

Project Update: May 2011

In continuation to field survey, many activities have been carried out during April to June.

Works done:

1. Field/ Market survey: Many rivers in the state Arunachal Pradesh (AP), viz., river Siang at Sipu confluence to around 20 km above, river Subansiri at Daporijo, river Dikrong at Nirjuli, other minor streams have been surveyed to identify Mahseer fishes and their possible habitats. Keeping track of the earlier conservation campaign in NC Hills district of Assam, further visits were made two times during the period.

Tours completed	District	GPS data
River Simang confluence with river Siang, Boleng (AP)	East Siang	N 28°19'53.34" E 94°57'31.68" Alt. 239.94m
River Sipu confluence with river Siang, Alo (AP)	West Siang	
River Siang, Pasighat (AP)	East Siang	N 28°6'0.72" E 95°18'16.2" Alt. 166.02m
River Sipi confluence with river Subansiri, Daporijo (AP)	Upper Subansiri	N 28°04'11.64" E 94°09'46.26" Alt. 244.7m
River Subansiri beyond Dapo town (AP)	do	N 27°59'19.98" E 94°13'22.86" Alt. 229.5m
Dibarai Lake, Haflong (ASSAM)	NC Hills	N 25°09'54.6" E 93°0'53.7" Alt. 662.9m
Dehangi Market (ASSAM)	Do	
River Diyung (ASSAM)	Do	N 25°25'14.34" E 92°59'36.12" Alt. 112.04m
A good map would be prepared later		

2. Results: Popularization of the important Mahseer fishes among the general people is very urgent task. People mostly indiscriminately catch fishes from natural water bodies like rivers and streams. Sometimes few people go for destructive fishing using fish poison, small mesh nets, dynamiting, etc. In Arunachal Pradesh, wild harvest of fishes is prevalent, because of unsuitable landscape for pond construction. In such situation, there is pressure of consumer demand on the fish stock in wild. Indiscriminate and destructive fishing have been identified as the principal causes of Mahseer declination in nature.

During the field visits in different locations in Arunachal Pradesh, general people in group or singly have been discussed about different morphological features of the Jungha Mahseer. People have also been informed the prevailing threats from anthropogenic acts over the wild stock of this species. In various locations, about 30 (thirty) people have been discussed on the matter.

It has been found that the old age people do understand the conservation necessities rather than few youths. In that situation, the youths have been discussed about the prospects of entrepreneurship development in the Angling-Tourism sector considering the Angling qualities of the species. It is one of the sectors where travel and amusement of the tourists are centered on activities like sport fishing (angling), swimming, boating, rafting, etc. emphasizing sustainability and conservation of aquatic diversities along with economic gain to the home people. In sport fishing, the fishes are caught and released immediately after enjoying the catch. Thus, a single specimen readily provides economic benefits in multiple times. Such practice of fishery based ecotourism provides economic benefits through employment for local communities in the form of fishing guide, boat man, watch man, etc., as well as earning of revenues through sales of license to organizing agencies/ entrepreneurs. Very importantly, the angling based ecotourism seeks to foster ethical behaviours that protect and sustain fish population, provide political support for clean water and local conservation initiatives, promote a respect for nature and natural settings, and encourage a stewardship ethic. Increasing the number of tourists at a fishing destination can maximize these benefits if fishing is approached from ecotourism standpoint.

Having good response from the youths in different places in AP, the angling-tourism agencies in India have been contacted. One such agency, viz., Himalayan Outback, owned by Misty Dhillon has been keen to respond well on my proposal for a test drive for selecting angling itinerary in the state.

3. Conservation campaign: The earlier attempts of conservation campaign through display of banners were found not much affective. The banners displayed at different places in Dehangi were found missing after two weeks. It came to know that people have withdrawn the banners and took away.

So, a strategy was adopted to display such banners in the office premises of the Government Departments. In this connection, a discussion was made with the District Fishery Development Officer of Daporijo; who has strongly supported and allowed to fix a banner in his office chamber. In the last field survey, only two banners have been displayed in different such offices. **Such activity would be continued future.**

SPECIAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

A one day Workshop-cum-awareness programme on World Environment Day was performed in Cachar district in Association with the Centre for Environment and Development (CENAD) Silchar. The programme was attended by 58 members from 6 different Joint Forest Management Committees (JFM) in the district. Among the dignitaries, there were an Assistant Professor from the department of Ecology and Environmental Science of Assam University, a Research Officer from National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board (NAEDB) Shillong, a Forest Officer from Govt. Forest Department Assam, the president of CENAD, other members of CENAD, and me. I have took the opportunity to discuss among people about different bad impacts of using fish poison in water, and appealed to people to support my movement against such destructive fishing in the wild. General people have realized to save Mahseer fish population in the wild. The programme was very successful on the special day of WED 2011. A press release on the activities under the programme

was delivered to local news agencies on the very day, however, one news paper Dainik Jugasangha has published the news on 9th June. This is a grand success of the environmental awareness and evocation of people's participation in Nature conservation activity.

INTERESTINGLY the publication of the article entitled "NEED OF INITIATIVES TO DEVELOP MAHSEER-ANGLING-TOURISM IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH" in The Arunachal Times on 18th May 2011 <http://www.arunachaltimes.com/may11%2018.html#Need> has received very good response. People have started supporting my movement against FISH POISONING IN RIVERBODIES; email correspondences were made by many people with me.



DISPLAY OF CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN BANNER IN THE OFFICE CHAMBER OF DISRICT FISHERY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, DAPORIJO, ARUNACHAL PRADESH



DISPLAY OF CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN BANNER IN DEHANGI VILLAGE OF NC HILLS DISTRICT, ASSAM



DISPLAY OF CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN BANNER IN DEHANGI VILLAGE OF NC HILLS DISTRICT, ASSAM



WORKSHOP AND AWARENESS ON WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY IN CACHAR DISTRICT, ASSAM



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