

# FISHBYTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FISHERIES CENTRE – UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
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## When does helping become fishing?

by Amanda Vincent

"We don't fish. We only assist our husbands. We help prepare the gear and decide where to fish. We go to sea with the men. We put the gear in the water and we pull it out and extract the fish. We also sell the fish. But we are not fishers. We are only housewives who help our husbands." Thus we patched together diverse comments from six women in one village this August, to extract the beginnings of a story.

Our Project Seahorse team's interest in gender and fisheries has been piqued by changing practices in the



Nora Angeles (far right) and Amanda Vincent (back row, right) discuss fishing with women in Handumon village, Getafe, Bohol. Photo by R. Apurado/Project Seahorse Foundation.

family. Despite being little consulted on fisheries decisions, too, women are commonly taking the lead in the people's organisations that are central to coastal management.

We decided we needed to know much more about women's

### In this issue...

Women in Philippines' fisheries

2006 IIFET Conference

Major prizes for Carl Walters and Daniel Pauly

Panel for high seas fisheries management

FC welcomes Murdoch McAllister

And, as always, lots of News and Notes!

central Philippines, where we have done so much of our practical work for the past decade. A few women had told us that they are going to sea more as resources decline, perhaps largely because men could no longer afford to take a partner from another

involvement in fisheries and how it was affecting prospects for conservation and sustainable use. Luckily we could consult a colleague with impeccable credentials in resource management and gender studies: Dr Leonora (Nora) Angeles from UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning and UBC's Centre for Women's and Gender Studies. Nora, herself a Filipina, generously agreed to visit our field sites in August 2006.

As part of a very preliminary pilot study, we joined six village women and a Filipina team member from the national Project Seahorse Foundation for Marine Conservation in an outdoor shelter of coconut lumber, bamboo and palm fronds. Nora began by asking them to write a diary of their daily activities. They listed a full schedule of domestic chores and social events. But they did not include their various leadership and organisational

Continued on page 2 - Philippines

*Philippines - Continued from page 1*

roles in the village council, people's organisation for coastal management, village health care, village day care and more. Nor did they mention fishing. I began to fear that my hunch had been all wrong, until I remembered spotting one of the women out in a fishing boat.

On direct questioning, two of the women acknowledged that they had sometimes casually given minor help in fishing. When we probed farther, much farther, we eventually

discovered that perhaps half of the village girls who make it to high school fund their studies partly through fishing (roughly the same rate as boys). Sustained discussion finally revealed that all the women had fished at some time, and all continued to glean opportunistically in the intertidal. Moreover, three of the six women participated comprehensively (if intermittently) in fisheries activities, although they portrayed it as "only helping their husbands". Their determined self-depiction was as housewives.

Women's self-deprecation may help explain why their roles in fishing are so often overlooked. Women in agricultural communities also often describe themselves as "just helping", despite engaging in virtually all aspects of farming. Whatever its origins – themselves worth probing – there is no doubt that a lack of self- and external recognition of women's roles in resource management will handicap efforts to achieve sustainable use. We look forward to much more work on this topic.



## Fisheries Centre at IIFET Thirteenth Biennial Conference

by Yajie Liu

From July 11 to 14, 2006, the International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET) held its thirteenth biennial conference in Portsmouth, England, a beautiful coastal town with a unique maritime heritage. The conference was hosted by the Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE) of the University of Portsmouth. The core theme of the conference was *Rebuilding fisheries in an uncertain environment*. Together with two sub- themes: *Fish for the future: recovering fisheries from crisis or collapse* and *Ocean management: fisheries and ecosystem*, the conference covered a variety of topics ranging from aquaculture and marketing to modelling, development, policy and management. Around four hundred participants were in attendance, including academics, policy makers, fisheries managers, industry actors and NGO representatives from forty-one nations of the world.

William Schrank, from Memorial University of Newfoundland, gave the opening plenary lecture entitled *Is there hope for fisheries management?*. His key issue was how fisheries

management could deal with the problems facing oceans and fisheries given the uncertainties associated with fisheries science. The second and third plenary talks were given by Meryl Williams, former director of the WorldFish Centre, and Chris Grieve of the Marine Stewardship Council, respectively. Seven concurrent sessions followed. The presentations varied widely in terms of topics, methodologies and policy implications. Some talks discussed the use of models to tackle classic fisheries economics issues in innovative ways, while others targeted emerging problems, such as the economic effects on fisheries of Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Two topics were particularly emphasized: aquaculture economics and economic effects of climate change on fisheries, which have recently attracted growing attention.

The Fisheries Centre was well represented by six current and two associated members. Rashid Sumaila presented two talks. The first on the economics of joint resource management of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem and the second on a global ex-vessel fish

price database. Gordon Munro chaired a special session on the management of high seas fisheries, which was one of the most stimulating and interesting sessions (see p.3 of this issue for more on this topic). Dale Marsden spoke about retrospective economic analysis of Fraser river sockeye salmon management. I delivered a presentation on the costs of sea lice emanating from farmed salmon on wild salmon fisheries, and also presented a poster on the potential economic values for a Pinto abalone selective breeding project based in Bamfield, Canada. Villy Christensen delivered a talk on ecosystems at risk: the contribution of ecosystem approaches to fisheries. Louisa Wood presented a global review of marine protected areas. Claire Armstrong, an associated member of the Fisheries Economics Research Unit (FERU) from the University of Tromsø and Richard Stanford, FC former graduate and currently working with the Devon Naturalists Trust, also attended the conference.

Here, my special thanks go to the organisation of Pacific Fishery Biologists for its generous support.



## Pauly, Walters and Hilborn win Volvo Environment Prize

Daniel Pauly and Carl Walters have been awarded the 2006 Volvo Environment Prize for their contribution to understanding the human impact on the world's fisheries and oceans. Established in 1988 by an independent foundation, the Volvo Environmental Prize's recipients are selected by a jury of international scientists appointed by Sweden's Royal Society of Arts and Sciences.

Daniel Pauly is honoured for developing important models and tools — including the global fish database *FishBase* with information on more than 28,000 species of fish — and for his extensive communications with fishers, policy-makers and the public.

Carl Walters is honoured for his analysis of fishery stocks and harvest management, and key contributions in the area of adaptive management, now widely used by ecologists and fishery managers worldwide. He is also this year's recipient of the American Fisheries Society's Award of Excellence.

The 2006 Volvo Environment Prize was also awarded to Ray Hilborn of the University of Washington, for developing mathematical models for assessing and managing fish stocks, for formulating improved management procedures and approaches and for pioneering adaptive management strategies. Dr Hilborn will present the 8<sup>th</sup> Larkin Lecture at the Fisheries Centre on March 28, 2007 (see p. 4).

For more information and a list of previous winners, please visit [www.environment-prize.com](http://www.environment-prize.com).

## Carl Walters wins AFS Award of Excellence

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) presented its Award of Excellence to Carl Walters at the 136<sup>th</sup> AFS Annual Meeting in Lake Placid, New York, on September 11, 2006. The Award of Excellence is the Society's highest honour and it is presented to an AFS member for original and outstanding contributions to fisheries science and aquatic biology. The award was presented to Carl in recognition of his



Carl Walters (left) receives the Award of Excellence medal and plaque from AFS President Chris Kohler. Photo by Jim Clayton, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

contributions to fisheries science through his writings and influential books and for his support for rationale scientific fisheries management decisions at public, regulatory and political forums.

The AFS Award of Excellence was presented in 2004 to Daniel Pauly and in 2005 to Ray Hilborn.

## Fisheries Centre on a high-level international panel on high seas fisheries management

The governments of Canada, Australia, Chile, Namibia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, along with the WWF, IUCN and the Earth Institute at Columbia University established a Ministerially-led Task Force on IUU Fishing on the High Seas, better known as the High Seas Task Force. The Task Force was based at the OECD, in Paris. Central to the work of the Task Force was the emerging Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) regime, arising from the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

The Task Force issued its report in March of this year. The key recommendation in the Task Force's report is that an independent high-level panel, of internationally recognized experts on issues relevant to high seas fisheries governance and RFMOs, should be established to develop a model for improved governance by RFMOs. Gordon Munro, of the Fisheries Economics Research Unit (FERU) and the *Sea Around Us* project (SAUP), has been invited to serve on that

panel. The panel had its first meeting during the last week of September in London. It is worth noting that the High Seas Task Force was preceded by an expert consultation convened by the OECD in 2004 on IUU fishing, of which Rashid Sumaila, FERU and SAUP member, was a participant (see OECD, 2004. *Fish Piracy: Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing*. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris, 406pp.).



## Fisheries Centre welcomes new Faculty member: Murdoch McAllister

We are very pleased to welcome to the Fisheries Centre Dr Murdoch McAllister, who arrived from Imperial College London to take up a Canada Research Chair in July 2006. Dr McAllister brings with him an impressive set of skills aimed at solving fisheries problems, particularly in the development and application of Bayesian methods. His work focuses on:

- Developing and applying Bayesian statistical methods for fisheries risk assessment, estimation, decision analysis and management strategy evaluation.
- Applying Bayesian methods to fisheries stock assessment and providing quantitative decision support to

NGOs, corporate clients, intergovernmental organisations and government agencies.

- Complex population dynamics and fisheries dynamics modeling. Statistical evaluation of model uncertainty in models fitted to data.

In addition, he gives lectures and workshops in applying conventional and Bayesian statistical methods and quantitative decision analysis methods. He has successfully supervised eight PhD graduates and is currently supervising six PhD students at Imperial College London and one at UBC. Please join us in welcoming Dr McAllister to the Fisheries Centre.

## News and Notes

### Congratulations

**Dr Andrew Trites**, Director of the Marine Mammal Research Unit, has been promoted to full Professor at UBC. **Dr Rashid Sumaila**, Director of the Fisheries Economics Research Unit, has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Dr Hector Lozano** successfully defended his PhD thesis, "Historical Ecosystem Modelling of the Upper Gulf of California (Mexico): Following 50 Years of Change", on July 28, 2006. Hector's thesis evaluated trophic changes resulting from the elimination of nutrients, caused by dams on the Colorado River and by intense fishing pressure in the Gulf. He will begin a Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship in the Department of Zoology (UBC) in 2007.

**Dr Nathan Taylor** successfully defended his PhD thesis, "Growth and Survival Responses to Experimental Fishing: Models, Experiments and Lessons from the Pygmy Pikeminnow of South Central British Columbia" on July 31, 2006. Nathan used Bayesian methods to estimate growth and survival of Pygmy pikeminnow and is currently employed as a post-doctoral fellow with Dr Ray Hilborn at the University of Washington.

### Diadromous fish conference

The second international symposium *Challenges for Diadromous Fishes in a Dynamic Global Environment* will be held in **Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada**, on **June 18-21, 2007**.

The symposium will review the status and range of responses of key diadromous fish species to changes in the global environment from direct and indirect effects of human activity. Abstract deadline for papers was September 1, 2006. However, abstracts for posters can be submitted until January 1, 2007. For more information, see [www.anacat.ca](http://www.anacat.ca).

### 8th Larkin Lecture: Dr Ray Hilborn

**March 28, 2007, AERL Rm 120**

The 8th Larkin Lecture will be given by Dr Ray Hilborn, on the topic "Learning from Fisheries Successes", on **March 28, 2007**. The public lecture will be followed by a question and answer session at 11am, Thursday March 29, 2007. Please mark your calendars and check the Fisheries Centre website for further details ([www.fisheries.ubc.ca/events/lectures/](http://www.fisheries.ubc.ca/events/lectures/)).

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