

**PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES IN NORTHERN
PART OF BATTICALOA LAGOON**



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ABSTRACT

Nowadays popularity and demand for fish had increased substantially among the society. In Sri Lanka fish are highly available in water bodies such as lagoons. However data availability of status of fish production in Sri Lanka is limited. Batticaloa lagoon is the main potential area for the production of fish when compare with other lagoon bodies in Sri Lanka. Therefore, a study was conducted to assess the present status of fish production in Northern part of Batticaloa lagoon with the objectives of to quantify the total yield of Batticaloa Lagoon, to identify the fishing method and catch species in Northern part of Batticaloa Lagoon and to identify the seasonal maximum yield in Northern part of Batticaloa Lagoon.

This study was conducted in Northern part of Batticaloa lagoon of. A pre-tested structured questionnaire was used to collect the information. Stratified random sampling was used to select the fishers and a total number of 50 fishers were interviewed during the field investigation. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS 22.0 statistical software. The fish species were identified by visual observation.

The fishers of Batticaloa lagoon depended mainly on fishing for their livelihood. Majority of the fishers' main occupation (74%) was fishing and other as part-time job (26%). The fishers had good indigenous knowledge about fishing. September to March is the peak fishing season because of sea water is directly connected to the lagoon due to rain water. Tilapia (15.60%), cat fish (14.50%), herrings (14.33%) and gerres spp. (11.33%) types of fish are the highly caught by Batticaloa lagoon fishers and crabs (0.88%) are caught at low rate.

Among the fish crabs and prawn was the most expensive one and highly demanded. However the marketing facilities of the fish were low. A big proportion of the

collected fish sold at market and road side of Batticaloa area. The functions of fishery co-operative societies in Batticaloa were not satisfied by fishers. The level of extension services reached to the study area was very low. The main constraint in fish production threat was adverse climate. Other problems of the fishers were lack of equipment low fish population or fishing yield, weak selling prices for fish, problems in getting credit, low extension services, poverty and various physical affects. Market facilities, export facilities, extension services, credit facilities and community empowerment programs should be given to the fishers of Batticaloa lagoon to improve their income and living standard.

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