



FELLOWSHIP SUMMARY REPORTS

Cover page – which should include:

- Your name: Kumi Soejima
- The subject title and theme number of your research fellowship: Using Gender Perspectives in Small-Scale Fisheries Research to Improve Policy, TAD/CRP JA00096614
- Your host institution: Innovative Fisheries Management (IFM), Department of Planning of the Technical Faculty of IT and Design, Aalborg University (AAU), Denmark
- The name of your host collaborator: Dr. Alyne Delanery (Associate Professor)
- The dates of your fellowship: From 1st May 2018 to 4th September 2018

- Your consent to your report being posted on the Co-operative Research Programme's website, or alternatively, a short paragraph about your fellowship which could be used anonymously.

Yes

1. What were the objectives of the research project? Why is the research project important?

(1) Importance of Small-Scale Fisheries

Small-scale fisheries (SSF)--which encompass all activities along the value chain including pre-harvest, harvest and post-harvest activities – undertaken by men and women--play an important role in food security and nutrition, poverty eradication, equitable development and sustainable resource utilization around the world. Small-scale fisheries provide nutritious food for local, national and international markets and generate income to support local and national economies (FAO 2015)¹. Half of global fish catches come from SSF. Of the catches destined for direct human consumption, the share contributed by SSF increases to two-thirds. About half of the world's 51 million fishers are small-scale². Small-scale fisheries employ more than 90 percent of the world's capture fishers and fish workers, about half of whom are women (FAO 2015)³.

Since the majority of small-scale fisheries are in developing countries, most of research and studies on SSF have focused on developing countries. However, there are also small-scale fisheries in developed countries, including OECD members. The SSF in developed nations also outnumber their large-scale counterparts in terms of fleet number and employment, making significant socio-economic contributions to many coastal areas⁴. Small-scale fisheries also make vital contributions to sociocultural and ecological sustainability. Small-scale fisheries are based in local communities with historic links to nearby coastal resources and have strong local community cultures, values, and identities (Delaney and Yagi 2017)⁵.

(2) Women's role and issues in small-scale fisheries

Traditionally, men are the primary– but not only – participants in fish harvesting activities at sea in the SSF; women also harvest fish. Women, in fact, play a large role in fisheries, participating in all activities including processing, sales and bookkeeping. Today, women's roles are changing in the face of on-going societal changes, especially in Japan and Europe. Many fisherwomen, for example, are now innovating and taking part in new activities for their family fishery business (e.g. processing and sales for their local fish). Such innovative undertakings help secure their income at a time when their fisheries incomes are declining in Japan. That is to say women are now not only “supporting” the fishing industry, but in many ways also the drivers at economic levels. Many women are leading diversification activities aimed at creating adding value to the fisheries and aquaculture products.

In Europe, many coastal communities face declines in populations when fisheries close and fishers retire. Yet, some SSF communities in Europe are working to find a way to survive. In these regions, women—fisheries women, in particular-- play important roles in their revitalization and survival of their communities⁶.

In Japan, the Fisheries Agency has set new policies with high expectations that fisheries women will be active in improving incomes. “Seashore Revitalization Plans” (2015) are a mainstay of these Japanese policies. These plans are primarily created by Fisheries Cooperative Associations (FCA) with the goal of boosting fishing incomes by at least 10% over five years through voluntary initiatives to devise and implement action plans. Many “Seashore Revitalization Plans” include measures to increase the price of fish and also produce and market new value added products. The efforts of fisheries women are central to most of these plans. However, in many cases women are either not involved at the initial planning stage, or else they have been included in the plan despite lacking their motivation to participate. In some cases, women don't even know the contents of a plan despite the fact that their activities have been included in it. Thus, despite the fact the roles and positions of women are changing in policies written for revitalizing and sustaining fisheries and communities, many gender issues remain.

Prospects for SSF in Europe mainly lie in the organization and empowerment of small-scale fishing groups, including women. The growing network of fisherwomen's organizations in Europe (e.g., the AKTEA network) presents an opportunity to recognize and encourage women's role in SSF. The aim of the AKTEA network is to make the role of women in fisheries visible and recognized, provide women better access to decision-making on fisheries management and coastal development, and serve as a means to exchange experiences and share knowledge⁷. There is a growing recognition of the importance of small scale and low impact fishing in the communities⁸.



(3) Objectives of the research project

Worldwide, the role that women play in SSF and their participation in fishing practices are often overlooked in SSF research and in practice, despite women and gender in fisheries as critical global topics⁹. Understanding women's contribution to SSF is important in relation to their potential role in improving the governability and considering the future of SSF¹⁰. With this as background, this research intends to build and expand upon my on-going research on an importance of incorporating gender/women across scientific disciplines for sustainable and revitalized fisheries and communities. I have conducted work on the role of women and changes in Japanese SSF and communities for a number of years. I would now like incorporate a comparative perspective in to my research, expanding to other countries with the same economic characteristics as Japan. Due to the number of countries in close proximity and having similarities with Japan—e.g., large SSF fleets, numerous, small coastal communities and post-industrialized nation status-- Europe is the best place to undertake this comparative research on fisheries communities.

The objective of this CRP fellowship research project is to investigate the changing challenges, issues, and roles of women in European SSF. The research will enable the distillation and comparison of common points between Europe and Japan. Thus, it will contribute to a sound knowledge base for fishery policy making and promote international scientific understanding among OECD Member Countries and others from women/gender views.

(4) Importance of the research project

Through this CRP Fellowship research project, I will examine fisheries policies on revitalization and sustainability of SSF and communities in OECD countries from a women/gender perspective. The lessons learned from this research will have broad application and relevance to other sectors (e.g., agricultural) for OECD countries and worldwide. This research analysis can give knowledge and information about these. An innovative aspect of this proposed study is its transdisciplinary aspect, through the inclusion interactions, expertise, and data from different scientific disciplines (e.g., social and natural sciences). Understanding sustainability of fisheries and communities requires a balance of both sides.

2. Were the objectives of the fellowship achieved?

Or are they on the way to being achieved?

If not, for what reasons? (The data or research is still ongoing or being analysed; technical reasons (e.g. equipment not working, adverse weather conditions, unexpected results, etc.; other reasons?)

The research worked was based on standard social science methods (Bernard 2012)¹¹ including a comparative case study analysis, a literature review, and qualitative interviews. The case region was Europe, with fieldwork accomplished in 3 nations. In addition to interviews with local fishers and community members, additional qualitative interviews and discussions took place with some social scientist experts on European small-scale fisheries.

During this fellowship, I met a wide range relevant of small-scale fisheries actors in Europe, for example fishers, fisher women, local fish processors, teachers, local people, immigrants etc. in Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. Some small-scale fisheries and communities in Norway and Denmark are trying to survive, despite them being better known as a countries with concentrated large-scale fisheries. The local people and the fisheries and fish processing were deeply tied together, and the island's economy and life were established in Husøy island Norway. The women's point of view was strongly utilized there. Small-scale fishers also operate processing and café, making places where local fisher's wives and young people work in Thorupstrand, Denmark. Menus made with fish landing at the local small-scale fisheries attract tourists. AKTEA is the European network of fisherwomen's organisations in Europe. They work collectively for the formal recognition of women's role in the sector and to ensure access for women of fishing communities to decision-making at European and national level. I found many common ideas of revitalization and sustainability of SSF and communities in Europe and Japan from a women/gender perspective. I also explored a wide range of fishery policy and academic literature, aiming to deepen my understanding of European fisheries. Finally, I participated in discussions during PERICLES's seminars relevant to SSF – PERICLES is a research project for preserving and sustainably governing cultural heritage and landscapes in European coastal and maritime regions at Aalborg University, of which SSF culture is also included in cultural heritage.

During this fellowship I established collaborative links for developing ideas, however I have to accept this aim will take longer to be achieved. Continuing and deepening this research is my next goal.



3. What were the major achievements of the fellowship? (up to three)

1. I was able to build cross-disciplinary relationships with not only the fisheries social science which is my field but also cultural and environmental anthropology which is the fields of the host Dr. Alyne Delaney, fisheries resource management, regional economics, women's studies. I am sure this relationship has had interactions between scientific disciplines and a readiness to engage with those beyond the research community to explore wider societal implications.

2. Being able to build collaborate relationships not only with researchers, but also with SSF related people such as fishers, fisher women and processors etc. In keeping with this research, this collaborate relationship is important. There would have been no chance of building this relationship without this research fellowship. I also would like to further expand it.

3. The availability of detailed, local-level information and data on European sectors and communities, particularly about SSF, is limited in Japan. Consequently, fieldwork and interviews to collect empirical data in Europe was vital for the success of the project.

4. Will there be any follow-up work?

- Is a publication envisaged? Will this be in a journal or a publication? When will it appear?
- Is your fellowship likely to be the start of collaboration between your home institution and your host?
- Is your research likely to result in protected intellectual property, novel products or processes?

I am developing an action plan for co-authored papers with Dr. Alyne Delaney. This paper would be written in English and targeted to key international journals. In addition, Dr. Delaney and I plan to apply for research funding to continue our collaboration and exchange.

5. How might the results of your research project be important for helping develop regional, national or international agro-food, fisheries or forestry policies and, or practices, or be beneficial for society?

Please express this in terms of environmental/food security/food safety/economic/health (human and livestock and plant) benefits, etc.

This research project aligns with the food security through the aims to advance and develop sustainable SSF. Adequate assessment and management of SSF's values leads to stable lives of the people and the strengthening of the sustainability of fisheries, and business enterprises. Many women in the fisheries diversify their fisheries activities through direct sales and marketing and connecting with tourism. Their activities are precisely one of the activities of food security as they increase value and income from resources without increasing catches; thus, such activities in SSF help to meet the goals of sustainable food security.

6. How was this research relevant to:

- The objectives of the CRP?
- The CRP research theme?

One objective of CRP is 'Managing natural capital for the future' as it aims to advance and develop sustainable SSF. Natural capital is the capital formed by the natural, for instance, biological resources, sea and so on. We can capture the flow which created from natural capital as an ecosystem service. In addition, this research has many common points in fishery and communities' issues in not only Japan and Europe, but also OECD countries like Canada, USA, Chile, New Zealand, and South Korea. Furthermore, the issues make a strong contribution to Africa, south-eastern Asia and south Asia. The research has the potential to expand the research subject worldwide. This research is greatly related to policy making and can bring some important knowledge. Especially regarding Japan where the fisheries management system is currently under reform and the Fishery Agency is looking internationally for examples of ways to change their policies, the research is extremely timely. Recommendations stemming from this research analysis will have direct line to fisheries policy making in Japan and Europe. We also have a large network of



stakeholders including government policy makers. It means that the results of this proposed research can be shared directly and used for the fisheries policy making by policy makers involved in the development of their national and international fisheries policies.

7. Satisfaction

- Did your fellowship conform to your expectations?
- Will the OECD Co-operative Research Programme fellowship increase directly or indirectly your career opportunities? Please specify.
- Did you encounter any practical problems?
- Please suggest any improvements in the Fellowship Programme.

The fellowship increased directly my opportunities and expanded the possibility of this research. However, the fellowship was resource constrained. At a high-property-price area like Denmark, this program's project budget was lower than actual costs. In addition, I needed to pay travel from Denmark to other project case study countries (within Europe) with my own personal funds.

8. Advertising the Co-operative Research Programme

- How did you learn about the Co-operative Research Programme?
- What would you suggest to make it more "visible"?
- Are there any issues you would like to record?

I knew about this program through my working university. Since Dr. Ichiro Nakayama, chair of the members of the CRP's Scientific Advisory Body, in the same organization as me, I could get the information. However, unfortunately, this program has not been known in Japan. I know that they are trying to promote this CRP programme at some university or research organization. It may be better to promote to major Japanese academic societies involved in agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry.

Reference list

- ¹ FAO, Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, 2015
- ² FAO, <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/en>
- ³ FAO, Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, 2015
- ⁴ Too Big To Ignore Research Report, Regional Synthesis Report-Europe, 2017
- ⁵ Delaney, A. and Yagi, N., 2017. Implementing the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines: Lessons from Japan. In *The Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines* (pp. 313-332). Springer International Publishing.
- ⁶ Frangoudes, K. Women in fisheries: A European perspective. European Union: Directorate general for internal policies. Policy Department B: Structural and Cohesion Policies:BA-01-13-425-EN-C, 2013.
- ⁷ Gomez, S., Lloret, J., Demestre, M., & Riera, V. The Decline of the Artisanal Fisheries in Mediterranean Coastal Areas: The Case of Cap de Creus (Cape Creus). *Coastal Management* 34: 217-232, 2006.
- ⁸ Too Big To Ignore Research Report, Regional Synthesis Report-Europe, 2017
- ⁹ Kleiber, D., Harris, L.M., & Vincent, A.C.J., Gender and small-scale fisheries: a case for counting women and beyond. *Fish and Fisheries* 16: 547-562, 2015
- ¹⁰ Too Big To Ignore Research Report, Regional Synthesis Report-Europe, 2017
- ¹¹ Bernard, H.R., 2012. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage.

