

Success Story of the Rupaibali Beel Fisheries Development in Assam

Project Name : Community Based Development & Management of Rupaibali Beel, Cachar, Assam.

- **Implementing Agency:** Assam Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd. Assam.
- **TPC:** Rs.33.712 lakh
- **NFDB assistance:** 80%
- **Project Location:** Rupaibali Beel, Cachar, Assam

Introduction:

The project at Rupaibali Beel, Cachar was sanctioned by NFDB, Hyderabad with an aim of enhancing fish production and productivity of the beel by involving fisher community in the development of wetland fisheries and generation of employment & livelihood security of poor fisher folk. The Rupaibali Beel was leased to the Society, M/s Chatla Anchalik Fishermen Association with an area of 92.00 Ha.

Objectives:

1. Enhancing fish production & productivity of flood plain wetland through cage/pen culture and supplementary stocking
2. Involving local community of fisher folk to enhance employment generation and providing livelihood security
3. Capacity building of the Community by availing training and awareness programs
4. Conservation of Flood plain wetland (Beel)
5. Dissemination of *in-situ* and *ex-situ* fish seed rearing technology through cages and pens

Achievement

1. **Capacity Building of the community:** The 3-days training program was organised for sensitizing and confidence building among the society members. The participants were benefited immensely in management & stock enhancement of Beel fisheries in a scientific way.
2. **Infrastructure development of Rupaibali Beel:**
 - The Beel was made ready for wetland fisheries development by clearing the area of 70093.20 sqm as macrophyte growth was hindering the productivity. The clearance of aquatic weeds resulted in enhancing of fish production of the Beel.
 - Rearing tank was constructed in 0.40 Ha area for raising fry to fingerling of cultured species. Total 15 floating GI cages with PVC drum (Cage dimension: 6m X 4m X 2m=48m³ with effective water volume of 36 m³) were installed in the beel for culturing of fish seed to stockable size for stocking.
 - 3 units of pen with an area of 0.60 Ha (0.20 Ha each) were installed for rearing the fish seed and reared up to 2-3 months for stocking in the Beel.
 - Fisher community was assisted with required inputs such as fish seed, feed, manures, fertilizers to achieve the targeted productivity scientifically.

- Apart from input assistance, society members were provided country boat for regular feeding/monitoring purpose and Three wheeler for transportation of harvested fish to markets

3. Harvest of Fish from Beel and Marketing:

The production from 15 cages was 5.25 MT with ABW 100 gm; fetched a gross income of Rs.4.199 lakh @Rs.80/- per kg of fingerlings.

Fingerlings of 1,82,400 nos. with average size of 10-15 cm were harvested from Rearing tanks and Pens and were released to Beel for enhancing fish production.

The project has increased the production level from existing 97kg/Ha to 650 kg/Ha and a gross income of Rs.45.50 lakh @ Rs.100/- was received by the fisher folk from the sale of fish.

Marketing network was also taken care as transportation facility was upgraded by introducing 3-wheeler fish transport vehicle. The Society members are able to sell directly their fish to the nearby market in live/fresh condition wiping out the middlemen involvement.



Before and After Weed Clearance of Rupaibali Beel for Wetland Development



Installation of Pens in Rupaibali Beel



Installation of Cages in Rupaibali Beel



Fingerling release in the Rupaibali Beel

Rupaibali Beel is an oxbow shaped elongated beel of 92 Ha, situated at Binnakandi Block at Cachar district of Assam. The Beel is having seasonal connection with the river Barak. There are two fishermen villages in the vicinity, Hazarigram mostly dominated by SC fisher community and Hatirhar village dominated by Maimal community. Their livelihood is solely dependent on the Beel fisheries. With the course of time, the Beel got infested with macrophytes and productivity was reduced to 94.14 kg/Ha which affected the income generation of the communities. Hence, This Beel was considered for Wetland Development by AFDC with the financial assistance of NFDB and lease was given (for 7 years) to M/s Chatla Anchalik Fishermen Association. The “Community Based Development & Management of Rupaibali Beel, Cachar, Assam” was sanctioned for an estimated amount of Rs.33.712 lakh with 80% of Central assistance in the FY 2018-19.

The Community was given hands on training for sensitising and confidence building for Wetland Development. The Beel was cleared by removing the weeds/macrophytes by involving the fisher community. Rearing Tank of an area of 0.40 Ha was constructed, 15 nos. of GI Cages (with effective water volume of 36 m³) were installed and also 3 units of Pen with an area of 0.60 Ha (0.20 Ha/Pen) were installed.

Once the Beel was made ready for stocking, in July, 2019, The fisher folk stocked 1.60 lakh of fish fry in the rearing tank, 2.40 lakh in Pens and 0.81 lakh/ cage with the input assistance (Fish seed, feed, fertilisers, manures) from AFDC.

After 3 months of rearing 1,82,400 nos. of fish fingerlings were harvested from the rearing tank and pen with survival rate of 45% and average size of 10-15 cm and the same was released in the Beel for enhancing the fish production. From Cages, a total of 5248.8 kg was harvested with 90-100 g average weight and was sold at fingerling stage.

The marketing of the fish was done by Bicycle before this NFDB project. Now the 3-wheeler Fish Van supplied to the society which is helping them in marketing in fresh/live condition from landing centre to the nearby market. This facility has helped them in curtailing the time consumed for transportation before and also 50% of the monetary

benefitted the traders as live fish fetches higher price. Now The community is culturing the fish and selling fish directly in the market without the involvement of middlemen and consumers are also getting fresh/live fish at lower price.

The project has benefited 51 nos. of fisher families associated with the society. The production from the Beel has increased to 650 kg/Ha from the earlier production level of 97 kg/Ha after intervention of the project. The gross income of Rs.45.50 lakh was achieved from the sale of fish @Rs.100/kg. The production from cage was 5248.8 kg which was sold at Rs.80/kg fingerling and achieved a gross income of Rs.4.199 lakh.



Country Boat for regular monitoring in Beel



Fish Transportation by 3-Wheeler

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