

EDITORIAL

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FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IS URGENTLY REQUIRED.

Fisheries has been given a high priority in the country's development plans. Fisheries and fishermen have been receiving special attention in the last two decades. During this period the Government of the Maldives has tried to manage the fishing industry by using various regulations. But it was as late as 1987 before we had a comprehensive fisheries law.

The Fisheries Laws of the Maldives passed by the Majlis in 1987 has stipulations for management as well as development. Even before this law came into being, the government had initiated some management procedures and started various development projects.

Fishing being the main occupation in the country, it is not surprising that anything that effects the economics of fisheries could affect the majority of the population of the country. Therefore the government takes a keen interest in the fisheries of the country.

As things stand today we have quite a few fisheries development projects in the implementation stage and many management problems are being discussed. Taking into consideration the very fast development in the fisheries industry, it has become necessary for us to start implementing management plans for the country's fisheries.

In this year of our country's 25th Independence Anniversary it should be our aim to plan for the future. To the year 2000 and beyond. It is not enough that we keep on working to tackle a problem here and a problem there. A comprehensive plan for fisheries development and management, for the short term and also for the long term has to be drawn up. This becomes so very essential when we know that the developed countries - our partners in development - are themselves quite busy designing world economic orders.

Our wish is to stay in the mainstream, but even for survival we have to start taking appropriate action right now.