



DISASTER RESILIENT FUTURES OF SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

Social-Ecological Systems and Commons approaches to Vulnerability to Viability Transitions in India's Kolleru Lake

A Collaborative Initiative between

Vulnerability To Viability (V2V) Global Partnership at the University of Waterloo and Disaster Resilience and Community Science project at the Thompson Rivers University

Venue: Eluru on Kolleru Lake, India; **Date:** 9-18 December 2024

Kolleru, the largest shallow freshwater lake in Asia and a Ramsar designated wetland, is under tremendous change. Severe encroachments, shifts from agriculture to aquaculture, salinity ingress and significant shifts in the social-ecological-political conditions and impacts of climate change are creating irreversible pressures on this once-thriving ecosystem. The urgency resulting from the situation warrants immediate attention from all stakeholders. Ecological changes in Kolleru system, under the influence of regional and national drivers, have impacted the social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental life and livelihoods of the communities in and around the Lake, especially the traditional small-scale fishers. These fishers face multiple vulnerabilities because of their lack of access to resources. Urgent innovations are critical to positively transforming the Kolleru human-environmental systems.

The Kolleru Lake Community Camp on Kolleru Lake explores the interdependences of the small-scale fishers whose livelihoods depend on its social-ecological system. The main focus of the Kolleru Lake Community Camp will be how we can facilitate the transition from these vulnerabilities to viability for the Kolleru fishers. The participants will work in three thematic groups, focusing on 1) Kolleru Lake as a complex social-ecological system; 2) the processes of commonisation and decommonisation in Kolleru; and 3) pathways for Vulnerability to Viability transitions in Kolleru.

The weeklong Kolleru Lake Community Camp brings together a selected group of up to 25 students and early-career researchers / professionals from academia, government, NGO, and coastal communities. It provides a creative platform to deliberate collaboratively and learn about concepts, approaches and methods helpful to develop knowledge, skills, experience and expertise in applying the concepts of social-ecological systems and commons to the notion of Vulnerability to Viability (V2V) transitions. The Kolleru Lake Community Camp includes a creative mix of both classroom teaching and field training right in the heart of India's largest freshwater lake – Kolleru. Participants will gain firsthand experience and creatively engage in furthering their understanding and knowledge of commons theory and practice as they apply to just and equitable V2V transitions, and with concepts and approaches that are novel, transdisciplinary and problem-oriented in nature.

All on-site Community Camp costs for registered participants are covered (this includes local accommodation, all meals, local transportation by bus and boat, village community visits, local tours, a engagements with local fishing communities, cultural program and all training costs). All participants are responsible for the costs of flights arriving at the Kolleru Lake Community Camp in advance of the start time (for local participants, travel needs will be met by the organizers). A certificate of participation is provided to all those that complete the course.

The Kolleru Lake Community Camp is part of the larger initiative of the Kolleru Social-Ecological Resilient Systems Collective (SERSC).

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