

# **Co-management in fisheries**

# Fisheries co-management

- Fisheries co-management can be defined as a partnership arrangement in which the local resource users (fisher folk), the government and other relevant stakeholders share the responsibility and the authority for the management of fisheries.
- Fishers should primarily have the right to participate in key decisions about various aspects of management.

- The focus in co-management is small-scale fishers because they contribute the major part of the fishery sector. Their contribution to local food security is significant.
- Further, they are weak because of poor financial conditions and their technical capabilities. Hence, some kind of government support, as envisaged in co-management, is needed for their social and economic securities.

# Goals of co-management

- **Sustainable management of fishery resources**
- **- Equity, empowerment and redistribution of power.**
- **- Better quality of life for coastal fishing communities.**
- **Major thrust is sustainable management of fishery resources through empowerment of resource users/fishing communities.**
- **Fisheries co-management of a local fishery resource has the mandates to resolve the issues of:**
- **- Scale of production in the light of sustainability**
- **- Kind of stakeholders to be involved depending on the nature of the resource.**
- **- Delegation of management functions on different issues.**
- **- Establishment of co-ordination mechanism among the stakeholders**

# Co-management and women

- Women should be a part of co-management because
  - - Women are often a part of the fisheries (Involved in preparing for fishing trips, artisanal fisheries, repairing nets, marketing and value addition)
  - - United community will facilitate better management. Women's role in social networking and keeping good relations will help this process.
  - - Women can create better awareness on resource conservation and sustainable fisheries among the children (of fisher folk) who will become a part of the co-management process at a later stage.

# Role of researches and extension organizations in co-management

- The research organizations should provide necessary technical guidance to the local community on scientific management of local fishery resources. They have to help the community in stock assessment and stock rehabilitation.
- They have to monitor the impacts of various activity carried out by the stakeholders on the system to suggest management strategies.
- Extension machinery should be geared up to provide necessary services in this regard.
- The extension machinery should provide a valuable service of sharing of information between the stakeholders and research organizations.
- Vital information on traditional knowledge, catches and catch composition should be effectively used by the research organizations for better management of the resources.

# Advantages of co-management

- - Sustainable utilization of local fishery resources
- - Conservation of local fisheries and their habitat.
- - Minimal social conflicts and maintain social cohesion.  
Responsibilities on compliance with rules and regulations and other management functions lies with the fishing community.
- - Can make maximum use of indigenous knowledge and expertise.
- - Sustainable income for the fishing community.

# Limitations of co-management

- - Only successful in communities with unity.
- - Involves enormous money and time on the part of the individuals of the community to participate.
- - Characteristics of particular local resources may pose lots of challenges in the management of resources (eg. fish migration patterns)