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Status of the Fishery in Mount Lavinia, Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Mount Lavina has become popular due to its unique ecological and recreational qualities which is a limited resource within the Colombo Metropolitan Area. But it also consists of a small fisher community. However the scale of this community is still unknown. Therefore this project was initiated to analyze and review the status of the fisher community in the area. The study was conducted for a 4 month period in weekly intervals. Sociological survey was conducted to assess the status of fishery while separate study conducted to identify the Bycatch species of beach seine fishery. According to the results, there were a total 160 fishermen and 60 boats. Four different mesh sizes were used and almost half of the fishermen used 6 mm size. The main targeted species were squids, *Caranx* spp., *Tuna* spp., rock fishes and lobsters which depend on the season and the type of the net. According to statistics, the daily salary ranged between Rs.500-15,000. Crew members were paid by the boat owner and it deepened on the amount of catch and fuel prices. For the non-working days crew members rely on other part time jobs. There were three traditional beach seines operated in the area only in specific seasons (September-January). Study identified 52 species caught in the beach seine fishery. Among them, 27 were Bycatch species. Most Bycatch species were puffers, sharks and rays by weight. Most of them were discarded while others were sold to dry fish markets. Moreover turtles and jellyfishes were recorded as non-fish Bycatch. The study is being continued as a long-term by-catch study to evaluate the intensity of the Bycatch in traditional fishery

Keywords: Bycatch, *Caranx* species, Beach seine, Sociology survey, Sri Lanka