

NATURAL AND ANTHROPOGENIC DETERMINANTS OF CICHLID COLONIZATION IN THE VICTORIA RESERVOIR.

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SUMMARY

Victoria is a recently impounded hydro-electric reservoir where exotic cichlids form the mainstay of the gill-net fishery. The progressive decline in cichlid yields since 1990 has made identification of factors influencing the colonization of cichlids in this reservoir a priority issue.

The main factors influencing colonization considered during this investigation could be categorised as natural and anthropogenic. Among natural factors morphometric and morpho-edaphic features of the reservoir, the limnology and rainfall pattern and the predator pressure have significant bearings on successful colonization. Anthropogenic activities such as the electricity demand, stocking procedure and fishing practices also play an important role. Strategic management taking into account the multiplicity of factors involved could help to establish a viable and self-sustaining cichlid fishery in this reservoir.