



AFSSRN BULLETIN

Bi-annual Newsletter of the Asian Fisheries Social Science Research Network
Asian Fisheries Society
Issue 7 January to June 2025

Message from the AFSSRN President, 2024-2027

DR. NIKITA GOPAL

Warm Greetings from the Asian Fisheries Social Science Research Network of the Asian Fisheries Society!

The Asian Fisheries Social Science Research Network was one of the earliest Sections of the Asian Fisheries Society, set up with the intention of fostering greater engagement of social science and scientists in fisheries and aquaculture research. Due to the dedicated services of our Past Chairs, Dr. Alice Ferrer and Dr. Marieta B. Sumagaysay the Network activities were revived and we are now on a path, that is well and truly set, towards achieving its objectives.

As the new Executive Committee takes over, we place on record our sincere thanks to the members of the outgoing Committee, as we rededicate ourselves to meeting the goals and objectives of the Network. We hope that the Asian Fisheries Social Science Research Network (AFSSRN) will be a global social science network in fisheries and aquaculture, which will provide a platform for researchers, academicians, policy makers, practitioners, students, and fisherwomen and men to connect on issues specific to the sector that require a holistic approach to address.

To achieve this we need to bring together different stakeholders through a discussion fora; continue to organize seminars and conferences where emerging issues needing social science approaches will be deliberated; train students and early career researchers in social science methods in fisheries and aquaculture essential for the science to develop; and foster collaboration by developing and implementing collaborative projects in topics of current importance in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. With the cooperation of its membership and support from the AFS and AFS Council, the AFSSRN will emerge as a strong voice in social science research, policy and advocacy in fisheries and aquaculture.

This Newsletter carries news related to AFSSRN contributions since our last edition, stories from major events, recognitions to our members. It also carries a report of a non-funded, voluntary project undertaken by the AFSSRN.



RESEARCH FEATURE: INDONESIA

Stakeholder perspectives on managing abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear in Rembang crab fisheries

Budy Wiryawan, IPB University, Bogor (Co-authors: Sofiyan Muji Permana, Maharani Yulisti, Mohamad Natsir, Mahiswara, Baihaqi, Helman Nur Yusuf, Suryanto, Regi Fiji Anggawangsa, Ignatius Tri Hargiyatno, Aris Budiarto, Irfan Yulianto)

Abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) poses a significant threat to natural marine habitats, causing damage to aquatic ecosystems and affecting fishing productivity. In this study, the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) method was employed, and interviews were conducted with stakeholders to identify strategies for preventing the occurrence of ALDFG in crab fisheries in Rembang waters. The results indicate that the highest-priority criteria, as identified by stakeholders, include: marine debris: plastic bags; fishing gear waste: fishing traps; cause: entanglement with other fishing gear; impact: decreased income; solution: prohibition of modified purse seines; and actor: central government. These were considered the most significant by stakeholders. In contrast, the lowest-priority criteria were marine debris: sacks; fishing gear waste: nets or flags; cause: physical damage (cuts); impact: anxiety; solution: establishment of an oversight committee; and actor: business entities. It is hoped that these findings will offer stakeholders new insights and perspectives, which will accelerate the process of integrating diverse public opinions to develop more effective approaches to handle ALDFG.

RESEARCH FEATURE: ASIA PACIFIC REGION

A social and economic monitoring framework for Pacific tuna industries

KATE BARCLAY, University of Technology Sydney. (Co-authors: Nicholas McClean, Alistair McIlgorm, Rachel Nichols, Anna Farmery, Ilinus digim'Rina, Leka Pitoi, Gerry Katai, Gayleen Hape, Gesling Lulupa Chee, Andy Bill, Jeff Kinch, Megan Bailey, Federico Davila)

The public policy goal for fisheries is to benefit society, through contributions such as sustainably providing nutritious food, livelihoods, business opportunities, and cultural and social connections. While fisheries management agencies monitor fish stocks for environmental sustainability as a core activity, the social and economic performance of fisheries is rarely evaluated, aside from very high-level figures like gross value of production. For most fisheries worldwide there is no time series data enabling monitoring of the contribution of fisheries to social or economic development goals. This is a significant governance gap. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) wants to develop such monitoring, and we have been working with them on that since 2020. Our work has involved constructing and piloting a framework for monitoring the social and economic benefits from tuna industries in Pacific Island countries, for fisheries management agencies to use in adaptive management. The framework includes nine areas to which fisheries may contribute – including national economic development, food and nutrition security, decent work, poverty alleviation, education, and gender equality. We piloted the framework in Papua New Guinea in 2023 and are now completing a pilot for Tonga. Repurposing existing social data and careful design of new data collection and evaluation methods are necessary for cost-effective ongoing monitoring, to provide an evidence base for policies to support the social and economic goals that constitute the reason to have fisheries in the first place

RESEARCH FEATURE: PHILIPPINES

The caring masculinities of male fishers:

A case study of two villages in fishing islands in the Philippines

Renz Prudenciado, PhD Candidate, Asian Institute of Technology (Co-author: Marieta Bañez Sumagaysay, University of the Philippines Tacloban College)

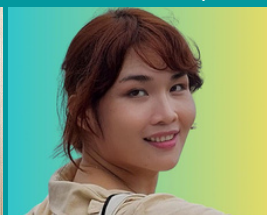
In this study, men reveal narratives of caring masculinity in their fishing work and their relationship with the marine and coastal environment. Traditional gender roles often cast men as providers and women as nurturers, leading to societal expectations that discourage men from expressing empathy or engaging in caring behaviors. Being masculine brings dominance and violence in the guise of a deep concern and care for the other. This traditional definition and perception of masculinity may result in social stigma, labeling empathetic men as unmanly, leading to discrimination and marginalization. The study shows that male fishers challenge these conventional notions of masculinity, demonstrating that caring is not an exclusively feminine trait; that caring men take the stance of co-responsibility and empathy, and that caring is a masculine role which is not synonymous to dominance. Through in-depth interviews, the study explores how these men care for each other; exhibit nurturing roles in fishing activities which are similarly extensions of homework that women do and are expected to do. Moreover, male fishers show caring behaviors when they relate to the marine and coastal environment. The caring masculinity of male fishers challenges prevailing stereotypes and provides a narrative of resilience, community, and the evolving nature of gender roles in Philippine fishing communities which are promotive of gender justice.

FEATURED LEAD RESEARCHERS/AUTHORS

KATE BARCLAY, PhD

RENZ PRUDENCIADO, MA

Prof. Dr. Ir. BUDY WIRYAWAN



Professor, Sustainability and Environment Program at the University of Technology Sydney, and Director of the Climate, Society and Environment Research Center (C-SERC). She is a qualitative social scientist who has been researching on the development impacts from tuna industries in the Asia Pacific Region since the late 1990s.

PhD scholar in Gender and Development at Asian Institute of Technology, supported by His Majesty the King's Scholarship. She earned her master's on the same field as a DAAD scholar. Her research revolve around masculinities, and the intersection between GEDSI and climate change, sea level rise, and disaster.

Finished Dr.rer.nat on Biological Oceanography at Christian Albrecht University, Kiel, Germany. His research and publications focus on sustainable small-scale fisheries, and shrimp and tuna traceability. Dr. Wiryawan is Professor at IPB University, Kota Bogor, Jawa, Indonesia. He is Vice President of Asian Fisheries Society, 2025–2028.

CONGRATULATIONS

In photo: Dr. Marieta Bañez Sumagaysay (left) and Dr. Nikita Gopal (right) receive their respective AFS Merit Awards during the 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (AFAF) with the theme, *Greening the Blue Growth in Asia Pacific*. Held on 12-14 February 2025 in New Delhi, India.

