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SUMMARIES OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Subject II

Fisheries

Rapporteur: Ramachandra Bhatta*

The fishing and aquaculture sector in India has seen major changes during the last one decade and these changes are having an impact on the people working with various sub-sectors. Although, there has been substantial increase in the production, income and employment generated in the sector with increasing international trade, the variability and vulnerability has also increased over the years. The sustainability of capture fish stocks is threatened with over-exploitation and environmental degradation. The potential threat to capture fisheries (inland and marine) has been offset by the increased production from the aquaculture. Some of the policy options to improve the living standards of the fishermen are presented below:

1. It is important to gain better understanding of the status of the marine fisheries exploitation before encouraging any further expansion of the fishing effort through subsidies and other forms of regulation.
2. Recognise the needs of the traditional and resource dependent communities in enforcing the management regulations and provide preferential access to local communities to harvest inshore resources.
3. Integrate fisheries with wider coastal area management and ensure the livelihood of fishermen in planning and development.
4. Better understanding of the consumption needs of the poor with a view to promoting their food security while encouraging the fish exports.

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