

Participatory Approach of River Conservation with Special Focus to Bagmati River, Nepal

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This study was conducted during June 2014 to April 2015 in Nepal in order to know the causes of pollution and to identify remedial measures. A stretch of Bagmati River from Gokarna to Minbhawan (15 km) was selected for the field survey. Five monitoring stations were established along both rural and urban areas of the Bagmati River to determine the quality of the river water. DO, BOD, COD, and turbidity were observed monthly. Turbidity and BOD were found to be decreasing and DO to be increasing. In addition, a semi-structured questionnaire was prepared to conduct a social survey. The study showed that the degradation of Bagmati River was due to dumping of solid wastes into the river, discharging wastewater into the river, encroachment of floodplain area, operation of an open market, and improper management of waste materials after cremation of dead bodies. The survey identified a cleanup operation called the Bagmati Mega Cleaning Campaign for River Conservation. Large numbers of volunteers from different organizations participated in the Mega Cleaning Campaign. The survey also uncovered major effects due to politics on Bagmati River. Although millions of Nepalese rupees have already been invested for the Mega Cleaning Campaign, the river is still polluted. There are many ways to approach river conservation but this study has shown that the participatory approach is the most appropriate one in the context of Nepal.