

A CASE STUDY ON WHAT TO BE SHARED EQUALLY TO MAKE A SUSTAINABLE REEF ASSOCIATED INCOME GENERATION

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Spiny Lobster Fishery (SLF) and Live Marine Ornamental Fish (LMF) capturing are well established coral reef associated export oriented industries supporting livelihood for the local community in south coast of Sri Lanka. High demand indicates threat to these organisms and lead to overexploitation. This case study was performed at Polhena village, Matara from 28th of February 2013 to 15th of February 2014, selecting Polhena coral reef associated fisher folk (48 fishermen) in order to show the current issues and trends related to SLF and LMF. Pre-tested semi structured questionnaire, formal and informal discussions and field observations were used during data collection period. Collected data set was statistically analyzed by using statistical software (MS-Excel and SPSS v.13.0). Results disclosed that majority (64%) of fisher folk has no idea about the effect of their fishing practices and target species to the ecological equilibrium of coral reef habitat. Most of the fisher folk (89%) are with the attitude that the reef conservation measures and practices might be done by the government or any other outside intervention. The other fact that 92% of the community in Polhena village believe, that the resource exploitation from Polhena reef is only for Polhena residents. According to the chi square test there was no significance with this situation with the age and the education level of the fisher folk ($\chi^2 < 5$, $p > 0.05$). Results also indicated that there were major socio-economic issues related to these industries, namely no fixed lower limit to the price system, not existing well-defined property right for fisher folk's properties, lack of savings and alternative livelihood for the off season. Findings suggest that these issues need to be addressed to share the responsibilities equally among all stakeholders to formulate local level fisheries resources management related to SLF and LMF.

Keywords: Coral reef, Live ornamental fish trade, Polhena, Spiny lobsters, Sri Lanka