

Angling in the rural environment: social, economic, ecological and geomorphological interactions

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Aims and Objectives:

Our overall aim is to analyse the complex network of natural and socioeconomic relationships around angling in the river environment, including institutions of governance and land use practices at a range of interconnected scales. The results will contribute to policy debates on the integrated development of the rural river environment. The project is organised through a series of inter-linked Work Packages illustrated in the adjoining diagram. Our specific objectives are:

1. To assess the geomorphological, ecological and socioeconomic influences that angling has on the Esk, Swale and Ure river catchments;
2. To assess how the natural environment, the institutional context of management and cultural practices influence angling in these three river environments;
3. To identify the goods provided by the rivers to anglers and other users in the study catchments including links through urban users;
4. To critique current rhetoric and decision making practices in order to inform and strengthen the sustainable integrated management of rivers and their rural catchments;
5. To build interdisciplinary capacity through practice and reflection; and,
6. To facilitate information and knowledge interchange between different disciplines, academics and stakeholders in the wider community, by developing collaborative processes and tools capable of generic application to policy development and implementation.

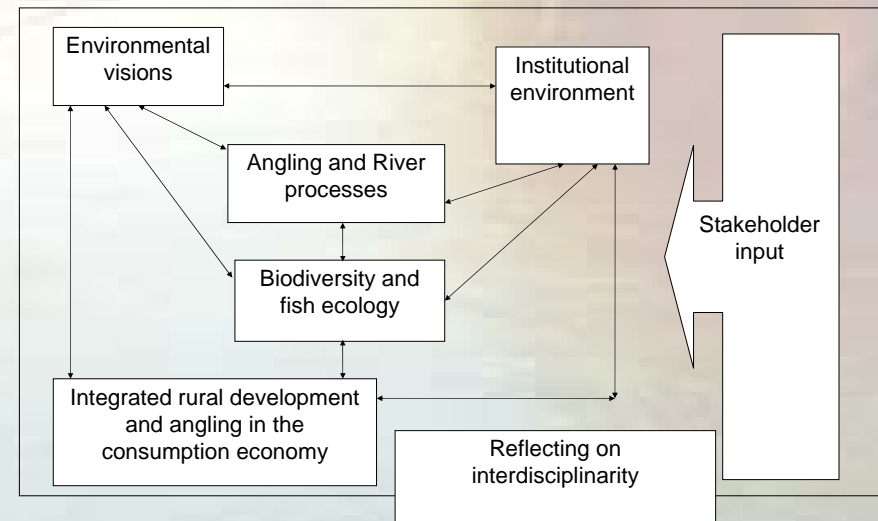
Project overview

This project uses angling as a lens to understand the scales at which interrelated processes act upon the rural environment. Interdisciplinary teams - drawing upon different perspectives of rural economic and social development, aesthetics of the environment, geomorphological processes and biodiversity conservation - investigate key intersections within the practice of sustainable development in river catchments.

The Rivers Esk, Swale and Ure are selected as study sites. They offer: a range of fishing types and practices, different land uses, problems of siltation, key biodiversity species, come under the remit of several rural and environmental development agencies, and build upon the experience and knowledge of the researchers. The project will innovate by integrating quantitative and qualitative data across the social and natural sciences.

The large scale legislative framework of rural development fits uneasily with the spatial scale of restoration and the economic, political and social drivers and constraints. The research will explore the rhetoric of governance in relation to actual practices affecting the environment. A significant output of the research will be a set of conceptual tools to understand the complexity of such issues.

The relationships between areas of research



Stakeholder engagement:

Continuing dialogue with stakeholders will take place through the development, data collection and analysis stages of the project through themed knowledge exchanges to ensure the relevance and applicability of the research as it moves forward.

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