

## **Impact of Corona Virus Disease 2019 on Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Sector with Special Reference to Trincomalee District in Sri Lanka**

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Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease spreaded rapidly across the borders creating pathetic health, economic and social impacts on each and every country in the world. In fact, aquaculture and inland fisheries is one of the industries which has been affected drastically. COVID-19 first time recorded in 2020 in Sri Lanka. This study aims to analyze the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic situation on aquaculture and inland fisheries sector in Trincomalee district focusing on the impacts on the inland capture fisheries and aquaculture community along with production dynamic during the period of 2019 and 2020. Mixed method and Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques have been employed as major methods of sampling during the data collection where a total of 155 individuals who are engaging in aquaculture and inland capture fisheries activities operated under the monitoring of National Aquaculture Development Authority in seven Divisional Secretariat divisions; Kuchchaveli, Morawewa, Trincomalee Town and Gravets, Thambalagamuwa, Kinniya, Muthur, Kanthale located in Trincomalee district. Pre-tested and structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data from respondents while secondary data were collected from Trincomalee National Aquaculture Development Authority and mainly descriptive analysis was applied by using Microsoft excel to compare the situation before and during COVID-19 in order to accomplish the objectives of the study. The results indicated that Trincomalee district inland fisheries total production was 9% lower in 2020 with compare to the 2019. Apart from that, the study also confirmed the livelihood, education, health & food security, well-being, and happiness of aquaculture and inland fisheries community have been severely affected by the COVID-19, especially during lockdown period. Hence, this study emphasizes the necessity of providing livelihood assistance to such affected household in order to enhance their living standard and need to provide Advice with business continuity planning and Advice on how to prevent infections while maintaining business operations.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Aquaculture; Inland fisheries; Livelihood; Socio-economic impacts