

STATUS OF FISHERIES IN UNION OF MYANMAR

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PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES IN UNION OF MYANMAR (1996-97)

Myanmar is endowed with abundance of fishery resources. It commands a cost line of 2832 kilometers with a continental shelf area 225,000 square kilometers. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extend to seaward to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baseline. 8.2 millions hectares of inland water resource and about 0.5 million hectares of swamps along the coast replete with rich and diverse varieties of fish. The total fish production has been increasing with 1996-97 production at 0.85 millions metric tons made up of 0.22 and 0.63 million metric tons of fresh water and marine fisheries respectively. performance for the period 1986-87 to 1996-97 are as shown in **Appendix(I)**. The fishery resources and in particular, marine resources still remain under exploited with the maximum sustainable yields (MSY) being around 1.05 millions metric tons and current status of exploitation amount is only 0.61 million metric tons leaving a large potential for further development. The amount of export rose from 14254 metric tons in 1991-92 to 67400 metric tons in 1996-97. Details of fisheries exports for last six years are as shown in **Appendix (II)**.

As Myanmar marine Fisheries has been steadily developing and its production force still unmatched to its rich resources, over exploitation of resources has not been observed. The catch reports, landing statistics and frequent biomass surveys show the possibilities and capabilities for expansion of fishing capacities and efforts. It has been seen that the standing stock of over 441. Species of fish remained unchange over the years. Fisheries management is pursued by proper licensing, prescribing exploitable species, fishing method and gears, regulating closed season etc. Fishing ground of Myanmar is attached for reference.

Aquaculture played a minor role in fisheries industries up till 1989 due to unfavorable constraints. Only three hundred hectares of fish pond were establish at that time. However, due to encouragement and promotion by the State through the Law Relating to Aquaculture, the aquaculture industry expand by over thirty thousand hectares of fish pond at the end of 1995-96.

To keep the momentum the State has provided with inputs such as technology transfer, seeds and extension services. In addition to this the Department of Fisheries has been releasing fingerling into lakes reservoirs and open natural water to increase national fish inland production and to maintain a sound balance of flora and fauna. Distribution of fingerling by the Department of Fisheries increased from 19.8 million in 1991-92 to 88.0 millions in 1995-96.

Mangrove forest are an important buffer zone against natural destructive disasters. The Government of Union of Myanmar has been empowered by Forest Law (1992) to declare mangrove forests and protected forest for conservation process. Fishing within three hundred yards. Around mangrove areas are strictly prohibited. The coral reefs along the coast of Myanmar act as a buffer zone. They also stabilize the bottom sediments, control the local mean water level and the direction of water flow. There is no need to protect coral stock in Myanmar. As there is no coral mining yet.

Fisheries in Myanmar are divided into fresh water fisheries and marine fisheries. Fresh water fisheries are mainly composed of its fish culture fisheries, Feasible fisheries, open fisheries and reserved fisheries, where as marine fisheries are classified into, inshore fisheries and off shore fisheries. To conserve the juveniles fish and shrimps and to avoid conflict between the artisanal fisherman and the commercial fishermen, Rakine coast five miles from the shore line, for Ayeyarwaddy and Tanintharyi cost, ten miles from shore line trawlers are not allowed for fishing operation in those areas. Accordingly this allocation of fishing ground is entirely based on objectives of protecting our local fisheries. The Department of Fisheries gives fishing priority to local fishermen by permitting them to operate in all fishing ground. The water between the base line and coast are reserved exclusively for local fisherman and to strengthen the sustainability of small scale artisanal fisheries. The size and engine power of the fishing boat inshore areas are limited.

Department of Fisheries is playing major roles in fisheries management⁷ conducting acquisition and analysing of information, implementation of fishery policy and design and excersing of management measure and the continuous evaluation of result of management activities.

Department of Fisheries always strict to the management and conservation of aquatic resources through licensing surveillance and enforcement of existing fisheries laws as it main responsibilities. To render assistance and to support the efforts exerted by Department of Fisheries on fishery management tasks the government has promulgated four fisheries laws namely.

- Laws Relating to Fishing Rights of Foreign Fishing Vessels (1989).
- Myanma Marine Fisheries Law (1990)
- Fishing Law Relating to Aquaculture (1989)
- Fresh water Fisheries Law (1990)

The main salient features of these IENVS relating to environment are Reduction and eradicating of mortality caused by men apart from legal fishing. Preservation areas, habitats and fishing grounds. Protection of specific stocks and species. Exploitation of resources on rational sustainable basis. Inhibition of environment deterioration induced by the industry .

Sectors policies and the main Socio-economic objectives for fisheries sector are as follows:

- To increase all round production including conservation and effective utilization resources.
- To encourage the expansion of aquaculture both in marine and fresh water environment.
- To permit the private sector both local and foreign to utilize follow and rginland for aquaculture industry
- To increase private participation in in-shore and off-shore fishery and rapid expansion in aquaculture provided forceful momentum for increasing production.

In Myanmar since the fishery industry is still growing and with a huge potential, great diversity in aquatic resources, promission prospects, well defined disciplines and most of all a clean natural environmental problem in the field of Myanmar Fisheries.

Appendix I

Production of Fish

Particular	Production (MT)					
	1986-87	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Freshwater fisheries	144986	192668	214079	220211	226000	224236
Marine fisheries	540877	597658	602067	602883	606476	628450
Total	685863	791326	816146	823004	832476	852686

Appendix II

Export of Fish

Year	Export(MT)	Value (US\$ in million)
1991-92	14259	22.5
1992-93	28487	55.0
1993-94	23215	6804
1994-95	96740	120.6
1995-96 (P)	54360	113.7
1996-97	67400	163.1

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

FISHING GROUNDS OF MYANMAR

