
Successes and failures of inland fisheries management in Ridiyagama Reservoir in Ambalantota, Sri Lanka

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Inland fishery is a common pool which is potentially subject to resource degradation if over-exploited. Therefore, a proper resource management is essential for its sustainable resource use and development. Community Based Organizations (CBO) in terms of participatory approach is formed within the village communities to address the management problems. Primary purpose of this research was to examine the successes and failures of Ridiyagama CBO when managing inland fisheries in Ridiyagama reservoir, Ambalantota. This study specifically investigated the fisher-folk perceptions towards the fishery resource status in Ridiyagama reservoir while examining the role of existing CBO for a sustainable fisheries management in the reservoir. Following an interview based approach, a convenience sample of 38 fishermen was selected and relevant information were gathered using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using SPSS 13.0 software by performing descriptive analysis and non-parametric statistics such as Wilcoxon signed rank test. According to the perceptions of the fisher-folk, fishery resource in Ridiyagama reservoir is in a declining stage. The CBO of Ridiyagama reservoir has been successful in stocking fingerlings, record keeping and maintaining sound relationship with the government in managing the inland fisheries. Nevertheless, it has failed to address the prevailing key issues of illegal fishing and encroachment due to improper implementation of Input and Output control mechanisms. Therefore, taking actions to minimize the functional weaknesses of Ridiyagama CBO is of paramount importance to uplift the sustainable management of Ridiyagama inland fisheries.

Key words: Community based organizations, illegal fishing, inland fisheries, input and output control, Ridiyagama reservoir

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