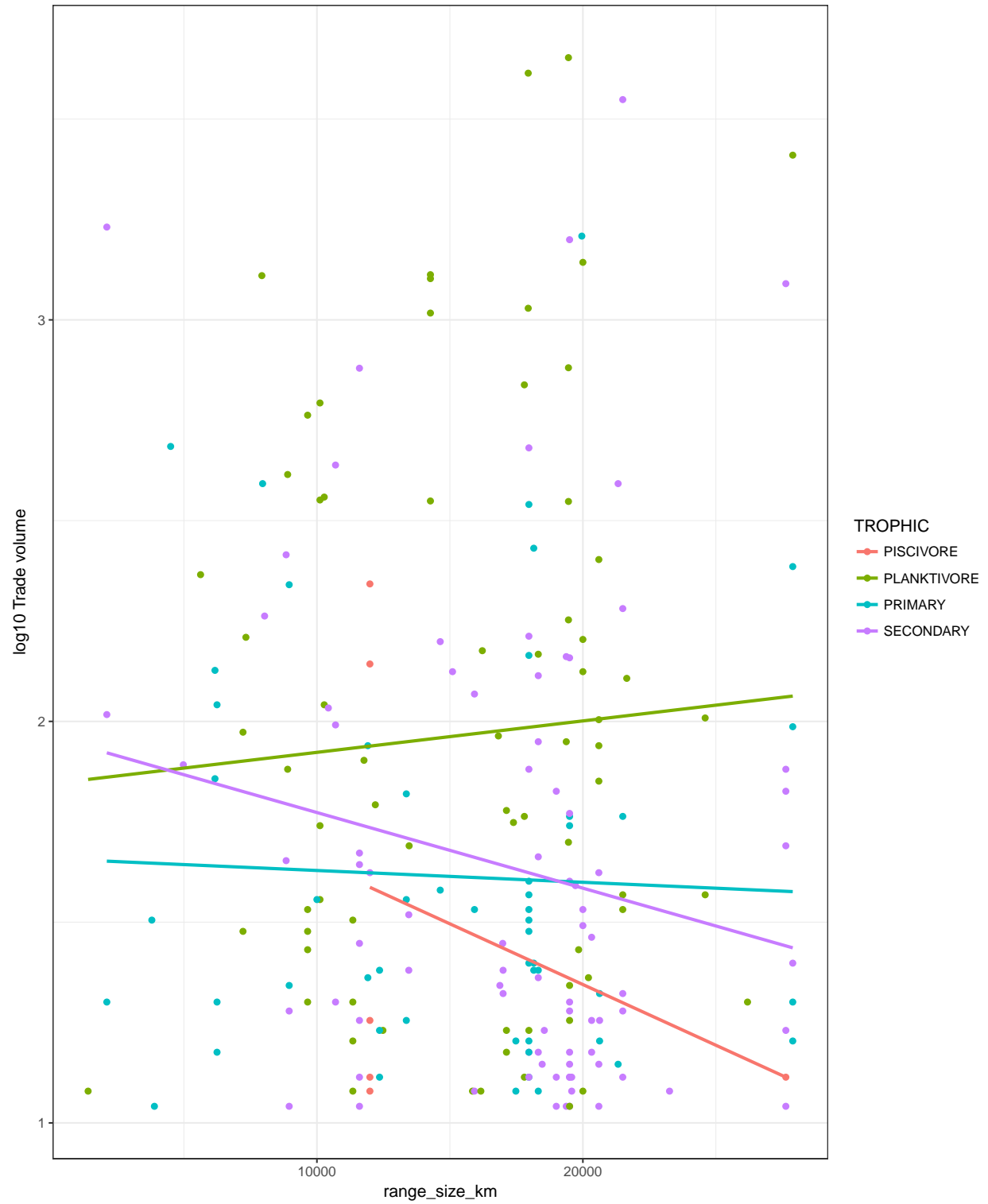
Geographic analysis of range distributions - where are species exported from? Are small or large range size fishes exported more or less? small range - which species? large range - lots of export countries?

Data: Range sizes from Andrew Rhyne

Expectation: linear relationship between export volume \sim range size. But any species that falls off the line is of interest: 1) smaller range size for volume = high risk; 2) larger range size than volume = low risk?

Caveat: This question is country-independent - ranges cross borders, data point = fish species.





Data Decisions

- subsetting to full years of data only (2008, 2009, 2011)