

BOBP/REP/72

**SRI LANKA/FAO NATIONAL WORKSHOP
ON DEVELOPMENT OF
COMMUNITY-BASED
FISHERY MANAGEMENT**



Report and Proceedings of the

**SRI LANKA/FAO NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERY MANAGEMENT**

Colombo, 3-5 October 1994

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document contains the report and proceedings of a National Workshop on Development of Community-Based Fishery Management. It was organized by the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (DFARD), Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (MFARD), in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 3-5 October 1994, in co-operation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Funds for the Workshop were made available through the Japan Trust Fund GCP/RAS/138/JPN. Publication of the document was facilitated by the Bay of Bengal Programme.

The document comprises the final report of the Workshop as approved by the participants; a list of participants, the prospectus and agenda; and a list of documents followed by the papers presented at the Workshop.

Dr Masamichi Hotta, Senior Fishery Planning Officer, Fishery Policy and Planning Division, FAO Fisheries Department, served as technical secretary of the workshop. Technical editing was done by Dr Hotta along with Dr Anton R Atapattu, Director of the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development, Sri Lanka. Ms Mary J. Morris, Consultant, was Editor-in-Chief.

The Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) is a multi-agency regional fisheries programme which covers seven countries around the Bay of Bengal— Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The Programme plays a catalytic and consultative role in developing integrated coastal fisheries management in the Bay of Bengal to help improve the conditions of small-scale fisherfolk communities in member countries. The BOBP is sponsored by the governments of Denmark, Japan, and United Kingdom, and the International Maritime Organization of the UN (IMO). The executing agency of BOBP is the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

ABSTRACT

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In Sri Lanka, traditional fisheries management has been implemented for many years in certain areas. The concept of participatory approaches in fisheries management where target beneficiaries are involved in the planning, decision-making and implementation of management measures is, therefore, not new in the country. The Government is keen to introduce and actively promote community-based management for the sustainable use of fisheries resources. The Workshop examined the possibilities of strengthening participatory approaches in fishery management and identified a number of conditions to be met, and made recommendations for the government and other institutions to follow.

FOREWORD

Sustainable resource management in general and fisheries management in particular is one of the hottest development topics of today, but it is not new to Sri Lanka. As this workshop held in October 1994 showed, self-regulatory management systems have evolved over the years in several places such as Chilaw, Puttalam district and Galle district. The workshop indicated that “community-based management” means collaborative management – the close co-operation between government authorities, resource users and the people.

Fisheries management cannot be imposed from above; it has to get internalized and evolve, with active local community participation. Otherwise we could end up with a management mechanism that can be likened to a “cat-and-mouse” relationship. Collaborative management is a softer approach and necessarily less punitive than a top-down approach, and encourages local community participation. One of the main reasons for the workshop was to promote the idea and the practice of participatory fisheries management and develop guidelines in this context. The workshop’s discussions and recommendations and the papers presented, which we are happy to publish, certainly furthered its objectives.

The workshop’s 75 participants spanned an entire gamut of professionals, managers, administrators, extensionists, scientists and industry representatives concerned with fisheries. No wonder discussions at the workshop, and the package of recommendations that resulted, reflect varied aspects of a complex subject. They should be regarded as a useful contribution to fisheries management knowledge in Sri Lanka.

Let me highlight just a few of the workshop’s recommendations. One of them related to effective mechanisms for monitoring, control and surveillance and law enforcement. This is essential – unless laws are enforced energetically, fisheries management will remain a concept rather than a practice. The best practice is possibly self-policing by resource users and the fishing community – this would be more cost-effective than any other kind of enforcement, and place the least burden on public funds. Education of fisherfolk, about fish stocks and potential yields, is equally vital. Even school-children in coastal communities should be made aware of the value of the environment, fisheries management and sustainable production.

The workshop made several valuable suggestions about strengthening data collection in fisheries. A system should be developed to analyse data on lagoon fisheries, and on catches of ornamental fish by species, areas and gear used. Future statistics should cover more fisheries and species, including effort and indicative prices. Duplication of data collection between the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development and NARA should be avoided.

The workshop urged stronger links between economic activities and fisheries management. Better coordination, for example, should be developed between banks and fisheries officials. Informal and formal credit sectors must be integrated to bring down the usurious interest rates charged by money lenders. There should be relocation programmes to transfer labour and capital to offshore fisheries.

The workshop further urged improved awareness-building among resource users, government authorities, the private sector and the general public about environmental

degradation of coastal ecosystems. It suggested an imaginative use of FADs as part of fisheries management schemes, and a continuing impact assessment of existing community-based management systems.

Highly useful for reference value would be the 21 papers presented at the workshop. They covered traditional fisheries; socio-economics; community-based fisheries management; coastal zone management; the environment; aquaculture; fishery resources: conflicts in small-scale fisheries; case-studies past and present. Together, these papers are not merely a valuable contribution to knowledge; they offer pointers for action.

We would like to compliment the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development in Sri Lanka, and in particular Dr Anton R. Atapattu, Director of the Department, for organizing and hosting this important workshop, and for giving the FAO an opportunity to be a part of it.

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COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

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