

## Improved livelihoods through better fisheries management



A disappointing catch in Andhra Pradesh! Not much for the 20 fishers who pulled the net. Sadly, this is not an isolated incident. Globally, 28 million people are employed in capture fisheries industries and fish are significant in the diets of 2.6 billion people. Developing countries account for more than 70% of fish production for food, yet over 70% of world fisheries are fully or overexploited. Growing populations increase the pressure and reduce the per capita availability of fish. To contribute to poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability and improved food security, better fisheries management is urgently needed.

Help is at hand. The Fisheries Management Science Programme has developed a number of tools to help maintain the benefits from the world's valuable but

threatened fish resources. Across Africa and Asia training of trainers' courses for participants from 11 countries have increased local assessment and management capacity, generating enthusiasm for developing management plans. The tools are compiled in an FAO Fisheries Technical Paper (487) distributed globally, and in two complementary guides to their use. Effective application of FMSP tools as part of a good management plan may be expected to put fisheries on a sustainable track.

Back in Andhra Pradesh, the Fisheries Department is applying the guidelines in self-funded projects to develop better management plans that will help to ensure fisheries sustainability and support the livelihoods of these fishers and their families. Locally, as in the case of Andhra Pradesh, better management has started. Applied globally, the potential benefits are enormous.

- FMSP stock assessment tools and management guidelines were developed through more than 20 projects funded by DFID's Fisheries Management Science Programme from 1991 - 2005.
- In 2005/06 a manager's guide and stock assessment guide to the use of the tools were developed with partners from India, Bangladesh and the Caribbean (Project R8468).
- These tools have already been applied in more than 25 countries worldwide.
- Tools, guides and software are available at [www.fmsp.org.uk](http://www.fmsp.org.uk) (see particularly, 'Software', and projects R8360 and R8468).