

<p>Institution: University of Portsmouth</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies</p>
<p>Title of case study: Influencing National and Regional Policies in the Fisheries of Central Asia: Promoting Legislative Change and Stocking Strategies to Enhance Growth and Tackle Poverty</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research commissioned by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation from the University of Portsmouth on fisher livelihoods in Central Asia has generated impact in the public policy and economic/commercial arenas. First, it has influenced government policy (evidenced in the development of a national fisheries strategy) and prompted a legislative change which has decriminalised artisanal and recreational fishing in the Kyrgyz Republic [Impact 1]. Second, it has been instrumental in shaping the restocking and culture-based fisheries policy of a new regional FAO fisheries body (CACFish) encompassing Central Asia [Impact 2]. Third, Portsmouth researchers have contributed to improved production processes (economic/organisational impact) by helping develop and then deliver a national training programme to disseminate best aquacultural practices in Kyrgyzstan [Impact 3].</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The role of fisheries and aquaculture in supporting growth and reducing poverty is central to the mandate of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This mandate saw FAO employ Thorpe as a consultant over the period 2007-2012 to advise on the rehabilitation of the fisheries sector across Central Asia. He analysed how the sector might more effectively contribute to livelihood strategies of impoverished fisheries communities and the feasibility of developing the region's culture-based fisheries, thus enhancing growth.</p> <p>Earlier research by Thorpe had benchmarked the representation of fisheries in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies and donor support programmes. The research established and thence applied a series of metrics that identified the sector's political, economic and social significance across 129 states (Reference1 – R1). It also provided the basis for a series of peer-reviewed academic articles, including one on the 'transition' economies (R2). This research led to Thorpe being invited by the World Bank to deliver a keynote address detailing the importance of mainstreaming fisheries into national development policy documents at the first PROFISH Forum held at FAO headquarters in Rome in March 2007.</p> <p>The tragedy of Central Asian fisheries (as documented in R2) saw the FAO then commission Thorpe to examine fisheries, aquaculture and food security in the Kyrgyz Republic with a view to producing recommendations that would enable the effective rehabilitation of the country's inland fisheries. These findings and recommendations were published as a 2008 FAO Fisheries Circular, and also in two peer-reviewed academic articles (R3 and R4). In R3 Thorpe and his co-authors provided the first documented study of how the collapse of the Soviet system heralded the demise of the country's fisheries, showing how institutional failure, ruptured supply chains and a chronic lack of funding resulted in production collapsing from 1,447 to 48 tonnes between 1989 and 2005. R4 extended this analysis, reviewing regional fisheries and offering some preliminary ideas as to how this decline might be arrested and then reversed.</p> <p>In the light of these recommendations, the FAO employed Thorpe to investigate the livelihood strategies of inland fishers in five Central Asian republics (R5). This research expanded upon the reasons for sectoral decline, highlighted the five capital assets (natural; human; financial;</p>

infrastructure; social) upon which local fisher livelihoods depended, and traced how the sustainability of these livelihoods had been critically compromised in the post-Soviet period. Recommendations made by Thorpe relating to the safeguarding and enhancement of natural capitals saw the FAO then request Thorpe, Whitmarsh and Drakeford to examine the potential for stocking and culture-based fisheries in the Central Asian region (R6). This research reviewed the historic lessons to be learnt from past practices in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and developed a set of seven overarching principles, including ecosystem compatibility and the identification of wider economic and social opportunities, that should underpin any future attempt to develop culture based fisheries within the region.

Portsmouth Staff Involved:

Dr. Andy Thorpe 2005-13 (Professor of Development Studies),

Dr. David Whitmarsh, 2011-2 (Professor of Fisheries Economics, Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources [CEMARE], deceased)

Dr. Ben Drakeford 2011-13 (CEMARE Research Fellow).

3. References to the research

- R1:** Thorpe, A. (2005). Mainstreaming Fisheries into National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategies: Current Situation and Opportunities. *FAO Fisheries Circular*. 997. FAO: Rome. [URL: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5930e/y5930e00.HTM>] *Quality assessment: research commissioned and published by the FAO. Subject to internal FAO expert review and external peer review.*
- R2:** Thorpe, A., van Anrooy, R., Brugere, C, and Reid, C, (2004,). The Incorporation of Fisheries in the Development Strategies and Programmes of the Transition Economies of Eastern Europe and the Confederation of Independent States, *EMERGO*, 11(4), pp. 2-20. [URL: http://eprints.port.ac.uk/7645/1/REID_The_Incorporation_of_Fisheries_in_Development_Strategies.pdf]
- R3:** Thorpe, A., van Anrooy, R., Valbo-Jørgensen, J., Niyazov, B.N., Sarieva, M.K. and Mena Millar, A., (2009), The Collapse of the Fisheries Sector in Kyrgyzstan: An Analysis of its Roots and its Prospects for Revival, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 42(1), pp. 141-63. [DOI: [10.1016/j.postcomstud.2009.02.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2009.02.007)]
- R4:** Thorpe, A. and van Anrooy, R. (2010), Strategies for the rehabilitation of the inland fisheries sector in Central Asia. *Fisheries Management and Ecology*, 7, pp.134-40. [DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2400.2009.00699.x] *Fisheries Management and Ecology has an impact factor of 0.798. The article was selected by the journal's editors as one of the most outstanding that was published in the 2010 volume ([http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1365-2400/homepage/custom_copy.htm](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1365-2400/homepage/custom_copy.htm)).*
- R.5:** Thorpe, A. and van Anrooy, R. (2009). Inland Fisheries Livelihoods in Central Asia: Policy Interventions and Opportunities. *FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper*. 526. FAO: Rome. ISBN 9789251062852. *Quality assessment: research commissioned and published by the FAO. Subject to internal FAO expert review and external peer review. Co-author was formerly Fishery Officer, FAO Sub-regional Office for Central Asia, Ankara.*
- R.6:** Thorpe, A., Whitmarsh, D., Drakeford, B., Reid, C., Karimov, B., Timirkhanov, S., Satybekov, K., and van Anrooy, R. (2013), Regional Study on the Feasibility of Culture-Based Fisheries in Central Asia. *FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper*, 565. FAO: Ankara. [URL: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/ba0037e/ba0037e00.htm>] *Quality assessment: research commissioned and published by the FAO. Subject to FAO expert review and external peer review.*

The following grant awards are relevant to the completion of the underpinning research/impact.

Project 1: A. Thorpe 'Development of inland fisheries and aquaculture in the Kyrgyz Republic to reduce rural food insecurity', FAO, July 2007-April 2008. US\$12,000.

Project 2: A.Thorpe. 'Identifying new opportunities for effective livelihood-supporting policy interventions in the inland fisheries of Central Asia' FAO, December 2007-2008. US\$21,000.

Project 3: A.Thorpe/D.Whitmarsh/B.Drakeford (and national collaborators) 'Regional study on the feasibility of restocking and development of culture-based fisheries in Central Asia', FAO, December 2009-November 2010 (subsequently extended). US\$35,000.

Project 4: B.Drakeford 'The Kyrgyz Fish Supply Chain', FAO, September 2012-February 2013. US\$10,000.

4. Details of the impact

The **reach and significance** of the research can be clearly demonstrated by the way Thorpe has worked with a major international agency and international donors to influence fisheries policy across several countries. The research has contributed to legislative change, shaped sectoral development strategy, and influenced international donor investment (**Impact 1**); helped underpin the scientific and technical work programme of a newly-established UN fisheries body (**Impact 2**); and provided technical inputs and expert training for a capacity-building programme on fish supply chains (**Impact 3**).

Impact 1 (Public Policy): Legislative Change and Influencing National Fisheries Policy

Thorpe was despatched to Kyrgyzstan in September 2007 by the FAO (project **P2**) to undertake base-line research and to then help coordinate the first National Workshop on Fisheries and Food Security involving 53 key stakeholders - including the Minister of Agriculture and two cabinet officials (**Corroborating Source – CS1**). These inputs fed into the completion of the first ever FAO National Fisheries Review published in mid-2008 which Thorpe played a significant role in drafting. Thorpe's role was to collate, synthesise and relate the ideas emerging from local stakeholders with established practice elsewhere in the field of poverty reduction and fisheries governance (**R1**), 'drafting the notes of the September [2007] meeting that started the ball rolling' in the eyes of the FAO regional Fisheries and Aquaculture officer (**Corroborating Person – CP1**). The Director of Fisheries of the Kyrgyz Republic (Letter – **CP2**) acknowledges that 'Thorpe's work helped underpin many of the policies espoused' in the first *National Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Development and Management in the Kyrgyz Republic 2008-2012* (NSFASM). The legislative change that ensued (April 2008 Law – **CS2**) resulted in the decriminalisation of artisanal fishing - affecting an estimated 100,000 individuals who were transformed from 'poachers' into legitimate artisanal and recreational fishers. This change had been strongly advocated by Thorpe in both the Review and in subsequently published research (**R3**) as was acknowledged by the FAO officer and the Director of Fisheries (**CP1** and **CP2**).

Impact 2 (Public Policy): Shaping Restocking Policy of a Regional FAO Fisheries Body.

The success of this project (**P2**) prompted the FAO into scaling-up its activities in the region, successfully soliciting US\$1.9 million for a five year (2009-2014) *Central Asia Regional Programme for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development* under the FAO Turkey Partnership in 2008 (Project Document – **CS3**). Significantly, the background section of the 'project design' component of this partnership project (p.9-10) employed both the precise wording employed by Thorpe in **R3** (Introduction) and also borrowed the preliminary findings of Thorpe's research into regional inland fisheries livelihoods (**R5**) to articulate priority intervention needs (**CS3** – p.13). As a result, Thorpe and his colleagues (Whitmarsh and Drakeford) were invited to study the potential for aquaculture development in the region under Output 4.3 of the project. The findings of this new study (**R6**) were presented to the Fourth Inter-governmental Meeting convened to establish the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish) in June 2011. The meeting acknowledged the high quality of this research, agreed with the overarching principles proposed to guide future regional culture-based fisheries and stocking activity, and accepted the importance of implementing simple – yet pragmatic – national regulatory frameworks across the region (Report **CS4** – paragraphs 46-8). The inaugural meeting of CACFish in Ankara in December 2011 (Report – **CS5**, p.41) put on record the need for members to prioritise restocking and developing culture-based fisheries in the region in line with the recommendations made by Thorpe and colleagues (**R6**). Additionally, 'the comprehensive, detailed, recommendations provided [by Thorpe and colleagues] ...are likely to remain the cornerstones upon which future regional fisheries policies will

be built' (CP1).

Impact 3 (Economic/Commercial): Development of Improved Aquacultural Production Practices.

In response to this CACFish directive the Kyrgyz government requested support from the FAO to develop a functional fish supply chain for the commercial cultivation of trout and capture fisheries. Drakeford was consequently contracted to review the current fish supply chain, lead a national capacity-building workshop (early 2013) and advise on a national development programme designed to enhance domestic production practices and add value across the whole supply chain. The development of such academic-industry events was acknowledged as an imperative first step in addressing the countries nutritional deficit by the Team Leader of the FAO/Finnish fisheries support programme (Letter – CP3).

In summary, the field research and associated publications were not only instrumental in causing significant legislative change which reached – and decriminalised – an estimated 100,000 artisanal and recreational fishers in Kyrgyzstan, but also played a fundamental role in the establishment of a new FAO regional fisheries body (CACFISH) and has contributed to enhanced domestic fish production practices in Kyrgyzstan. The research also led to the publication of the first ever FAO National Fisheries Reviews of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and two FAO Technical reports on fisher livelihoods and the feasibility of culture-based fisheries in the region.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

Corroborating Source

CS1: Report of the National Workshop on Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Kyrgyz Republic: Status and Prospects to Increase the Contribution of the Sector to Food Security, Bishkek, 12 September 2007.

CS2: Ministerial Decree No.161: Validating the Regulation on Artisanal and Sport Fishing. 22 April 2008.

CS3: Project Document – Central Asia Regional Programme for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (FishDev – Central Asia), FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme, 2008 (Project No: GCP/RER/031/TUR).

CS4: Report of the Fourth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Establishment of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission, Cholpon Ata (Kyrgyzstan), 22-24 June 2011.

CS5: Report of the First Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission, Istanbul (Turkey), 19-21 December 2011.

Corroborating Person

CP1: Letter dated 29 June 2011 from FAO Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer (and subsequently first Secretary of CACFISH). Author of the letter was a *PARTICIPANT* in the sense he commissioned the work for FAO (Projects 1-3) and so, in line with FAO policy, his name appears on the final research outputs although he was not involved in fieldwork, only reviewing final documentation (References 2-6). CS1-5 provide independent corroborative support to complement comments made in his letter of 2011 (Letter covers Impacts 1 and 2).

CP2: Letter dated 24 January 2013 from the Director of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of the Kyrgyz Republic. *REPORTER*. The Director of Fisheries reviewed and approved all work, findings and recommendations from the Portsmouth project team (Letter covers all three impacts - available in Russian and English).

CP3: Letter dated 24 January 2013 from FAO Team Leader of the FAO/Finnish 'Support to Fishery and Aquaculture Management in the Kyrgyz Republic'. *PARTICIPANT/REPORTER*. Author of the letter commissioned Project 4 and also helped organise the workshop (Impact 3). The author of the letter however played no role in the research or had input into the scientific organisation of the workshop nor its outcomes.