

Interdependencies of small-scale fisheries with other sectors: how to maximize synergies and avoid negative impacts?

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Venue: Phaholyothin II

Participation: 6 from Asia, 3 from Africa, 2 from Europe

Rapporteur's report

The interdependencies between small-scale fisheries and the following sectors were raised during the group discussion: (a) tourism; (b) trade; (c) agriculture; (d) energy; (e) industry; and (f) infrastructure.

In the case of tourism, small-scale fishers have to move out where tourism is and get displaced in the process. There could be strong as well as weak positive links, however, in instances where fishing communities get employed as tourist guides and supply seafood products to tourist establishments. In agriculture, the use of chemicals, for example in dry rice cultivation, leads to negative impacts in the productivity of small-scale fisheries. Synergy between agriculture and small-scale fisheries was pointed out with reference to the use of fish wastes for fertilizers.

In trade, an example from West Africa showed that, subsidies meant for supporting local production and consumption of products from SSF, are being used for the promotion of seafood exports. As regards energy, the experience from large hydropower projects, such as in the Mekong Region, has significant effect on the hydrology of the river, thereby affecting the productivity of fisheries. This is further complicated by the fact that the river is shared by several countries, which are differentially affected by virtue of their geographical location (upstream or downstream). In the case of industry, the example provided illustrates negative linkage because of the dumping of industrial wastes into the sea.

The following key issues were raised:

- Marginalization of SSF in national and international policy and development debates
- Weak capacity of stakeholders to engage in policy debates
- Lack of livelihoods diversification options within and outside the sector, with the latter leading to migration of people into SSF
- Weak value chains and low profitability

In order to maximize synergies and mitigate negative impacts, the following actions are needed:

- Improve valuation of the social, economic and cultural contribution of SSF

- Create greater awareness among policy makers and other stakeholders on the importance of SSF
- Formulate coherent policy for integrated multi-sectoral investments and development, considering existing interdependencies
- Capacity building of stakeholders to engage in policy debates
- Appropriate communication strategies at all levels