

Fish Culture versus Capture Fishery

A question is often asked, "What is the position of fish culture in the face of capture fishery from natural sources?" It should be emphasized that fish culture has a definite place and importance of its own. Even for places where a capture fishery exists, the need for fish culture is felt when, (i) supplies of fish is short, (ii) cost of transportation of fish from the site of landing to the market makes fish too expensive for the common man, and (iii) there is a demand in the market of fish of a desired species, but it is either not available from wild sources or available in too scant a quantity. The main advantage that gives fish culture its unique place is the fact that pond-raised fish are of a desired species, of a known quality and of a known number. These fish are under complete control and can be supplied to the market taking advantage of the demands there, at any time. Culture of fish alone can help regulate price line of this commodity in the market. Fish culture of "exotic" or "luxury food" category of fish served in expensive restaurants can be more rewarding in return. Additional advantages of fish culture include : (i) land that cannot be economically exploited for any other use (such as; sandy and marshy grounds, land too poor or too difficult to drain for agricultural use), can be of economic value if used as fish ponds. (ii) land that has run to poor condition after repeated agriculture crops, can often be reclaimed if used for fish farming for some years, (iii) an unhealthy water body such as a swamp lying waste can be turned into an aesthetic and hygienic pond that will give food in addition, (iv) fields that retain water even after paddy is harvested can be profitably used for a supplementary crop of fish in the off-season (paddy-cum-fish culture), (v) Many by-products and wastes from home and industry, and condemned food stuffs can be converted into human food if fishes are raised on them (sewage-fed fish culture), this will besides solve the problem of their disposal, and the threats of pollution from them.