

**AN EVALUATION OF EXCITING INLAND FISH MARKETING SYSTEM
OF PERENNIAL TANKS IN NORTH CENTRAL PROVINCE IN SRI
LANKA**

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An attempt was made to study the institutional, political, cultural, economical and social behavior of the participants in fish marketing systems in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts.

The study revealed that the fish marketing was oligopolistic in nature. There were two different marketing systems, Anuradhapura, involvement of traders (Mudalalis) was so common, no traders were involved in Polonnaruwa where fishermen sell their catch directly to the retailers. Price was determined based on size and species of fish in Anuradhapura, though in Polonnaruwa there was no price determination based on size.

Fish co-operative society was the major organization of fishermen. However, the smooth functioning of the marketing system was constrained by factors related to political, institutional, economical, ecological, social, legal and production. The main weaknesses of the inland fish marketing system of North Central Province were identified as bad political interventions; institutional problems such as lack of easy credit facilities, inefficient follow up of stocking programs, poor research and extension activities, marketing problems such as lack of cold storage facilities, poor value addition and fluctuations or seasonality in production.

Proposed recommendations to overcome above problems were handing over of the management of the tank to the Ministry of Fisheries to conduct better stocking programs with proper follow up, improving research and extension of fishery sector and infrastructure, proper implementation of regulations, encourage fishermen to build up strong fish co-operative societies and legal action to restrict un-authorized fishing. Important research areas were to find more palatable fish species, fish processing mainly on drying, salting, smoking, preparing fish meal from inedible fish and machines and equipments necessary for improved technologies. Training programs should be conducted for fishermen on fishing; financial management, cold storage facilities and other facilities through fish co-operative societies.

If a mechanism was identified to reduce the ill effects of such factors and implement above recommendations, fish industry could be geared to solve the problems such as unemployment, underemployment, malnutrition and low living standards of the people.

Key words: Structure conduct performance, Inland fish marketing system, Fish co-operative society