

**P R E F A C E**

Out of around 735 lakh metric tons of fish catch from all water resources of the world, Asia, Europe and North America contribute 40%, 32% and 7% respectively while 17% of the total catch is contributed by the rest of world. Japan, Soviet Russia and U.S.A. occupy the pioneer position.

India has abundant natural endowment, conventional wisdom and human skills in respect of intensive fish farming, but in spite of enormous potentials, much headway has not been made. The levels of production and productivity have not been adequate, there being a large gap between the potential and the actual yields. The new technology which seemed technically attractive has failed to produce substantial results in reality. India has made some progress in exploiting the demersal resources of the sea but the progress in inland fisheries and in tapping pelagic resources has been poor. The inland capture fisheries of the rivers and open estuaries are rather limited in their production potential.

In order to develop the culturable and semi derelict fishery resources the Government of India through "Central Board of Fisheries", has launched since 1980 the "World Bank Assisted Inland Fisheries Project" (WBAIFP) in 5 States namely West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh with the assistance of "Fish Farmers Development Agency" (FFDA) which is now covering 20 States and 2 Union Territories.

Fishery in India constitutes an important sector of the national economy. It contributes about 2.40% of the gross domestic product. The export of fish contributed Rs. 531.24 crores and India produces above 4% (sixth in rank) of the world fish production.

The contribution of the fisheries sector to the net domestic product has gone up from Rs. 886 crores in 1980 to Rs. 2648 crores in 1988-89.

The State of West Bengal occupies pioneering place in the country in the field of fish seed and adult fish production. The inland fish production increased steadily from 3.40 lakh tons in 1980-81 to 4.70 lakh tons in 1988-89. The Government of West Bengal has initiated steps for intensifying fish culture by implementing "WBAIFP" with the assistance of IFDA. Accordingly the Government of West Bengal selected the district of West Dinajpur, a backward district, with the objective to improve the economic condition of the district and thereby its people.

The district of West Dinajpur produces 4.8% of the total fish production in West Bengal from fresh water resources (1987-88) and it is expected that the production will increase to a considerable extent in the years to come. The district is rich in fishery resources viz., ponds, tanks and dighis and it is thickly interperse with rivers viz., Atrayee, Purnakhaha, Tungon, Nagore, Kulik, Sreemati, Gandak and others. Out of the total impounded water area resources of 34,910.43 acres (private ownership 29,990.67 acres and Government ownership 4919.76 acres) the culturable and semi derelict fishery resources of this district are 29275.49 acres of which private ownership is 26,229.86 acres and the Government ownership is 3045.63 acres.

In West Dinajpur district 31.52% of the impounded water area is derelict and semi derelict due to years of neglect. The "WBAIFP" has been put into operation since 1980 engaging a considerable numbers of people along with other fishery programmes (5% of the total workers population in the district) of the sixteen community development blocks related with the pisciculture of this district. A total of 10619.313 acres water area have been taken into consideration in the "WBAIFP" programme for the

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improved pisciculture from 1980-81 to 1987-88.

The principal constraints faced by the inland culture fisheries of West Dinajpur district are non-utilisation and under utilisation of readily available culturable waters. This is due to the lack of knowledge and ignorance of the fishermen community and dearth of finance for investment. Besides there are other problems that are a menace to the required development.

The unsatisfactory performance is attributed mainly to absence of rational management, judicious exploitation and utilisation of the resources. Negative socio-economic factors are annoying the cultivators at work.

This study attempts to make an appraisal of the role of pisciculture, specially the "WBAIFP" with a view to reviewing and examining critically the efficiency and degree of achievement of the "WBAIFP" as well as the overall position of the pisciculture of the district of West Dinajpur, and also assessing the impact of the project on the economic development of the district for the period 1980-81 to 1987-88.

Moreover the district of West Dinajpur has been divided into two parts namely, Dakshin Dinajpur and Uttar Dinajpur, since April 1992. The author had to face difficulties in obtaining the required information and statistical data owing to the lack of Administrative link between these two different districts. However the principles and procedures as are shown in the thesis in assessing the achievement of pisciculture activities in erstwhile west Dinajpur district would also be equally applicable in the assessment of the achievement of pisciculture activities in the two districts namely, Dakshin Dinajpur and Uttar Dinajpur.

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Economic information on the various aspects of fish culture have seldom appeared in literature and published critique on fish and fisheries of India is meagre though much research work has been done in the biological and marine sciences, it is not properly co-ordinated with the economic theory and management.

The present study is divided into the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Fisheries in West Bengal and West Dinajpur.
3. Measures considered for pisciculture in West Dinajpur district.
4. A study of the World Bank aided pisciculture.
5. A study of Demand and Supply constraints.
6. Marketing aspect.
7. Socio-Economic study of the fishermen, owners and farmers of West Dinajpur district.
8. Conclusion and Suggestions.

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