

Fishery Resource Allocation System in Chilika Lagoon, India and its Social Impacts to Fisherman Villages

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*Key Words: Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA), Relationship between fishermen and commission agents and mahajans,
Social conflicts between fishermen and non-fishermen*

1. BACKGROUND

Concepts of poverty on recent developmental strategies have evolved multiple aspects not only income index, but also social exclusion, vulnerability, etc. To achieve poverty reduction with care of multiple aspects on poverty, Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) was newly designed. SLA provides a way of thinking about the livelihoods of poor people in a context of vulnerability with an overlap between micro and macro level. SLA is considered to be effective measure to achieve poverty reduction, but there have been little documents to be done in the area of the fisheries so far.

2. PURPOSE

This thesis applied the concept of SLA to grasp pressing constraints and strengths to develop their capability in the case of fishery community in Chilika lagoon, India. The research was centered on the view of inter-relationship over fishery resource between fishermen and other stakeholders and its impacts on fisher families with the analysis of applied livelihood assets.

3. RESULTS OF FIELD SURVEY

The field survey revealed that economic condition of fisher families still kept poor (\$ 1,023) as opposed to the government's estimation (\$ 1,366). Although economic growth of fishery industries totally achieved to some extent in and around Chilika lagoon, it implied that the benefit from the growth could not spread into poor fishery communities.

On the basis of analysis of SLA, the poor livelihood condition of fishery communities is supposed to be due to fish price control by mahajans through commission agents and social conflicts between fishermen and non-fishermen. With a focus on fishery resource allocation system, 91% fishermen, in prawn season, sold their catch fish to commission agents who would sell the fish to mahajans at lower price than actual price. The high dependency of fish trade among them is mainly derived from loan finance for fishing gears, but it also found that fishermen, irrespective of non-loaned fishermen and loaned fishermen from commission agents tend to sell their catch fish to them, especially in prawn season. Commission agents made a significant role in supporting desirable needs for fishermen by way of fishery supports such as loan finance, sale of basic materials and fish trade on the boat near their fishing grounds, taking advantage of severe social conflicts between fishermen and non-fishermen, which created a need to stay on the boat near fishing grounds at all times for monitoring of illegal encroachments by others

4. DISCUSSIONS

With the analysis of applied SLA, expected livelihood strategies are recommended to revitalize cooperative societies to achieve poverty reduction and sound fishery resource management. Past attempts toward self-development by the societies and strengthening of existing community-based monitoring system will be effective measure. In this context, SIFFS activities known as successful achievement for revitalization of fishery cooperative societies in south India will become a good model to develop their activities in Chilika lagoon. Moreover, redesigns of existing fishery lease system such as redistribution of fishery lease sources through only cooperative societies, modification of lease license fee system and strengthening of monitoring system for illegal fishery activities are imperative factor to develop their capability for better livelihoods.