

**Socio-Economic Appraisal of Culture Based Fishermen:
Case Study in West Bengal**

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ABSTRACT There exists a great deal of direct and indirect employment potential associated with inland wetlands of our country. However this can be implemented only when these are well organised and managed through effective participation of relevant primary and secondary stakeholders. Fishermen constitute the primary stakeholder group on whose capacity and disposition to toil and labour depends the prospect of fishing industry considerably. Their unique efforts in providing night time labour, source of traditional know-how and sense about the quality of pond water and soil are extremely important for its sustainability. Without perceptible improvement in their socio-economic condition, inland fishery development itself will be at stake. Disparate living standard, differential access to income earning capacity and other amenities are likely to generate discontent among fishermen and weaken their motivation to participation in fishing activity. Case study in Burdwan district in West Bengal indicate the generally divergent and poor standard of fishermen in terms of access to basic amenities of life. Ameliorative measures like health insurance, better training and credit facilities, provision of easy access to input, reclamation of hitherto unused wetlands and need based public grants are some of the means that can prevent exodus from the fishing occupation.