

## gupta-chandan-2017-01-16.mp4

**Chandan Gupta** [00:00:10] Well when we started, I thought that I'll be fishing, and my fishing costs will be covered by that company. But later I get into that, and things become a bit bigger broader, started venturing into new areas. So, nowadays, what I like most about the fishing is, releasing the fish.

**James Thull** [00:00:32] Releasing the fish? Yes.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:00:34] When someone else catches a fish, I just ask them, to please give me the fish, I will release. I love seeing all the fish swim in the river, or whatever waterbody it is. I love that part most.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:00:56] I believe release is more important than catching, nowadays. First. there are quite a few reasons. First is, when you catch a big fish. I mean, catching just once is not enough. That fight and the battle of wit and skill. It is just not enough to catch just once. First. Second is, we are enjoying the fishing, but what about our kids? What do we leave them, if we kill all the fish? Then what they will do? They will spend all their time with all the gadgets and everything so.

**James Thull** [00:01:26] Yeah.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:01:26] So. For the future generations is very important. Tourism is, healthy fish is the parameter of a healthy river. And healthy river is the parameter of a healthy ecosystem. So fishes are important. More than as a food. So I think, catch and release is very, very, very important.

**James Thull** [00:01:45] And you're, you've taught your daughter to fish and she enjoys it?

**Chandan Gupta** [00:01:48] She does.

**James Thull** [00:01:49] Very good.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:01:50] She wants to come more often, which I'm not able to bring her always, with the clients and everything. She is very much enjoying it.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:02:03] Fly tying equipments, so we manufacture fly tying equipments. Our company [unintelligible] and we export to 44 countries.

**James Thull** [00:02:11] Wow. Very nice.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:02:18] It's a small carp in Calcutta. And the very next fish I caught is a small trout in France. I actually learned fly fishing in France, because I went for a business trip. And I stayed there, almost for a year. And as, and my French partner taught me first the fly tying, second the fly fishing, in the Loire River.

**James Thull** [00:02:45] Ahh, so do you remember what kind of trout it was?

**Chandan Gupta** [00:02:46] It was a Brown. But very small.

**James Thull** [00:02:49] Yeah.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:02:49] The people ridiculed me by calling it a fly, not a fish.

**James Thull** [00:02:52] Ahh.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:02:59] The aggression of the trout. And, or the fly fishing, see the species we get here is mostly for the freshwater carps. They are heavy for us. They don't take flies. Second is trout and Masheer, mostly. The freshwater. Now Masheer fishing with the fly is coming up nowadays. But still, I mean, that a lot, a lot of research has to be done. Like their food habits, because Masheer is a very whimsical fish. And we know very little about it. But trout we know, if you are a fly fishing then trout is your fish. It is a time tested fish. So I take it as, if you are a fly fisherman then trout is your obvious choice.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:03:55] Any day, any day, any day. I get less the scope of fly fishing because in Calcutta we don't have a river, I mean we have Ganges River, but you can't go fly fishing there. For fly fishing we have to come to the mountains, which is not easy. It's a one night journey, so I get less, but any day fly fishing.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:04:20] Fly fishing is not just about the catching the fish. Because I can defer to fly fishing in three broad categories. First is the fly tying. Which I used to do a lot. And we, there was a time we used to sell flies. Partial flies in UK. This is one thing. Second is the casting. I mean, it gives enormous pleasure. A nice cast. That other kind of fisherman do not understand. Because there's such a parameter to just catching the fish. But only a fly fisherman understand when you make a perfect cast. It is, also gives the pleasure. Fishing is a, catching a fish is the next thing. So, there's nothing like fly fishing. And then understanding the hatch, matching the hatch. Understanding the river. So it is a wholesome experience.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:05:21] We, most of the, whatever, what we get here is some [unintelligible]. And then stone flies. And then nymphs, because in India, nymphs and the bigger nymphs works almost everywhere.

**James Thull** [00:05:38] Very nice.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:05:41] Those are the time tested flies. However, let me tell you that the fly fishing in India maybe practiced by 10, 15 people. So just very very less, so a lot of work has to be done, a lot of research has to be done.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:05:55] Yes, very much.

**James Thull** [00:06:03] Is it popular with with locals?

**Chandan Gupta** [00:06:05] It was always popular, actually. And it is becoming more popular. The, the more popular style is the carp fishing, with bait. But now, the other kind of fishing are very popular. Spinning. Lure fishing. Bait fishing. Saltwater fishing. Shore fishing. These things are coming up. But we don't get equipment, we don't get gear. So probably, this is one line of business, but there is more demand. And less supply.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:06:43] National parks are doing a great job protecting the wildlife. But, I'm not sure about the fish, though. Because, you are not supposed to fish in the sanctuaries, in the national parks. But we have seen often, that when you stop fishing in a particular river, the poaching rises. Because anglers are the keepers of the river. They protect the river. For their own sake, and also they understand the importance of the river,

the fish. But when you stop fishing, then all the local people, the villagers, they kill the fish, they massacre the fish. Only for the [unintelligible] purpose. I'm not sure about that. That the national parks are sanctuary, sanctuaries are doing great job of protecting the fish.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:07:32] I think so, I think so. Unless you are catching your fish to consume it. I think that most of the anglers are very concerned about the everyday damage we're making, in the rivers, for the water inhabitants. So yes, I believe so.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:08:04] The rules are nice, but imposing is a problem. Manpower is a problem. This is a huge problem in India. You ban fishing, or dynamiting, or poisoning in a particular river. But the river is like 500 kilometers long. Going through all the forest and the mountains and the villages. So we keep an eye. That where exactly someone is doing something. So it is very difficult to control. They are trained. But, well, they need to come to the fish to protect the fish. They cannot do it from their office. I think some, apart from governments, some non-government organizations, like All Indian Fishing Association, and Masheer Cross, from UK. They are doing a lot of good work to protect the Masheer and the other species, and also the river. They're trying to convince government and the big corporations to get involved. So, they're being so [unintelligible] on the positive side.

**James Thull** [00:09:09] Very good.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:09:17] There is some, some there are some issues, are beyond human control. Or an individual's control like climate change. Like, I cannot change climate. Or, 10 or 20 people like me cannot change climate. But, there are a few things we can do, because the damage we already made is huge. At whatever level we are doing, we cannot relax and say we are doing enough. Because the gap is huge. So, climate is definitely one issue. Population is an issue. Because people actually consume the fish. And you ask them to release the fish. For what? I mean, what is their benefit? So you need to involve them, for the community development. For the, some alternative livelihood. If you cannot do it, you just can't tell them not to eat fish. Because it's a cheap source of protein, for Indians. This is one thing. Another big concern in India is the dams. Almost all the rivers are having huge dams. Almost all the rivers are having huge dams, and that is affecting badly the breeding process of the fishes. Especially for the marshes, as we call it marsh had a high rate. So you could put a dam on the marsh at a high rate. They cannot go upstream for spawning. So that's a huge problem. This is one of the biggest reasons the number of fishes are decreasing day by day.

**James Thull** [00:11:01] Are the, are fish ladders something that they use here?

**Chandan Gupta** [00:11:01] All the new dams, there are fish ladders. But all the old dams, they are not having. And the cost of putting your fish ladder in an old dam is huge. It is almost same as having a new dam. So it is, it is almost impossible. So the new dams that [unintelligible]. However now, there are many organizations who are trying hard to stop all the new dams, building of the new dams. But whatever has been done, has been done. That brought a huge impact.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:11:45] Tourism is very important. Why it is important, because tourism only by sports, by fishing tourism, you can actually involve the locals. Otherwise, how are you, how you involving them? You want to fish, you go to the river, you fish, and you go back home in that evening. So how you are involving the locals? But only through those fishing tourism, you can involve the locals. You can give them a sustainable local employment, alternative livelihood. And then they may consider, stop poaching, otherwise

why, why should they? Unless they have some benefits. When they see that the fishes in the river, are more beneficial for them than the dead fish. Then, only then only they will be involved in protecting the fish. So it is very important. Fishing tourism is very important and I think fishing tourism is coming in India.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:12:47] I thought that people and anglers will accept catch and release without any argument. They didn't. The, a very small percentage of families actually believe in catch and release, and choose to practice the catch and release. And the rest, the big number, [unintelligible]. So I, I expected that, each and every angler will be interested about catch and release. But that number is still very low.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:13:33] Delta Project is, it is a small fishing village in the eastern coast of India. We are planning to adopt it. Because it is a fishing village and the only livelihood there is commercial fishing. So we are trying to involve those fishermen with sports fishing. For guiding us, and for providing us boots and everything. The local, we are talking with the human empowerment groups. To get involved with them making the foods for the guests and everything. So somehow we are involving very large number of the village people, the local community. For the sports fishing project. So, I mean this is a very big project, first. And very important project for all of us, because it can be a good model, and I believe, none ever done it. Anywhere. They involve one or two guys for the guiding and everything, but not in a big number. So it is a very important program. And why do we call it Delta, because it is actually a Delta, which is having two rivers, in the back. It's a small island and, seeing the form. So there is a scope of shore fishing, a scope of deep sea saltwater fishing. As well as the brackish water, the mangrove, the river fishing. So, there is hope for the anglers, for the tourists, the scope is enormous. And that, that, that will benefit their local community.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:15:19] Bozeman, Montana, for their trout. Then Mongolia for the Tiamen.

**Chandan Gupta** [00:15:36] The catch and release problem is a typical Indian problem. The Western world already started believing in it. I think more Indians should be involved in the catch and release, this is one thing. I mean, there is no scope of argument. You can argue for the sake of it, but catch and release is the future. If you want fishing to survive, then you have to practice catch and release. Period. This is one thing. Another thing is, involving the local community is very, very important, we know that. I mean it is, it is not rocket science. We all understand that for a sustainable sports fishing, involvement of local employment, a local community, is very important. But exactly what we are doing, I don't think much. So I also invited the researchers to come to the delta. See how we are working. And maybe when they go back, they spread the word. And this particular morning, they can follow in the different parts of the world. Especially, in the not so rich countries, but for [unintelligible] is a big problem. Like India. So if your angling can make some some other people happy, so there is nothing like that.

**James Thull** [00:16:48] So about long term economic gain, versus short term?

**Chandan Gupta** [00:16:51] That is absolutely important. I think that is one of the biggest problems, short sightedness. Very few people think about, think in the long term. Long term goal is very important, very important. But we human tend to think of only the short term goals.