

The Conflicting Pillars of Blue Growth -Aqua-Tourism or Aquaculture, the Quest over Biodiversity and Its Perpetrators

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Introduction

For any country its economy stands important and if it be the two major sources of its economic development conflicting with each other and hampering each other's growth, the country suffers to choose between the two- Aqua-Tourism and Aquaculture being discussed about. As far as Aqua-Tourism is concerned, it is the arena people seek for amidst their hectic schedules for refreshment and aquaculture be their major protein source for vital living, making it impossible to opt for one over other.

The article discusses about the impact of Aqua-Tourism on aquaculture, their conflicts and also about the various tactics that would help the country forward by rightly balancing the two and their impact upon Mother Earth.

The Impact

The massive influx of tourists, often to a relatively smaller area add on to their pollution level in literally many ways of which some are dumping of plastic wrappers and plastic carry bags, sunscreen bottles etc., disturb the natural flora and fauna with their pace of sustenance, make them more volatile to predation and decrease their numbers, affect their feeding and breeding habit, alter their physiology altogether and many more. The fishes on confronting visitors or may be by the noise of recreational boats , gets stressed up with an increase in their corticosteroid levels thus altering their homeostasis and health. They even showcase differential behaviour affecting their circadian rhythm, vertical and spatial distribution too. For fishes guided by sound to their preferred settlement, finds it difficult to locate and settle at appropriate places. The lack of people adhering to regulations even impairs fish reproduction and larval settlement.

The tourism infrastructure on the other side confounds to the cause by replacing the eco sensitive habitats like mangroves which are the major nesting grounds for many

endangered species of mammals, birds and fishes and increase the pollution level and alter the water quality with their disposition of chemical filled or sewage filled water discharge.

Apart, there are social issues concerned too. With the promotion of aqua tourism along coastlines and with the upcoming of star hotels and resorts, the poor are now neglected and restricted from their chance of enjoying the leisure of nature. Also in the name of tourism promotion, the traditional culture of the nation is being distorted as per ones convenience to attract foreign tourists. This is menial.

All together the impact that tourism has socially and environmentally are relevant and needs to have a resolution. Tourism impacting aquaculture is danger as it may deprive the nation of its important protein source. This is because tourism is anyway damaging the natural fish stock and moreover if it is starting to affect the cultured fishes too, then the country would suffer to meet the protein needs of its people. The poor will be the major sufferers as fish is the low cost highly proteinaceous diet they could have to ensure their healthy living.



The Conflicts

The aquaculture components like sea cages or even the mussel raft may interfere with the aesthetics of seascape. There might be even odoriferous compound release from the various aquaculture or processing facilities or even its constitution at the place affecting the tourism value. A collision is inevitable with both the sectors are clubbed together at the same place , where the recreational boat may collide with the aquaculture setup, resulting in damage to both sides. The recreational boat operators are deprived of access to safe anchorage areas and this situation becomes dreadful once the sea state worsens. Yet another

impact is that which is contributed by both sectors equally and affecting Mother Earth by depleting the water and soil quality, increasing pollution load and thereby affecting the biodiversity. Thus it is understood that it is the spatial conflict between the two industries that is impeding each other's growth as well as affecting Mother Earth. This has to be sought out at the earliest.



The Tactics

Both the sectors being strong pillars of Blue Growth can't be left to conflict over its existence. Thus to part their ways and to ensure sustenance, the following tactics have to be applied:

Proper government interventions are recommended in this stance to overcome the trouble. A major versioned plan with appropriate provisions to have tourism its part and aquaculture and capture stock its part is the need of the hour. Both the industries are conflicting by their nature as both require space at the same area for their thrive. With proper technological advents like the development of submersible sea cages can avoid the interference of culture objects with the aesthetic view of seascapes. The use of obstacle markers and restriction of rendering aquaculture license in eco-sensitive zones can prevent the issues of collision with culture properties and eco damage respectively. Timely and thorough water quality monitoring can ensure fish sustenance. Participation of local people in conservation strategies and management can resolve the issue of pollution and ecosystem destruction to a major extent. Proper zonation demarcating areas separately for aquaculture and tourism can prevent overlapping of the activities. It's even highly recommended to maintain a minimum distance from shore for aqua cultural installations. And the best of all

the solutions is to promote 'Aquiturismo', which involves aquaculture related tourism i.e. hosting tourists in aquaculture for recreational, educational and cultural activities.

Apart, thinking innovatively, the act of engaging local people to collect and clear off the marine plastic deposits and to make out of it innovative products like the one made by athletic brand Adidas in collaboration with the environmental organization Parley for the Oceans- The Running Shoe. Similarly sunglass company Norton Point made a pair of sunglasses out of recycled ocean plastic. Many more such things could be made out of marine plastic, thus helping to clear the sea of its waste that was choking the fishes and also provides a business opportunity for people if they devise something interesting out of it. The marine plastics collected thereby could also be used to build any sculptures on the seashore or may be used to make beautiful paintings to attract tourists without harming the environment and relieving them of its trash. Providing opportunities for visitors to feed the cultured fish without disturbing them, arranging restrictions on daily visitors number and avoiding visitors during the breeding season entirely can help. Hosting feel good music concerts on the shore can help boost fish survival as well as provide entertainment for the tourists. Avoiding recreational boats and restricting human interactions with fishes will help them grow to their full potential. Restricting litter and sewage flow along with ban on industries and hotels near coast can also help.



The Concluding Note

Economy over Biodiversity or Biodiversity over Economy is the quest. Both being vital for human sustenance, I would suggest mutualism whereby one benefitting the other and to be made sure that none affecting Mother Earth. The best of its ways to accomplish it is to make ways to remove the threat upon biodiversity and to generate income out of it i.e. to be precise follow 3R. The act of practising 3R would reduce the pollution load over the biome



and at the same time yield various value added products that could help economy grow with zero pollution.

Thus the motto of the universe should be to produce less non-biodegradables, use them to maximum possible potential, reuse them again and recycle to produce different useful value added products and never to throw them away affecting the nature and its creations, including we ourselves as we stand the terminal receptors of all ill hues, even though we are late to recognise this universal fact!

