

# Documentation of Conventional Fishing Gears in Gohpur Sub-Division, Biswanath Assam

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## Introduction:

Since remote ages, like other parts of North East region of India, the indigenous people of Gohpur sub-division of Assam produces a considerable number of traditional tools in quantities some of which are used in traditional system of fishing. The paper deals about seventeen types of traditional fishing gears based on field surveys carried out during last three years. Habitat shrinkage, pollution, over exploitation ,the growing demand of rearing exotic fishes as well as modern fishing method lead to over exploitation of aquatic biodiversity of the region. The concept of sustainable development using indigenous technology in fisheries brought traditional system of fishing again to the forefront. Present study reveals that the new generation is hardly interested in such knowledge due to lack of awareness. The author feels that the knowledge especially those of indigenous system of fishing is still in use in several surveyed localities which are considered as eco-friendly and better option for sustainable livelihood. Information is available on traditional fishing gears from different parts of north east region but effort should be created for public interest. The paper suggests some urgent need of awareness for much ignored traditional fishing for conservation of regional biodiversity.

## Study Area:

Gohpur is a very popular historical place in Assam in terms of Indian freedom movement and archeology. It is a socio-culturally diversified area where various ethnic groups co-exist (Borah.M.M 2015) The Gohpur sub-division of Biswanath district of Assam is very rich in cultural diversity having different major ethnic groups. The use of different fishing gears by the indigenous people indicates the potential area of utilizing skill of talents in desired fields. Sustainability depends on rational utilization of local resources. The local inhabitants of Gohpur have been using various traditional fishing gears since time immemorial (Borah ,M.M.,S.kakati & A.Borkotoki 2010) A detail study may highlight various applications of this traditional system and could provide a scope of knowledge for developing indigenous economy and environmental security. Documentation of traditional knowledge has become an utmost priority as we are rapidly losing this knowledge base, passed from generation to generation verbally. (Borah M.M 2016) Information on use of various fishing gears by different people inhabiting in Gohpur sub-division has been included in this study.

Gohpur Sub-Division is situated in the North bank of river Brahmaputra between 26° 30' N and 27°02' N latitudes and 92°17' E and 93°43' E longitudes. It occupies an area of 603 sq. Km. with an elevation of 269 meter. It is bounded in the east by Lakhimpur district of Assam, on the west by Sonitpur district, on the north by Arunachal Pradesh and on the south by river Brahmaputra. The area extends from Hawajan to river Buroi. It covers 129 villages. The total population of Gohpur sub-division is 121,830 (2011).

## Methodology:

Field surveys were carried out from September,2019 to September,2022 in and around Gohpur sub-division. Different localities near rivers, *beels* ,wetlands and natural ponds were covered for sampling of data. Some localities worth mentioning are Kharoi river area, Mornoi river area , Buroi river area ,localities of Dhandi beel, Tatidubi and many natural water bodies of Gohpur Sub – Division. Collected samples of traditional fishing gears are exhibited in Zoology laboratory of Chaiduar college for awareness of students and local people.

## Result and discussion:

Study on different types of fishing gears used in the Gohpur sub-division has been carried out. Information was collected from different age groups of people. The survey team physically observed different traditional fishing gears on spot. The principle and effectiveness of capture, mode of operation of each fishing gears are recorded. The following table shows Assamese names of different traditional fishing gears, their types and kinds of captured fish species.

Sl. No.	Local Name	Type of Gear	Principle	Fishes
1.	<i>Chepa</i>	Trap	Bamboo traps of varied shape & sizes.	Small sizes of fishes upto 120cm length
2.	<i>Khoka</i>	Trap	Conical, bamboo made trap.	Small sizes of fishes upto 120cm length
3.	<i>Dingora</i>	Trap	Bamboo made, varied length.	Smaller to medium size of fish.
4.	<i>Dolonga</i>	Trap	Bamboo made,triangular shape.	Medium to large size of fish.
5.	<i>Hokoma</i>	Trap	Conical, bamboo made used in rivers	Fishes of various sizes.
6.	<i>Polo</i>	Impalling	Conical, bamboo made can catch upto 10ft. depth.	Large size fish.
7.	<i>Juluki</i>	Impalling	Conical, used in shallow water.	Smaller to medium size fishes.

8.	<i>Jokai</i>	Impalling	Triangular, bamboo made.	Small fishes.
9.	<i>Kol</i>	Impalling	Pointed, iron attached to bamboo.	Medium to large size fish.
10.	<i>Chaloni</i>	Lifting	Circular, different sizes.	Used in aquatic vegetation.
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Local Name</b>	<b>Type of Gear</b>	<b>Principle</b>	<b>Fishes</b>
11.	<i>Thela Jal</i>	Lifting	Triangular, different sizes.	Shallow water.
12.	<i>Tongi Jal</i>	Lifting	Various shape and sizes, shallow to deep water.	Different sizes of fishes.
13.	<i>Borosi</i>	Hook	Iron, different sizes, earth worm, larva, insect used as bait.	Varies with hook and bait.
14.	<i>Langi Jal</i>	Entangling gear	Different, length, nylon thread, set perpendicular.	Medium to large fish.
15.	<i>Khewali Jal</i>	Falling net	Circular shape, varied length.	Small to large size fish
16.	<i>Bandh</i>	Jumping fish	Bamboo made, used in river, stream & water current	Small to large size fish
17.	<i>Khaloi</i>	Basket	Bamboo made, various shape & size	For keeping fish

Table showing different fishing gears of Gohpur sub-division

Sustainable fishing aims at harvesting of fishes from natural habitat without harming its productivity as well as minimum impact on environment. Fishing should be encouraged to operate in indigenous technique which is eco-friendly. The traditional fishing gears and practices are gradually neglected by introducing modern technique which would ultimately result to the loss of the existing fish diversity. Through the findings of the present study and experience gained during the field investigations, the author feels that a holistic approach of planning is needed for conservation of fish diversity of Gohpur sub-division.

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