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## Impacts of culture and traditions on riverine fisheries resources in Uttarakhand Himalayas, India

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Streams and rivers provide various socio-economic and ecological goods and services and are viewed as source of religious entity in most part of the world including India. About 40% of the households settled near the vicinity of rivers in mid-Himalayas depend on fish for food and hence fishing sustains huge population of western Himalayas. Fishing in nearby streams/rivers is observed to be one of the avenues for food and livelihood security after agriculture and animal husbandry especially during agriculture off-seasons, food-scarce periods, festivals and visits of guests, at least to part of the population. Culture and traditions are influencing fisheries resources and production over centuries in India, more particularly in Himalayan states. While culture and traditions help conservation of plant and animal resources globally, at times, some of the unique cultural traditions affect natural resources variously on which presently limited knowledge exists. Considering the necessity of analyzing culture and traditions considering its potential for both conservation and destruction field surveys and a review during 2005-2015 were made on the subject with the focus on the impacts of fish and aquatic resources and ecosystems. Religious pollution and ceremonial fishing during fishing festivals, locally known as Maund mela that are organized in medium-order (5-6<sup>th</sup>) rivers by local communities during last week of every June when monsoon sets-off and the tradition of fishing using 7-8 prominent gears and techniques during different seasons and locations affect fish biodiversity of the region significantly. The indigenous ideas, their scientific and resource management rationale and impacts associated with fishing festivals and fishing traditions are discussed in this paper.

## Biography

Muruganandam Muthiah is a Fulbright Visiting Scientist at Department of Natural Resource Management, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD, USA. He is a Founder Scientist of Fisheries/Aquatic Science Department at ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation (ICAR-IISWC), Dehradun. At IISWC, he is Faculty Member and In-Charge of Fisheries Science. He has over 25 years' experience on Watershed-Based Fisheries/Aquaculture Research and Training. He has completed/handling 17 research/demonstration projects and published over 100 research/technical papers including five books, two manuals, six technology brochures and two theses. He organized two national conferences besides much training/camps/field demonstrations to diverse stakeholders. He is an active member in over 16 professional societies. He is recipient of over 12 professional recognitions including three National Fellowships and Fulbright award. He was resource person in about 70 national/international training/extension programs. He has attended over 75 national/international conferences/symposia and many technical workshops/meetings and co-chaired few technical sessions. He also visited Auburn University, Alabama, USA as a Visiting Researcher.

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