

POVFISH TOUR

The following is a project proposal for which we are seeking collaborators. It is a project which is designed to look at tourism in relation to small-scale fisheries, and is being organized through **Too Big to Ignore (TBTI)**, a new global research network and knowledge mobilization partnership to promote and revitalize small-scale fisheries (SSF) around the world¹. The working title of this project is POVFISH TOUR as a follow-up to the POVFISH project², funded by the Norwegian Research Council (Forskingsrådet) 2008-2011. This project is being designed around three main work packages, each of which looks at different dimensions of how tourism might play a positive or negative role in improving the lives of small-scale fishers – using eight countries as case study sites: These work packages are:

1. **Tourism, governance of rights, natural resource management and stewardship for small-scale fisheries**
2. **Tourism's potential impacts on gender equality, equity and social development for small-scale fisheries**
3. **Tourism and its relationship to ecosystem services – potential impacts for small-scale fisheries**

We are hoping for contributions from multi-disciplinary perspectives from network participants. A funding application for this project will be submitted to the Norwegian Research Council on the 25th of May. Funding for collaborators' contributions will be included in the funding application so an approximation of costs for your contribution will also be needed. **For those who want to contribute, we need your name, affiliation(s) and an outline of your contribution with possible deliverables for this project no later than 10 May.** We ask that you also critically review this project proposal and offer suggestions for improvements, including where you see possible risks emerging in combining tourism with small-scale fisheries. The more impressive the list of deliverables the stronger the application will be.

What is POVFISH TOUR?

POVFISH TOUR is an internationally coordinated and focused research project which will investigate how tourism can play a significant role in improving lives of small-scale fishers. It focuses primarily on how tourism might contribute positively or negatively to poverty alleviation, gender equity and equality, environmental conservation, and sustainable uses of ecosystem goods and services within small-scale fisheries. Several of the case studies published in *Poverty Mosaics: Realities and Prospects in Small-Scale Fisheries* (2011)³, a main deliverable from the POVFISH project, mention tourism as an area that must be explored further in offering possible solutions to the conditions of poverty within small-scale fisheries around the world (f.ex. Andrade & Midre, 2011 (Guatemala); Chuenpagdee & Juntarashote, 2011 (Thailand); Salas, Bjørkan, Bobadilla, & Cabrera, 2011 (Mexico); Thi Nguyen & Flaaten, 2011 (Vietnam)). Several of the POVFISH members are also members of the TBTI.

¹ <http://toobigtoignore.net/>

² <http://povfish.maremacentre.com/>

³ <http://www.springer.com/environment/sustainable+development/book/978-94-007-1581-3>

Further justification for this interdisciplinary research project is grounded in several internationally prioritized instruments:

1) Of the eight Millennium Development Goals, this research project addresses four: poverty alleviation (nr.1), promotion of gender equality and empowering women (nr. 3); environmental sustainability (nr. 7); and building global partnerships (nr. 8)⁴.

2) The UN World Tourism Organization has linked sustainable tourism and poverty alleviation as a top project priority through the Sustainable Tourism Eliminating Poverty programme (ST-EP)⁵.

3) The UN-FAO has put out new International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries - developed through a participatory and consultative process involving representatives of small-scale fishing communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, regional organizations and other stakeholders. These guidelines are consistent with other international instruments such as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries⁶ (CCRF) and stress the same themes mentioned above – poverty alleviation, promotion of gender equity and equality, and environmental sustainability as priority areas.

Tourism as an industry – the potential risks and benefits

Unlike other industrial activities, tourism generates income by importing clients rather than exporting its product (McKercher 1993(a)). The tourists are already being imported, which means the wealth potential is already present in the coastal communities. The problem, which is simple to state yet rather complicated to solve, is how to connect the tourists to the small-scale fishers, setting the stage for sustainable tourism development and poverty-alleviation strategies for SSF.

There are certainly potentials with sustainable tourism development but also notable risks. As an industrial activity, tourism consumes resources and potentially over-consumes resources (McKercher, 1993 (a), 1993 (b)). These resources which attract tourists are often valuable for local communities' livelihoods as well and therefore conflicts can emerge with multiple stakeholders fighting over the same scarce resources (Solstrand, 2013). If tourism policies are not managed with a sustainable long-term perspective, it is likely that the resources tourists are attracted to will be overused and degraded; something that is the unfortunate fate of most 'common pool resources'. When this happens, sustainable development is severely threatened (Hall, 2011(a), 2011(b)): economic wellbeing declines, environmental conditions worsen, social injustice grows, and tourist satisfaction drops (Briassoulis, 2002).

Another risk associated with tourism is prioritizing quick profits - driving tourism development in a direction which in many instances is imposed on local communities without their participation or consent. Connecting tourism to small-scale fisheries has therefore inherent risks associated – and these risks in establishing sustainable tourism development for small-scale fishing communities around the

⁴ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

⁵ <http://step.unwto.org/en/content/tourism-and-poverty-alleviation-1>

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/fishery/code/en>

world means we are confronted with a serious governability problem under interactive governance theory (Bavinck, Chuenpagdee, Jentoft, & Kooiman, 2013; Kooiman, Bavinck, Jentoft, & Pullin, 2005).

The central research questions which will be answered with this research project are therefore:

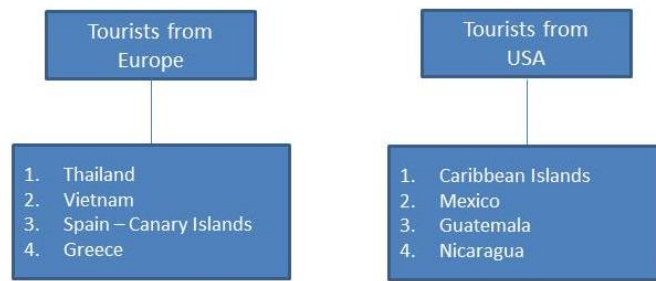
- 1) What capacities and capabilities do local governments and communities have in order to turn this new opportunity of tourism into a sustainable benefit rather than a liability for small-scale fisheries? What needs to happen at the level of the community and the level of government to make tourism a beneficial enterprise for all stakeholders?
- 2) What barriers are in place that are preventing tourists from being able to experience what the local small-scale fishers can offer and what is needed to break down these barriers?
- 3) What is preventing the local fishers/families from being able to take part in and benefit from the wealth and employment of tourism and what is needed to help small-scale fishers build bridges into the tourism industry?

How the project is organized

We will compare two pools of tourists for this study: Europeans travelling to the Asian-Pacific region, Mediterranean and Canary Islands; and Americans/Canadians travelling to Central America and the Caribbean. Such trips for both pools of tourists are offered fairly consistently and at fairly reasonable prices for families. For these tourists, a common tourist product offering is for example a sea-fishing trip or other sea-related experiences, but how rare is it that small-scale fishers are providing these excursions? Another example is that often, tourists enter a resort hotel with little or no contact with local residents of coastal communities for the duration of their stay, with the exception of hotel and restaurant staff. A common request from tourists is the desire to have more culturally-enriching experiences while on travel, but the large resorts seem to dominate, leaving the locals on the margins. Small-scale fishers can offer sea-related excursions but also many other culturally-enriching experiences for tourists on land. Women/families on shore could be arranging trips or offering other ecosystem services to the tourists such as food preparation or other culturally-based experiences.

A preliminary list of countries to be included in the field studies for all three work packages is found in Figure 1. This selection of countries covers a spectrum of well-established tourism destinations with sea-fishing/coastal activities as a regular package offering (f. ex. Thailand and Spain), to countries that are only now emerging as a tourist destination (f. ex. Nicaragua).

Figure 1: Two pools of tourists (from Europe and USA/Canada) typically travelling for one to two weeks for a family-holiday fairly reasonably priced.



If data and/or research interests involve other countries than the ones listed, we ask contributors to please make additional suggestions.

Details on the three main thematic areas/work packages for this study follow:

1. Tourism, governance of rights, natural resource management and stewardship for small-scale fisheries

Tourism may provide supplementary or alternative income and employment to poverty-ridden fishing communities, which can also relieve the pressure on marine ecosystems. But tourism development in itself involves risks of ecosystem degradation, as even small-scale eco-tourism may become less sustainable than it portrays itself (Gössling, 2003).

In addition, as tourism develops so too develops the disregard of local fishing tenure and culture, as can sometimes be seen in the case of marine protected areas which may potentially be a relatively successful endeavor for all stakeholders, but which might instead lead to further marginalization of small-scale fishing people (Jentoft, van Son, & Bjørkan, 2007). Thus, for these people tourism can become a mixed blessing. In this project we see this as a true governability challenge, confronted with dilemmas and hard choices. Research into this area is to identify the negatives that can be avoided. Solutions holding positive and sustainable outcomes should be pursued in a collaborative fashion involving all stakeholders through interactive governance.

The interactive governance approach (Kooiman et al., 2005) and the governability assessment framework (Bavinck et al., 2013) will be applied as theoretical foundations. The challenge here is to undertake a global empirical assessment of SSF in a way that makes comparison across case studies and countries possible. Despite the diversity, complexity and dynamics of SSF globally, general lessons for governance can be drawn with regard to tourism.

- a. What governance structures are in place (or not in place) for SSF to benefit (or not benefit) from tourism as a source of income? What is the likelihood of establishing policies and strategies?
- b. Does the governance structure allow for bridge-building between small-scale fishers and tourists? If so, where is bridge building needed?

- c. What is needed to empower the fishers to be more active participants in the tourism industry and benefit from tourism economically? What are the barriers working against such empowerment? Can these barriers be overcome?
- d. What is necessary to set-up a proper transparent information flow? What are the barriers to such an information flow, e.g. language or societal structures?
- e. How does the strategy for management of the fish as a natural resource affect a possible connection to the tourism industry e.g. marine protected areas, reduced fishing access etc.

2. Tourism's potential impacts on gender equality, equity and social development for small-scale fisheries

Increasing women's labor force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth according to the World Bank. Expanding women's access to economic opportunities means not just the women will benefit from economic empowerment, but so will men, children and society as a whole⁷.

As heavily stressed in the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries, gender is a serious issue in small-scale fisheries, where families are typically dependent upon the male of the house to operate the business. If the father/husband/son gets injured, sick or dies, the family can be left without resources for earning a living. Empowering women and families to set up services tourists might want to pay for can have a positive influence on poverty alleviation. Some women are capable of operating boats, and others could be far more participatory in tourism activities onshore. So the idea behind this work package is to answer the following questions:

- a. What is the current gender balance/imbalance with regard to SSF?
- b. Are there chances through tourism to empower women to be more active in recruiting and managing new business and organizing tours?
- c. Are there possibilities for local women to have a more equitable role in offering tourism products, f. ex. introduction to local culture and food after, before, or instead of fishing trips?
- d. What are the societal factors marginalizing women and the SSFs and how can tourism help reverse this trend of marginalization, break down competitions and build bridges so there is more equitable distribution of wealth associated with tourism?

⁷ The World Bank - <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,contentMDK:22992327~menuPK:489120~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336868,00.html>

3. Tourism and ecosystem services – potential for small-scale fisheries

As part of a socio-ecological systems perspective (Berkes, Colding, & Folke, 2003; Berkes & Folke, 1998; Folke et al., 2010), identification of ecosystem services has become an important tool in acknowledging and raising awareness of the many ways ecosystems contribute to human well-being. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA, 2005) divides ecosystem services into four categories. *Provisioning* services are products used by humans that are directly obtained from ecosystems, such as fish and shellfish. *Regulating* services are benefits obtained through regulation of ecosystem processes, such as climate regulation, storm protection and erosion control. *Cultural* services are non-material benefits, such as recreation, social relations and spiritual enrichment. *Supporting* services are those needed for production of all other ecosystem services and include biodiversity and habitat (MEA, 2005).

While fishing is an easily identifiable source of wealth, small-scale fishing communities benefit from a range of ecosystem services that have a commercial potential that can be extended to the tourism industry. How to get more wealth out of the different ecosystem services is key in having a positive impact to poverty alleviation. The theory here is that tourists are willing to pay for deeper and richer cultural experiences involving local fishers and local communities. The big resorts have in effect built barriers that are hard to cross for tourists on a one-week or two-week trip. For gender, while fishing is often dominated by males, females are often involved in using other, more shore-based types of ecosystem services such as harvesting of mussels or seaweed farming. By extending the focus from fisheries to other wealth-creating ecosystem services, the tourism potential can therefore be identified for a range of ecosystem services and include a broader range of participants and communities. Furthermore, taking an ecosystem approach can identify potential conflicts between different uses of the shore/water bodies and evaluate the sustainability of the current and potential uses of ecosystem services.

Biophysical assessment methods have to a large degree been applied to identify ecosystem services (Plieninger et al. 2013). Knowledge generated from previous projects on the case studies will be reviewed to identify both biophysical and social-science information on ecosystem services. A specific focus in this project will be generation of data on local knowledge and perceptions on ecosystem services and related values. Social science tools have been identified as important in capturing the many ways ecosystems contribute to human well-being and will therefore be the main tools to identify and evaluate the ecosystem services of concern. (See Daniel et al. (2012), Chan et al. (2012), and Martin-Lopez et al. (2009) in Plieninger et al. (2013) on methods and deliberative methodology). Mapping exercises to show what the services are and their potential uses, in addition to mapping potential conflicts which might prevent sustainable growth would be one major deliverable from this work package. Mapping exercises will be used to get an overview of ecosystem services in the community or region (see Ryan (2001) and Nelson et al. (2009) as in Plieninger et al. (2013)), and capture knowledge, preferences and perceptions on uses of these, including commercial potential in tourism and trade-offs. Key elements that will be addressed under this work package include:

- a. Identify and map ecosystem services that can be marketed to tourists - cultural and provisioning
- b. Identify and map potential conflict areas e.g. conflicting interests for the same resources
- c. Identify what tourists are willing to pay for to get more enriching cultural experiences while on holiday.

Collaboration, contributions and list of deliverables

Under all three main thematic areas, institutional coordination and collaboration potentials will be examined, with focus on strengthening support for capacity development in these countries.

There are expected several deliverables under each work package as well as more overarching to the project as a whole. Deliverables will include published academic research articles, workshops and localized capacity-building development projects. It is hoped that this project will catalyze actions at the local, national and international levels - moving the global discourse from “this is what we want to achieve” to “this is how it can be achieved”.

Such a research project requires a vast network of collaborators. Send us your ideas for contributions.

Possible Deliverables (feel free to add your ideas to this list):

1. Book consisting of several chapters addressing tourism and governability within SSF
2. Two post-doctoral fellows’ academic publications as a result of field work (est. 8-10 in total)
3. Workshops and a session or two at the World Small Scale Fisheries Congress
4. Contributions to TBTI’s general goals for dissemination of information
5. Contributions to the Global Inventory of Small-scale Fisheries Researchers⁸
6. Training workshops to catalyze actions within selected local communities
7. Promotion and establishment of global partnerships

Expenses or support for contributions will be included in the funding application so it is important that if you are interested, you meet the 10 May deadline.

⁸ <http://artisanalfisheries.ucsd.edu/2013/04/17/global-inventory-of-small-scale-fisheries-researchers/>

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For more information, please contact:

Maria-Victoria Solstrand

Doctoral student - Natural Resource Management
Norwegian College of Fishery Science – A-462

Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics
University of Tromsø
9037 Tromsø

Epost: mgu014@uit.no

Tel: +47 776 45566
Mobile: +47 95 46 13 96

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