



## Crab Council Funding<sup>1</sup> End-Year Progress Report 2014/15

<b>Association Name: Seafood Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka (SEASL)</b>		
<b>Funding Period:</b> April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015	<b>Reporting Period:</b> October 1, 2014- March 31, 2015	<b>Report Date:</b> submitted on May 06, 2015

Sustainability Criteria	Provide a Summary of the Work Performed During the Reporting Period	Progress Indicators	Projected Completion (Month, Year)
<b>Stock Status &amp; Data Collection</b> <i>(Example: Stocks Assessments, Harvest Control Strategies, Stock Rebuilding)</i>	<p><b>Population Biology Study (NARA):</b> A copy of the final Inception Report was submitted to SEASL by the Dr. Haputhanthri, Principal Scientist, Marine Resources Management Division of the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA) on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014. A statement of expenditure for the first quarter was also submitted in accordance with the contract signed between SEASL and NARA on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The SEASL released the second installment of funds to the NARA, in accordance with the disbursement plan in the contract. An amendment to the SEASL / NARA contract was drafted and signed to reflect the changes proposed by NARA to the implementation of the population biology, set out in the Inception Report. These included increasing the number of sampling locations from one to four; dispensing with the collection of independent fishery data using 'project gillnets' and SEASL undertaking to 'manage' the collection of field data (field samplers and field coordinator), supervised by NARA's research team. The contract amendment, including budgetary changes was signed by SEASL and NARA in December 2014.</p> <p>NARA commenced field operations, sampling BSC caught by northern fishermen from four locations in Jaffna District in November (9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>). Monthly data was collected in December (7<sup>th</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>NARA Final Inception Report</i></li> <li>✓ <i>NARA Financial Statement October 2014</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Contract Amendment</i></li> </ul>	December, 2015

<sup>1</sup> All activities described are funded by NFI CC, unless indicated otherwise.

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	<p>– 12<sup>th</sup>), January (19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>), February (8<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>) and March (15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>) 2015. More than 10,000 crabs have been measured, weighed and sexed from the four locations by NARA during the reporting period. Data analysis is ongoing. Preliminary results of the population study will be presented by NARA in the Interim Report due to be submitted in the last week of March 2015. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 1.2.4 Assessment of Stock Status / 1.1.1 Stock Status / 1.1.2 Reference Points / 3.3.4 Research Plans)</a></p>		
	<p><b>SEASL LB SP Stock Assessment:</b> The fourth and final LB SP assessment was conducted by SEASL’s field coordinator for the Northern Province in Mannar in March 2015. Length, weight and maturity data were collected from 2,080 female crabs from Pesalai on the 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2015. This completes the LB SP stock assessment for BSC fishing grounds in four districts – Puttalam (IOM) / Jaffna (NARA) / Kilinochchi (ILO) / Mannar (NFI) - for 2014 / 2015. Data analysis for all four districts will be completed before the end of June 2015. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 1.2.4 Assessment of Stock Status / 1.1.1 Stock Status / 1.1.2 Reference Points / 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities)</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Field data sheets for four districts</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Draft databases for four districts</i></li> </ul>	<p>June, 2015</p>
	<p><b>FIP Activities funded by IOM:</b> The International Organisation for Migration’s (IOM) assistance to the SLBSC fishery improvement project ‘<i>promoting consultative co-management of crab fishery resources in Kalpitiya DS Division in the Puttalam District of Sri Lanka in association with the Seafood Exporters’ Association of Sri Lanka’s (SEASL) Blue Swimming Crab Fishery Improvement Project</i>’ was concluded during the reporting period. A final report describing the activities successfully implemented in association with IOM’s Assisted Voluntary Return and Rehabilitation’s livelihoods support programme was submitted to the IOM project.</p> <p>The key activities successfully completed included the development of a length based spawning potential field methodology and data analysis protocols (with Dr. Jeremy Prince and Dr. Adrian Hordyck); length based spawning potential training with DFAR staff in Puttalam District; length based spawning potential assessment in Puttalam Lagoon; gillnet selectivity study in three fishing grounds; sustainable fishery management workshops with fishing communities in Puttalam Lagoon and the distribution of legal fishing gears to 32 vulnerable crab fishing households.</p> <p><b>Preliminary Results:</b> Field data describing the BSC fishery in Puttalam lagoon was collected from three fishing grounds – lagoon, estuary and sea – by fishing communities in Palakuda, Anawasala and Baththalangunduwa, between 7<sup>th</sup> August and 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Data entry was completed during the course of the field work. Preliminary data analysis indicates that the largest crab measured 214 mm and the heaviest crab weighed 395 g. The average size and weight of BSC decreased from the sea fishing grounds to the estuary fishing grounds. This is</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Back to Office Reports</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Preliminary LB SP Assessments</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Field database LB SP</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Field database gillnet selectivity</i></li> <li>✓ <i>IOM Final Report</i></li> </ul>	<p>December, 2014</p>

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	<p>consistent with the behaviour of BSC crabs. As crabs mature they move out of the lagoon, into the estuary and finally out to the sea to spawn. Field data was as sent each evening to Dr. Jeremy Prince and Dr. Adrian Hordyck, research scientists based at the Centre for Fish and Fisheries Research<sup>2</sup>, at the Murdoch University, Perth, Australia. Preliminary analysis of the data was undertaken assuming that the ratio of mortality (M) and growth (k) (M/k) = 1.5 and a theoretical maximum length (Linf) for female BSC = 170. The analyses assumed that size on maturity values for BSC for 50% maturity (L<sub>50</sub>) = 110mm and for 95% maturity (L<sub>95</sub>) = 135mm. The analysis estimated F/M = 1.03 and SPR = 0.46 (46%). When the principal parameters (<i>i.e.</i>, M/k, Linf, L<sub>50</sub> and L<sub>95</sub> were changed to look at different sensitivities, the estimates ranged from 0.20 to 0.46 (<i>i.e.</i>, 20% to 46%). Given the current level of knowledge about principle parameters that govern the results of calculating SPR - using the software application designed and developed by the Murdoch University - these estimates are, in the opinion of Dr. Hordyck, quite reasonable. Field data will be cleaned and analysed fully before the end of June 2015. Gillnet selectivity data will be analysed before the end of June 2015 (<a href="#">MSC Performance Indicators 1.2.4 Assessment of Stock Status / 1.1.1 Stock Status / 1.1.2 Reference Points / 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities</a>)</p>		
	<p><b>FIP Activities funded by ILO UN:</b> The ILO UN's LEED project's support for the SLBSC fishery improvement project, implemented by the Poonakary Fishermen's Cooperative Society Union (FCSU) commenced in October 2014, with technical assistance from the SEASL. Field activities commenced with meetings conducted with representatives of the Poonarkary FCSU, Mannar FCUS and the Jaffna FCSU. Field data to assess the spawning potential of the SLBSC crab fishery in the Palk Bay was collected between October 2014 and February 2015 by Irainamathanagar Fishermen's Cooperative Society.</p> <p><b>Preliminary Results:</b> The preliminary results of the based spawning potential analysis for the data collected in October 2014, estimate F/M=4.02 and SPR=0.31 (31%): for M/k=1.5 and Linf=170, while size on maturity values were L<sub>50</sub>=110mm and L<sub>95</sub>=135mm. When the principal parameters (<i>i.e.</i>,M/k, Linf, L<sub>50</sub> and L<sub>95</sub> were changed to look at different sensitivities, the estimates were F/M=4-5+ and SPR=0.20-0.35 (25% to 35%).</p> <p>In February a gillnet selectivity study was initiated with fishermen in Irainamathanagar fishing village, using 3½", 4½", 5" and 6" mesh gillnets.. The survey encountered problems including disruption of the fishing schedule by Sri Lankan trawlers and heavy rains in February and March which appear to have driven the crabs offshore into deeper waters. As a result the catch was not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>ILO UN Interim Report</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Field database – LN SP</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Field database gillnet selectivity</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Powerpoint Presentation - SLBSC FIP awareness district and Village workshop programme</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Project Proposal – Technical Assistance LB SP</i></li> <li>✓ <i>SLAFAR correspondence</i></li> </ul>	<p>Planned - March Actual - June, 2015</p>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Research-capabilities/Centre-for-Fish-and-Fisheries-Research/>

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	<p>has large as expected. Despite these constraints 15 fishing trips were successfully complete during the reporting period. The balance 3 fishing trips will be completed in April / May 2015. A preliminary analysis of the data was undertaken after the first six days fishing. A complete analysis of the field data will be undertaken in May 2015. Thirteen awareness programmes were successfully conducted with District Fishermen’s Cooperative Society Unions in Mannar and Kilinochchi and with village societies in Kilinochchi District during the reporting period. The balance programmes (Jaffna District; Mannar Villages; Jaffna villages) will be completed in April and May 2015.</p> <p>In December, the SEASL’s SLBSC FIP coordinator met with the National Programme Manager of the ILO’s LEED project to discuss further LEED project to co-finance in-country technical assistance from Dr. Jeremy Prince and Dr. Hordyck. In February the ILO LEED project confirmed co-financing. Dr. Prince and Dr. Hordyck will visit Sri Lanka in August 2015 year to share their technical expertise with researchers, officers and staff of the NARA, the DFAR and Sri Lankan universities. The sub project will be managed by SEASL; the contract agreement was signed on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2015. Preparations have been made with the Sri Lankan Association for Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to co-host a seminar and research programme with NARA and students and researchers from local universities. (<a href="#">MSC Performance Indicators 1.2.4 Assessment of Stock Status / 1.1.1 Stock Status / 1.1.2 Reference Points / 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities</a>)</p>		

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<b>Fisheries Governance</b> <i>(Example: Fisheries management planning)</i>	<b>Coordination with BOBLME Programme:</b> The project proposal drafted on behalf of the Director General, DFAR was formally submitted to the <b>Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem</b> , by the MFAR in October 2014. In November the DFAR invited the SEASL and officers and staff from NARA to discuss the implementation of the DFAR / BOBLME sub project, which will establish the current level of fishing effort – number of vessels, number and types of gear; fishing frequency – in the BSC fishery in four districts. Letters of Agreement between the BOBLME and the MFAR were exchanged in January 2015. However the sub project has yet to commence. <b>(MSC Performance Indicator 1.2.1 Harvest Strategy / 1.2.2 Harvest Control Rules &amp; Tools / 1.2.3 Harvest Strategy: Information &amp; Monitoring; 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities)</b>	✓ Final DFAR BPBLME Project Proposal	March, 2015
	<b>Rapid Fishing Effort Survey:</b> In November discussions were held with 12 fishermen’s cooperative societies (FCS) and the District FCSU to plan and implement a ‘rapid fishing effort’ survey for the Puttalam Lagoon BSC fishery. Individual societies were provided with formats to collect data on the number and type of fishermen engaged in the BSC fishery in Puttalam Lagoon, by landing centre. Field data collection commenced in December and was completed in January 2015. The data collected has been summarized. A full analysis of the data will be completed by the end of June 2015 and the results will be presented in the third Sri Lankan Blue Swimming Crab Newsletter. <b>(MSC Performance Indicator 1.2.1 Harvest Strategy / 1.2.2 Harvest Control Rules &amp; Tools / 1.2.3 Harvest Strategy: Information &amp; Monitoring; 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities)</b>	✓ Fishing effort data collection formats ✓ Database ✓ Draft data analysis	Quarterly
	<b>ILO funded Rapid Fishing Effort Survey:</b> In February the Poonarkary FCSU initiated a ‘rapid fishing effort’ survey in collaboration with the FCSU in Mannar and Jaffna districts. As in Puttalam District societies were provided with formats to collect data on the number and type of fishermen engaged in the BSC fishery in each district, by landing centre. Field data collection is ongoing. The data collected for Kilinochchi District has been summarized. A full analysis of the data will be completed by the end of June 2015 and the results will be presented in the third Sri Lankan Blue Swimming Crab Newsletter. <b>(MSC Performance Indicator 1.2.1 Harvest Strategy / 1.2.2 Harvest Control Rules &amp; Tools / 1.2.3 Harvest Strategy: Information &amp; Monitoring; 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities)</b>	✓	
	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> SLBSC National Steering Committee:</b> The 2 <sup>nd</sup> SLBSC National Steering Committee was held in Colombo on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2015. The national steering committee was attended by the members of the FIP <i>i.e.</i> , BSC fishing community representatives from Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar and Kalpitiya, as well representatives from the DFAR, NARA and seafood companies exporting SLBSC. The participants were presented with a progress report on the implementation of the SLBSC fishery improvement project 2014/15. External issues that need to be addressed to improve the SLBSC fishery notably Indian trawlers and Sri Lankan trawlers (see below) were then discussed with members of the FIP. Thereafter internal issues that need to be addressed to improve the SLBSC fishery were also discussed, such as hee use of monofilament nets to catch BSC;	✓ National Steering Committee Presentation ✓ Attendance List ✓ Photographs	ongoing

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	<p>harvesting, buying, processing immature crabs; the lack of management regulations specific to the BSC fishery and the unknown 'ecological' impacts on the fishery. A summary of the FIP actions planned by SEASL to improve the SLBSC fishery in 2015 was presented, together with other issues that need to be addressed. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities)</a></p>		
	<p><b>Engaging Crab Manufacturers (Processors):</b> In December the SLBSC fishery improvement project invited seven of the leading <b>SLBSC exporters</b> to Negombo, to update SLBSC exporters on the progress of the FIP. The meeting was also used as a platform to explore company's level of interest and potential business opportunities for sustainably sourced SLBSC. A logo for the SLSBC FIP was drafted in preparation for the meeting and the desirability of branding 'Sri Lankan blue swimming crab' products was discussed with the four companies that attended the meeting. Further discussions with seafood companies were held in March. The need to bring crab exporters together to improve the fishery, was emphasized. No formal agreement was reached as to the best means to achieve this, but two of the four companies Taprobane and Alpex agreed to work together to move this idea forwards next year. The SEASL will work toward formalizing seafood company involvement in the FIP during the course of 2015/2016, including raising finances locally to co-finance the FIP will be pursued in the second year of FIP implementation. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 3.1.2 Consultation, Roles &amp; Responsibilities; 3.1.4 Incentives for Sustainable Fishing)</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Email correspondence</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Invitation Letters</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Powerpoint presentation</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Participants List</i></li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<b>Ecosystem Impacts</b> <i>(Example: By catch, ETP species, habitat degradation)</i>	<p><b>MSC Eco-labelling Training Programme:</b> On the 17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 the SEASL and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) conducted a two day workshop on eco-labeling and sustainable fisheries at the Pegasus Reef Hotel in Wattala. The programme was conducted by Ms. Cassie Leisk, MSC Programme Officer for South and South East Asia. The first day's programme provided an overview of ecolabelling and MSC Certification. Day One was attended by 28 representatives of Sri Lankan seafood companies, officers and staff from DFAR and NARA and researchers and lecturers from three universities. The second day was exclusively for officers and staff DFAR and NARA and researchers and lecturers from three universities and focused on the application of the MSC's Risk Based Management Framework to the second principle of MSC's Fishery Standard – Ecological Impacts of the Fishery. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 3.1.4 Incentives for Sustainability; 2.1 Retained Bycatch; 2.2 Discarded Bycatch; 2.3 ETP Bycatch;)</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Invitation Letters</i></li> <li>✓ <i>MSC Powerpoint</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Participants List</i></li> </ul>	<p>March 2015</p>
	<p><b>Research on the ecological impacts of the BSC fishery:</b> A research plan has been developed by SEASL to enable university students and researchers to research the ecological impact of the BSC fishery using both MSC and MBS Seafood Watch protocols. The template and documents from MSC and MBA Seafood Watch have been shared with staff and students from the University of Jaffna, Wayamba University, Uva Wallasa University and Ocean University. The SEASL plans to initiate field research on the ecological impact of the BSC fishery by July 2015, with one or more universities. <a href="#">(MSC Performance Indicators 2.1 Retained Bycatch; 2.2 Discarded Bycatch; 2.3 ETP Bycatch)</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Research plan</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Email correspondence</i></li> </ul>	<p>ongoing</p>

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<b>Other</b> <i>(please provide details)</i>	<b>Social &amp; Economic Equity:</b> In October, December and again in March the SEASL and fishing community leaders met with the national and district level staff of international non government organisation, <a href="#">ZOA</a> <sup>3</sup> . ZOA has been working with fishing communities in Mannar / Kilinochchi / Jaffna for the past 5 years, under a European Union funded project. Despite the EU project coming to an end in December 2015, ZOA is committed to continuing to raise funds in support of improving / enhancing social and economic benefits generated by the exploitation of marine resources. ZOA's planned interventions could be utilised to assist the FIP in realising SFP Stage 3.4 level interventions <i>i.e.</i> , improving social and economic equity. Discussions between ZOA's senior technical adviser (Raga Alphonsus <a href="mailto:raga@zoasrilanka.org">raga@zoasrilanka.org</a> ) and the FIP will continue to explore ways in which ZOA can support the FIP to improve the social and economic equity of the SLBSC fishery. <i>(No MSC Performance Indicators)</i>	✓ Meeting Notes	Ongoing
	<b>FIP Management, Performance Monitoring &amp; Evaluation:</b> In October, the FIP facilitated an in-country field visit by two consultants from California Environmental Associates (James Giampetro and Jesse Marsh), who were part of an international team of experts collecting information about fishery improvement projects co-financed by America philanthropic organisations. During their visit to Sri Lanka the FIP organised meetings with the Director General (DFAR), the President (SEASL), Dr. Haputhanthri (NARA), as well as with representatives of ILO's LEED project in Kilinochchi and the fishermen cooperative society leaders in Poonakary. SEASL continues to provide updates and information regarding the FIP to the evaluation team. <i>(All MSC Performance Indicators)</i>	✓ <i>Email correspondence</i>	Ongoing
	<b>FIP Management, Performance Monitoring &amp; Evaluation:</b> In January the SEASL initiated dialogues (email and Skype) with the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch programme (Wendy Norden and Sam Wilding). These initial discussions were followed by face to face meetings with Sam and Wendy by Tim O'Reilly (Director, Taprobane Seafood Pvt Ltd) during the Boston Seafood Fair in March 2015. The aim of the FIP's to the MBA's Seafood Watch programme was to introduce the SLBSC fishery improvement project and explore ways in which the FIP could work with the programme to achieve accreditation under Seafood Watch's sustainable seafood labelling programme. The FIP will work in association with Seafood Watch over the course of the next year, with the initial aim of achieving a Yellow Label for SLBSC crab. <i>(MSC Performance Indicators 3.1.4 Incentives for Sustainability)</i>	✓ <i>Email correspondence</i>	Ongoing
	<b>FIP Management, Performance Monitoring &amp; Evaluation:</b> The FIP also initiated discussions with staff from FishWise (Elsie Tanadajaja and Ethan Lucas), a US based environmental watchdog that	✓ <i>Email correspondence</i>	Ongoing

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.zoa-international.com/content/sri-lanka>



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	lobbies and advocates for sustainably source seafood. The FIP will continue to collaborate with FishWise over the course of the next year, with aim of sourcing new market opportunities for sustainably sourced SLBSC crab. (MSC Performance Indicators 3.1.4 Incentives for Sustainability)		
	<b>FIP Management, Performance Monitoring &amp; Evaluation:</b> At the end of the reporting period the SEASL commenced updating the key documents describing the status of the SLBSC fishery improvement ( <i>i.e.</i> , the logic model, the development plan, annual implementation plan, performance monitoring and evaluation framework, budget forecast and key events / milestones). This process will be completed by the end of May 2015, where upon the documents will be uploaded on to the SEASL website. (MSC Performance Indicators 3.3.4 Management Performance Monitoring and Evaluatoin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Logic Model</li> <li>✓ Development Plan</li> <li>✓ Annual Plan</li> <li>✓ PM&amp;E Framework</li> <li>✓ Budget</li> <li>✓ Milestones</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>External Issues - Sri Lankan Trawlers:</b> Field visits to Puttalam between October and December 2014 focused on illegal fishing by 25 Sri Lankan trawlers. These visits included a programme of interviews and observations by a representative of a local environmental organisation (Environment Conservation Trust<sup>4</sup>), which was undertaken with a view to developing an environmental media campaign to stop trawling activities in the lagoon. The field visit and dialogues between BSC fishing communities and the ETC resulted in the production of a leaflet and a short video in Sinhala on the impacts of bottom trawling in Puttalam Lagoon.</p> <p>The subject of illegal fishing by Sri Lanka trawlers in Puttalam Lagoon was also discussed with senior researchers and staff at Verité Research (VR)<sup>5</sup>. VR proposed raising the issue in Parliament through a question to the House as well as submitting a petition to the Parliamentary Petitions Committee in the early part of 2015. Mechanized trawling is not a proscribed fishing method in Sri Lanka, however the DFAR claims not to issue licenses for mechanized trawl fishing gears. The operation of fishing gears without a fishing operations license is illegal under Section 3 of Fishing Operations Regulation of 1996. Further discussions with VR in January and February. Fishermen’s leaders from Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Kalpitiya met with Verité senior researchers and staff on 4<sup>th</sup> March, following the second SLBSC FIP National Steering Committee to plan and discuss the ideas further. It was agreed in these discussion that a petition would be drafted to the Parliamentary Petitions Committee and more than 1,000 signatures would be collected in early April 2015 from BSC fishing communities in three districts. The petition requests Parliament to take appropriate measures to stop the activities of Sri Lankan trawlers fishing in BSC fishing grounds. (No MSC Performance Indicators)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Sinhala leaflet against bottom trawling by Sri Lankan trawlers</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Sinhala video</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Proposed parliamentary amendment to the Fishery Act 1997</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Signature campaign signature list – Kalpitiya / Mannar / Jaffna</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Newspaper articles</i></li> </ul>	

<sup>4</sup> www.ectsrilanka.com

<sup>5</sup> www.veriteresearch.org/verite-research.cfm

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	<p><b>External Issues – Indian Trawlers:</b> In Mannar District, the BSC fishery improvement project’s discussions with fishing communities remained focused on the issues surrounding Indian trawlers fishing illegally on the Sri Lankan side of the Palk Bay. Discussions were held regarding the follow up to the petition submitted to the Attorney General’s office, by lawyers representing the Mannar and Jaffna District Fishermen’s Cooperative Society Unions. On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 three representatives of 30,000 northern fishermen filed a Writ of Mandamus in the Court of Appeal (CA) naming the Secretary of the Ministry of Home affairs and Fisheries; the Secretary, Fisheries Ministry, Northern Province; the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, the Director General, Sri Lanka Coast Guard and the Honourable Attorney General Attorney as Respondents. The case was called before a two judge bench in Court 107 of the High Court in Colombo on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Chandaka Jayasundere Attorney at Law with Chinthaka Fernando and Ms. Vishmi Fernando, instructed by K. Upendra Gunasekara Attorney represented northern fishermen’s leaders. The writ petition requested the Court of Appeal to consider whether the government’s current response to the Indian fishermen’s relentless fishing in Sri Lankan waters is legally apposite and or a sufficient deterrent likely dissuade Indian fishermen from fishing in Sri Lankan waters now or in the future?</p> <p>In brief the fishermen’s leaders’ lawyers argued that an appropriate legal response to illegal incursion into Sri Lankan waters by Indian fishing vessels can be found in the Fisheries (Regulation of Foreign Fishing Boats) Act No. 15 of 1979 read with the Department of Coast Guard Act No. 41 of 2009. Indian fishermen allegedly arrested for fishing illegally in Sri Lankan waters are in fact arrested and charged under section 45 of the Immigration and Emigration Act, for illegally entering Sri Lanka without a visa. The case was postponed until the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April at the request of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April. When the case was called and argued on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April the Court of Appeal dismissed the northern fishermen’s writ petition this afternoon, accepting the Attorney General (AG) office’s argument that the CA has no authority / jurisdiction to compel the AG’s office to prosecute Indian fishermen in accordance with a specific act or regulation. The AG’s argument ran along the lines of the AG must be free to decide the appropriate measures to be taken against Indian fishermen and any compulsion or order from the court would remove the AG’s discretionary powers regarding prosecution, which would be wrong. Unfortunately, the court agreed. The petitioners have 42 days within which to appeal to the Supreme Court. <b>(No MSC Performance Indicators)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Northern Fishermen’s Writ Petition to the Court of Appeal</li> <li>✓ Newspaper articles</li> </ul>	