

Ecosystem Approach for the Development of Fisheries in Sri Lanka: Current Status and future trends.

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Introduction

Importance of conservation and protection of the environment has been well identified for the sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture throughout the world.

During the recent past there has been an increasing concern of the society about the sustainability of fisheries and the environment.

According to United Nations Convention on Biodiversity, ecosystem approach is the management of ecosystems and natural habitats to meet human requirements of using natural resources while maintaining the biological richness and ecological processes necessary to sustain the composition, structure and function of the ecosystem.

It is a strategy for integrated management of land water and living resources that promote conservation and sustainable use of resources in an equitable manner.

The intention of ecosystem approach to Fisheries is to improve fisheries management to ensure sustainability of fisheries through conservation and protection of environment.

Concepts and Principles

Most of the concepts and principles of an ecosystem approach to fisheries are already contained in a number of codes and conventions directly or indirectly relevant to fisheries. These include the following:

- UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982
- FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of 1997
- Ramsar Convention of 1971
- Biodiversity Convention of 1992
- Jakarta Mandate of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity