

SAMVARDHAN SAMAJVIKAS SANSTHA

Annual report 2007 – 08

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Project office

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1. Registration and other details

- **Registration Number (Society):** Maha/165/2008 AKL
- **Registration Number (Trust):** F-12473-AKL

2. Brief Introduction and Rational

Wetlands are important entities provide goods and services to whole biosphere. These vital entities are disappearing from the face of earth rapidly. Immediate effect of this erosion is on wetland dependent people like fishermen. In order to conserve wetland resources people depend on such resources should be sensitized and help should be taken from them.

- **Brief Objectives:**

- 1 To prepare status report of the Adan river and associated water bodies and concerned people.
- 2 To strengthen sustainable livelihood through National Rural Employment Guaranty Scheme (NREGA) and Aquaculture.
- 3 To conserve riverine resources through the establishment of the Fresh Water Protected Areas.
- 4 Creating awareness regarding various issues of the environment.
- 5 To rejuvenate traditional Conflict resolution and Decision making systems

- **Hypothesis**

- 1 The root cause of the most of the today's social issues and group conflicts lies in the degradation of the natural resources and collapsing traditional village systems.
- 2 The solutions to local problems would best begin at the local level by the local stakeholders which can be facilitated by empowerment done by external agencies like NGOs.
- 3 Holistic approach can only be an important approach by which situation can be ameliorated. Holistic approach involves consideration of the as many as components of the wetland while intervention. The movement of the whole basin management is essential where various human, ecological, economic, cultural, human resources, political approaches are essential to save wetlands and to ensure sustainable life.

3. Decisions, Activities, Events, Developments in 2007-2008

3.1 Thrust area:

The major thematic area of the *SAMVARDHAN* is conservation of the Wetland resources and sustainable livelihood generation of the concerned people especially fishermen especially through aquaculture and wise implementation of National Rural Employment Guaranty Scheme (NREGA).

The main thrust area of this year was documentation and rapport building with the target society. It was resolved with consensus that, in order to devise long term working strategy in this area, proper documentation of the various aspects of the impact area is essential. In addition to work for the sustainable livelihood of the local people and their help in the conservation endeavour rapport building with them is essential. Thus, to understand the study area, to document the various aspects and rapport building with local people was considered an important work for this year.

3.2 Brief history

The *SAMVARDHAN* was established on 17 March 2008. Well before the establishment of the *SAMVARDHAN* president, secretary and other members of the society was actively involved in the various activities related to the aims and objectives of the *SAMVARDHAN*. In October 2007 a decision has been taken to register the *SAMVARDHAN* under the society's registration act 1860.

3.3 Geographical area:

Initially we have diverted our attention on the river Adan of the north eastern Godavari basin. River *Adan*, a principal tributary of the *Painganga* lies at Long $77^{\circ}.22'$ Lat $20^{\circ}.17'$ to long $78^{\circ}.21'$ Lat $19^{\circ}.9'$. The length of this river is 209.21 km. It rises in the *Washim* district of Maharashtra and flows through a curve, north, east and south, and meets *Penganga* River. The river *Arunavati* unites with the *Adan* at about 13 kilometres before it joins to *Penganga*. The valley of *Adan* is from 10 km to 22 km wide. The river ceases to flow in the summer, though pools are left in the latter part of its course.

Two dams have been built on Adan; one at its origin near Sonala village ($20^{\circ} 19' 11''$ N and $77^{\circ} 11' 52''$ E) and other near Karanja (Lad) city ($20^{\circ} 24' 57''$ N and $77^{\circ} 33' 53''$ E). The river is flows through scrubland and degraded type of dry deciduous forest with extensive agriculture.

The wetland dependent people of this area are BHOI, the fishermen. Bhoi are traditional fishermen depends on rivers and other lentic water bodies for fishes. They believe in Hindu god, although their deity is *Machhindarnath*. The *Machhindarnath* (*Machhi* means fish and *Nath* means master) was believed to found to a Bhoi fisherman in a river and grow at the Bhoi's home. *Machhindarnath* started *Navanath* tradition of worship. The main present day occupations of Bhoi includes fishing, selling of perched rice and gram, agriculture, labour, settled pastoralism, sand excavation and supply on donkey's back etc. The old occupations of this community were mainly fishing and palanquin bearer.

3.4 Activities

Following activities has been mainly carried out in this period. The activities are mainly includes developing knowledge about the stakeholders and their stakes.

- 1 **Data collection and Problem Identification:** Data collection about the various aspects of the river ADAN River was first priority for this year. These various aspects involve biodiversity and its present state, ongoing changes, people of the area, their issues, conflicts among various groups and its resolution, management options etc.
- 2 **Identification of the issues of the local people:** For the future positive interventions, issues of the local fishermen have been identified.
- 3 **Rapport Building:** Due to the identification of the problems a natural rapport has been built with the local people.
- 4 Field visits with scientist, activist and natural lovers organized in various villages and along the river. Notable scientist Prof. Madhav Gadgil, Center for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore visited to study area and one day discussion meeting has been arranged with the fishermen of Injori village.

3.5 Findings

The problems observed are divided into two broad types' viz. fish species depletion and habitat destruction. The main reasons found behind the species depletion are invasion of the cultured species, unfair way of the resource extraction, impediments in the migration root, forest fire effluent, habitat destruction, pollution etc. The main reasons found behind the habitat destruction are fragmentation of the stream ecosystem, unregulated sand mining, siltation, unchecked growth of hydrophytes, pollution, over use of river water for irrigation, hydrological alterations, deforestation etc.

Accordingly many suggestions are given based on the local people's perceptions and published literature, some of which includes need of more research and study, creating awareness, checking and eradication of the exotic species, checking deforestation, paying incentives/ compensation, renewing traditional conservation practices, capacity building of the local institutions, banning unfair removal of the resource, treatment of the sewage etc.

3.6 Information dissemination

There is lack of information about the Adan River in the public domain. Considering this lacuna, information about the river Adan associated people and associated lakes and tanks has been posted on the internet especially on the WIKIPEDIA.