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Fish Group – hand-dyed Indonesian batik



Meryl J. Williams
Asian Fisheries
Society

Women's Worlds
2011

Ottawa 5 July
2011

Women, Gender and Fisheries on the Coasts of Southeast Asia



Gender/women in fisheries

3 study perspectives* used for women in fisheries/aquaculture

1. Socio-cultural studies (especially anthropology)

- Fisheries as cultural, social practices
- E.g., *To Work and to Weep: Women in Fishing Economies*, Nadel-Klein and Davis, 1988

2. Studies of development

- Critiques and analyzes of existing and changing practices
- E.g., *Changing Tides: Gender, Fisheries and Globalization*, Neis et al 2005
- E.g., *Recasting the Net: Defining a Gender Agenda for Sustaining Life and Livelihoods in Fishing Communities*, ICSF 2010

3. Applied development studies

- Social studies perspectives that see women as instrumental to improving fisheries
- E.g., many of the studies in the Asian Fisheries Society gender/women in fisheries symposia

*Shepherd and McWilliam, 2011. Ethnography, Agency and Materiality: Anthropological Perspectives on Rice Development in East Timor. *East Asian Science: Technology and Society* 5:189-215.



Asian Fisheries Society

- Mainstream fisheries professional society
 - *scientific society .. promotes networking and co-operation between scientists, technicians and all stakeholders involved in fisheries (including aquaculture) production, research and development ... objective is to enhance food security and income-generating opportunities for fisheries workers ...*
- Women/gender and fisheries
 - 1995 PADEK WIF photo competition
 - 5 Symposia: 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2011
 - List server 2002-2010, per WorldFish Center
 - Website 2010 –
 - <http://genderaquafish.org/>, Symposia content + news, notifications of new research results, resources



第九届亚洲渔业和水产养殖论坛

The 9th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (9AFAF)

主办单位:
Organizers:



亚洲水产学会
ASIAN FISHERIES SOCIETY



上海海洋大学
SHANGHAI OCEAN UNIVERSITY

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9ISTA
4ISSESR
FAO&UN
AquaFish-CFSF



Some of the GAF3 presenters at 9AFAF,
Shanghai Ocean University, April 2011



Asian Fisheries Society and GAF

- Creation
 - Stimulated by a man (M.C. Nandeesh)
 - Receptive early leaders, participants
- Persistence
 - Core interest group
 - AFS supportive
 - WorldFish Center support 1998-2010 (staff time, proceedings, list)
 - Some donor support (Australia, Norway, UK, FAO)
 - Continuing researcher interest and support
- Future challenges
 - Leadership succession
 - Lack of strong base of GAF research concepts and researchers, cf AFS Fish Health Section
 - GAF not a priority in fish sector

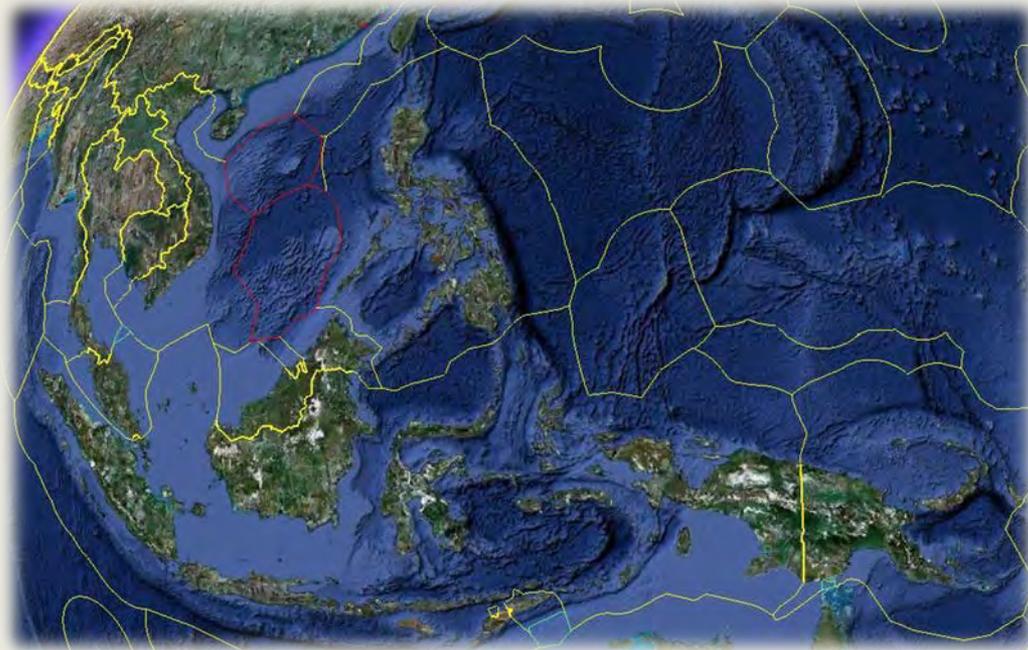


Farisal Bagsit, Stella Williams and Cindy Jimenez at GAF3. Photo. F. Bagsit



GAF3 insights and reflections

- Southeast Asia: 23 of 48 papers/posters
 - Focus on:
 - Globalization: 2 presentations (Philippines, Taiwan)
 - Natural resource management: 10 presentations (regional, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam)





Globalization

1. Gender roles in HACCP, tiger shrimp export (C.S. Baga, Phil)

- 80% workers are young women, ‘on call’
 - Cebu Technological University offers training
 - Pride in work but don’t want children to do it
- > **the ambivalent benefits of shrimp export**

2. Foreign spouses in Taiwan fishing communities (N.H. Chao, Taiwan)

- ‘Marriage migrants’ - foreign spouses of fishers (China, Vietnam)
 - Work for many different reasons
 - Not marginalized but well adjusted and integrated
- > **one of many complex cross-border migration women’s issues of Asia**



Women in shrimp export processing plant, Bohol, Philippines. Photo. C.S. Baga



Foreign spouse, Taiwan, working in abalone hatchery. Photo. NH Chao

NRM 1

Applied development studies

1. Spain, FAO-Regional Fisheries Livelihood Programme (A. Lentisco, RFLP)
 - Gender theme incorporated
 - Serious gender analysis, tools with focus on the project cycle
 - > **How to make the topic of gender more accessible?**
2. Disseminating fisheries legal information (C.N. Jimenez, Phil)
 - Survey of attitudes towards women and men in disseminating laws
 - > **Another instrumental role of women verified**



FAO-RFLP Workshop
Cambodia 2010

NRM 2



Marginal, vulnerable

3. Central Vietnam (Nguyen Dang Hao, RFLP)
 - Low income, low productivity, natural disaster prone
 - Women's roles traditional, low voice in NRM
 - > **Women's social status and their access requires fundamental changes**
4. Southern Thailand (C. Lim)
 - 'Edging up the ladder'
 - Women and men in highly unequal power relations over fish resources, control of assets
 - Of 5 women studied, 2 had no dreams
 - > **Challenge of empowering women to gain and use their skills**



Pin, a successful fish processor, Thung Maha village, Nakhorn Sri Thammarat, Thailand. Photo. C. Lim

NRM 3

Marginal, vulnerable (Indonesia)

5. Peri-urban (Semarang, Pekalongan, C. Java) (Zuzy Anna)
 - Economic, ecological, social, institutional, indicators of uncertainty
 - > **Multiple coping strategies, 'life goes on'**
6. Remote Pantar islands, East Nusa Tenggara (R. Fitriana)
 - Women are major marine resource users and traders but not regarded in management and use planning
 - > **How to include the women in marine resource decision-making?**



Pantar Island women travel by inter-island ferry to market their catch.
Photo. Ria Fitriana

NRM 4



Environment, Climate Change

7. & 8. Philippine mangrove replanting studies (F. Bagsit, A. Ferrer)
 - Women stay the course, take on many roles but still men lead
 - > **How to make this critical NRM task more lucrative?**
9. CC in the Pacific (V. Vuki)
 - Women's coastal and farming affected but not included in education, decision-making
 - > **Large cultural change needed to include women, youth**
10. Philippine women fish dryers (M. Sumagaysay)
 - CC related weather shifts affecting fish drying work
 - > **How to connect women to better forecasts?**



Women discuss mangrove replanting. Photo. F. Bagsit



- Many coastal women are
 - Marginal, vulnerable, not included, poorly remunerated,
- YES, BUT ALSO
 - Resilient, contributing, strong
- Asian Fisheries Society could encourage
 - Better studies to provide
 - Better evidence that is
 - Better communicated and generates
 - Better lives
- High quality (1) socio-cultural studies, (2) studies on development and (2) applied studies on women in fisheries are all needed

Conclusions



Coastal stakeholder, Philippines.
Photo. C. Jimenez