



Development of Recreational Fishing Industry in Sri Lanka

A.J. Jayasekara*

Department of Economics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

Abstract

As a developing country Sri Lanka can enhance the Gross Domestic Production in fisheries sector by developing the recreational fishing as a popular activity with significant benefits to the economy. Even though Sri Lanka is a beautiful island, when it comes to recreational fishing, still lack knowledge about this amazing profitable industry. The objective of the study is to analyze the Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats (SWOT) in recreational fishing industry in Sri Lanka and to establish a research platform for its economic development. The study area Negambo, is the only place where recreational fishing is conducted in both inland and coastal marine areas. Primary data were collected through face to face structured interviews. The convenience sampling technique was used to select thirty-two respondents. SWOT analysis was used for analysis of data. According to the results the industry is identified as one of the most popular leisure activities among locals and foreigners with social benefits, employment generation, poverty reduction and expansion in economic activities with multibillion-rupee industry. Lack of indigenous expertise, technologies, trained personnel and comprehensive policies, water pollution that adversely affects the quality and the quantity of the fish stocks and barriers to fish migration can be considered as weaknesses. Hydrological and biological values, social and cultural values could be established to develop a platform for conservation education, scientific research and employment generation, are identified as opportunities. High cost of fishing equipment, land leasing and ownership issues and social conflicts on natural resource use, are identified as threats. To make necessary harvest estimates and socio-economic information for the development, annual surveys and action-plans should be arranged. This information would support for ecosystem conservation and enhancement, promotion of public access to quality opportunities and discovery of advanced innovative solutions to challenges provided with scientifically sound and trusted social, cultural, economic and ecological information, while the growing demand increases for sustainable development of recreational fishing.

Key words: recreational fishing, economy, social, environment, leisure

***Corresponding Author:** anne.jayasekara@yahoo.com