

The role of animal husbandry in the post-disaster reconstruction in the Small Aral Sea region in Kazakhstan

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Purpose of the presentation

- To review the role of livestock farming in the recovery process from the Aral Sea disaster, examining the current conditions and challenges faced in remote villages
- To consider the types of support needed to foster sustainable development in the Aral Sea region





Icy Small Aral Sea in February 2020

0. Self-Introduction

Personal Background

- Hometown: Japan
- Age: 47
- Affiliation and Position: Associate Professor, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

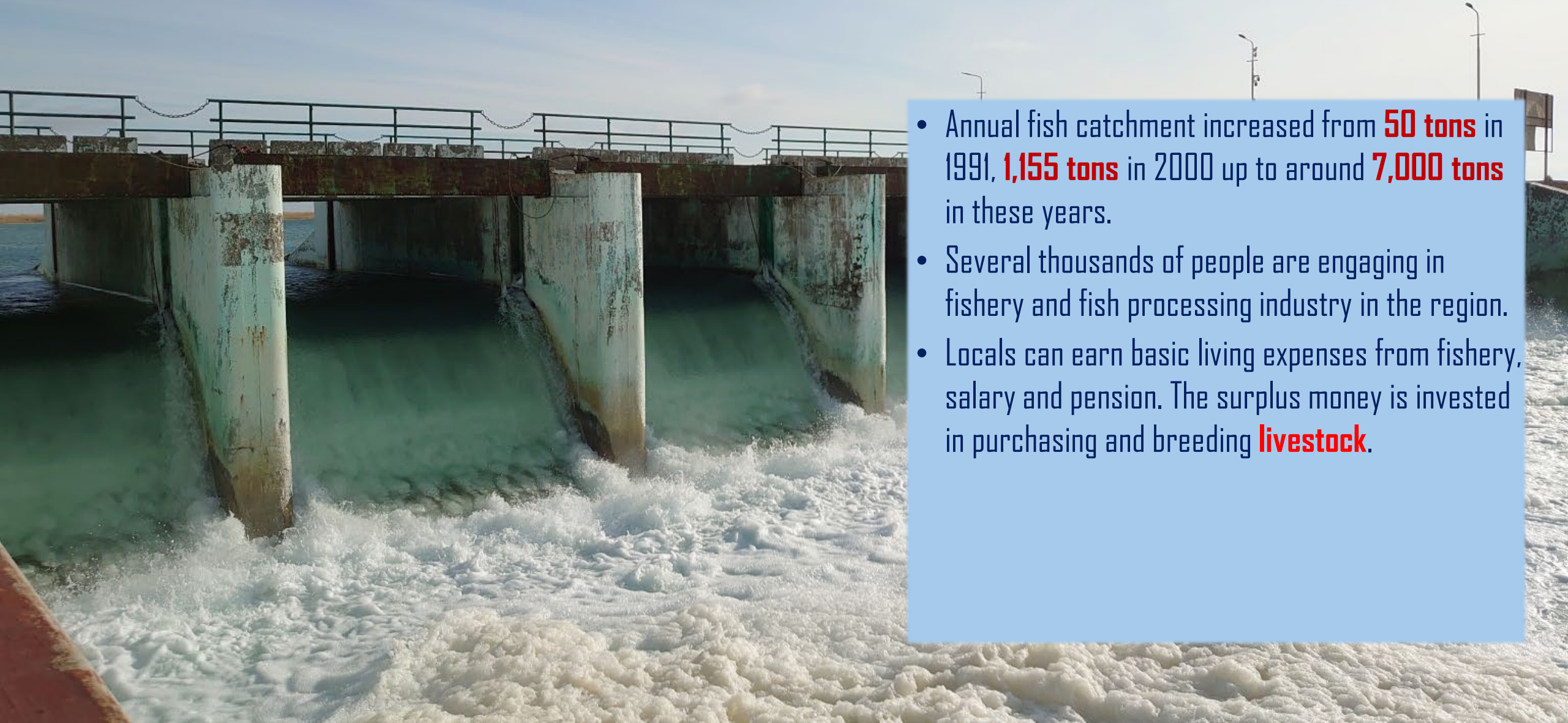
Research Focus

- Specialized Fields: Soviet History, Environmental History

Aral Sea Research Experience

- Start Year: 2005
- Fieldwork Experiences: 7 times in Kazakhstan and 2 in Uzbekistan, focusing on **the disaster recovery in the Aral Sea region**
- Joint fieldwork experiences with Professor N.V. Aladin in 2013, 2014, 2017, 2019 (in Kazakhstan) and 2015 (in Uzbekistan)

1. The role of Kok-Aral Dyke in the Disaster Recovery



- Annual fish catchment increased from **50 tons** in 1991, **1,155 tons** in 2000 up to around **7,000 tons** in these years.
- Several thousands of people are engaging in fishery and fish processing industry in the region.
- Locals can earn basic living expenses from fishery, salary and pension. The surplus money is invested in purchasing and breeding **livestock**.

Fishery & Fish Processing



2. Main Research Field: Akbasty Village

Location: 46°15' N, 60°05' E

Average Temperature: July +26 C, January -11 C

Annual Precipitation: 145 mm

Distance from Aralsk (District Center): 250 km

Administrative Area: Kulandy Rural Okrug, Aral District, Kyzylorda Province, Republic of Kazakhstan

Population: 501 people, 72 households (as of August 2017)

Industry: Animal husbandry and fishery

Livestock Numbers: 563 dairy cattle, 1,060 sheep, **1,818 horses, 2,049 camels** (as of June 2017); 846 dairy cattle, 1,157 sheep, **2,947 horses, 2,101 camels** (as of 1 January 2022, from zakon.kz)

3. Livestock breeding in Akbasty Village

Dairy cattle

- Rarely seen on the street in the village
- Lean with poor nutrition status
- Symbolical “property” for residents?

Sheep & goats

- Collective day grazing rotated by neighboring households
- Raising exclusively for meat production for daily consumption



Horses

- **Non-ideal condition for horse breeding**
due to lack of fresh drinking water
- Household-based semi-wild herds, headed by a breeding male, roaming around the village, although more cares necessary than camels
- Raised exclusively for meat production and selling with high price
- No use of milk for *kymys* (fermented horses' milk)



- Traditionally raised and crucially important livestock for disaster recovery
- Household-based semi-wild herds, headed by a breeding male, roaming around the village including on the former lakebed
- Only one or two calves kept in the enclosure next to owner's house, to which their mother regularly returns to the village to feed them
- Camel's meat, milk (for making fermented milk *shubat*) and wool utilized without waste
- Individual camels or meat being sold to get cash, when necessary



Camels

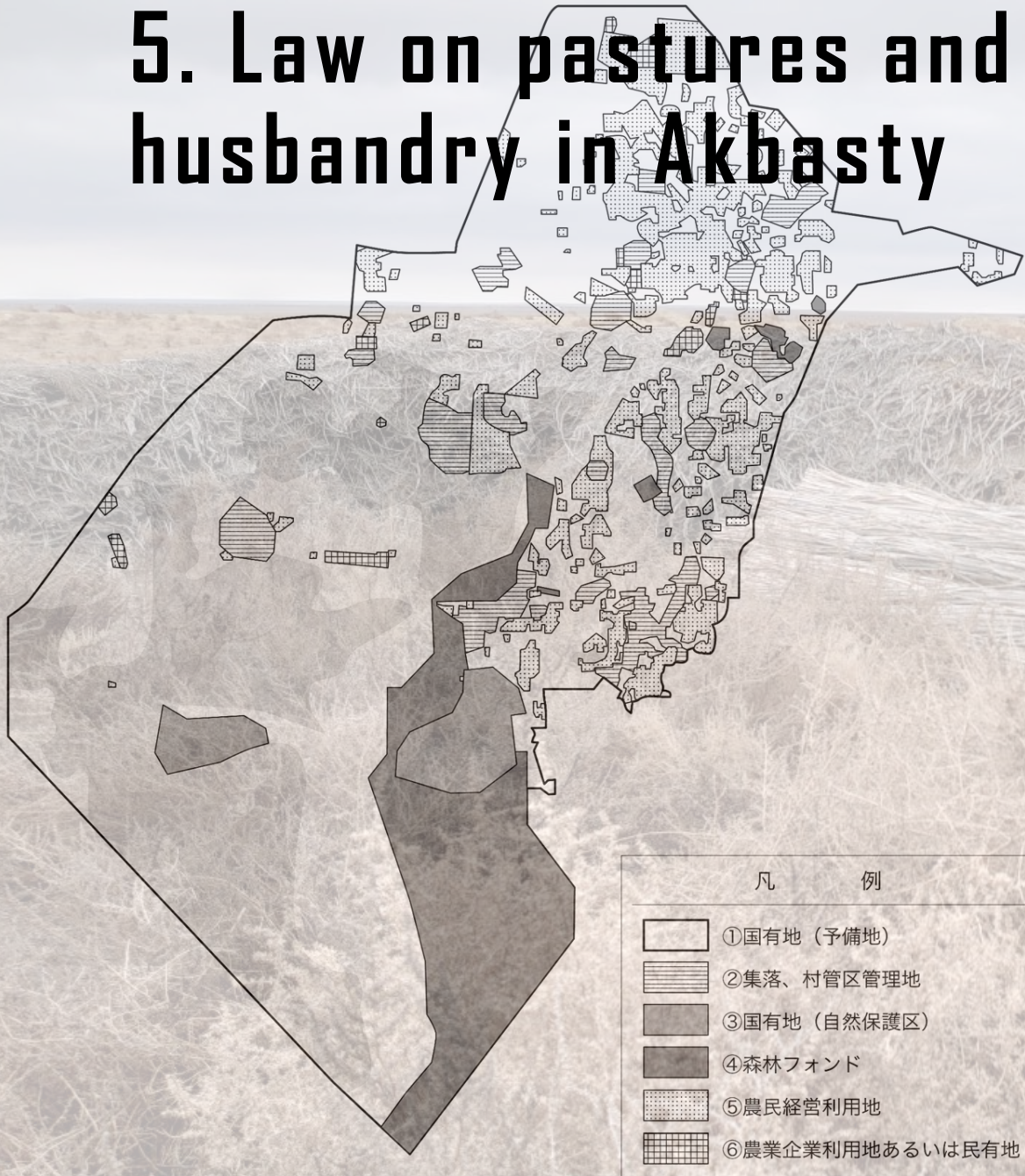
Increasing the number of camels is akin to saving money

4. Water and climatic factors in the animal husbandry



- **Persistent water shortage** in Akbasty, where drinking water has been taken only from a shallow well located 20 km from the village
- **Prevalence of camels** in the village capable of drinking even saline water
- **Water pipeline** up to Akbasty under construction or already laid?
- **Possible change of herd structure** from camels to horses if with abundant water
- **Negative impact of serious drought** in the western Kazakhstan in 2021 upon animal husbandry in Akbasty

5. Law on pastures and the future of the animal husbandry in Akbasty



- National “Law on pastures” adopted in February 2017
- Kazakhstan’s policy line to develop *fermerstvo* in animal husbandry
- Mandatory formulation and publication of “Grazing Land Management and Utilization Plan” by rural *okrug* and district administration
- Gradual shift from individual ownership towards **small-scale entrepreneurship** of the livestock sector
- **More effective use of remote grazing lands is necessary**, especially when *jut* or drought occur

Conclusion: what should be done?



Supports are necessary that aligns with their real needs to contribute to the sustainable development of the socio-economic conditions in the Aral Sea region. This relates to livestock farming and sanitation conditions (bathing facilities are lacking in Akbasty) as well as fishery and fish processing industry, for which robust supports have been provided.

Thank you very much for attention!!

