

Many things to many people

Maizan Hassan Maniku lived an accomplished and acclaimed life, serving his country well, as this biographical note shows

Maizan Hassan Maniku was a mentor, friend, colleague, academic, researcher, historian, environmentalist, artist, poet, writer, photographer, and many other things to many people of different walks of life and nationality. The list of his achievements and contributions to society and academia is far too long to note in brief. Hence, at this sad moment of his passing, let us note some of his major contributions to his country, the Maldives, and to the region, in the field of fisheries development, marine resource management and environmental conservation.

Maizan Hassan Maniku began his acclaimed career spanning over 20 years as a fisheries expert and marine scientist. From his appointment as a Fisheries Development Officer at the Ministry of Fisheries, Maldives in 1979, Hassan Maniku swiftly came to personify Maldivian fisheries both within the country and in the region. As Project Director for the First IDA/World Bank Fisheries Project (1979-1981) and other major fisheries development projects, he was instrumental in guiding the Maldivian fisheries industry through an accelerated phase of fleet mechanization, introduction of new fisheries and fishing technologies, socioeconomic development of fishing communities, and the development of post-harvest activities.

Hassan Maniku's work in Maldivian fisheries development included serving as

Project Director for major fisheries development and marine resource management projects, including the Maldives Fishwealth Exploitation Project (1982-1988), FAO/TCP Exploratory Tuna Fishing Survey (1983-1987), UNDP/FAO Reef Fish Research and Resources Survey (1986-1988), ICOD/Canada Collection and Identification of Economically Important Fish Species (1988-1990), ICOD/Canada Crown of Thorns Starfish Programme (1989-1991), ODA/GoM Rehabilitation of Degraded Reefs using Artificial Blocks (1990-1995), and the Tuna Stock Assessment under the Third IDA Fisheries Project (1992-1996).

During his lifetime, Hassan Maniku was the breathing force behind scientific research into the marine resource base of the Maldives. He was instrumental in establishing the Marine Research Centre and building its institutional and

human resource capacity for marine research and marine resources management. Hassan Maniku served as Head of the Marine Research Centre from its inception in 1984 until his early retirement in 1999. During this period, he was Director of Fisheries Research and Development (1989-1995) and Director-General of Fisheries Research and Development from 1995 to 1999.

Further, Hassan Maniku raised interest in, and awareness of, biodiversity and environmental conservation in the 1980s, culminating in the establishment of

regulatory frameworks and institutional arrangements for environmental management and conservation in the Maldives. He was a leading proponent of integrated reef resources management, and worked nationally and internationally to establish the framework and methodologies for such management. He was instrumental in the establishment of a coral reef monitoring network and unit, and strove to undertake and promote such joint work in the region.

Hassan Maniku was a strong proponent of community-based management of marine resources, and the utilization of indigenous knowledge in resource management structures. His research also looked into traditional and indigenous knowledge systems and community-based management practices in the Maldives, Asia and Africa.

Hassan Maniku's notable scientific and academic research included research into marine species and their habitats, collection and identification of flora and fauna in the Maldives, marine resource management, integrated reef resources management, tuna tagging studies and tuna management, environmental management of mangroves, corals and island ecosystems. He also began publication of the *Maldives Marine Research Bulletin* in 1994 and guided it through its formative years to become the established scientific journal it is today.

Hassan Maniku was honoured in 1990 by the Government of Maldives with the Presidential Award for contributions to the development of fisheries in the Maldives. Further, in 1994, he was presented with a Presidential Award recognizing his outstanding contribution to the establishment of marine research in the Maldives.

Born on 24 April 1953, Maizan Hassan Maniku completed his Bachelor of Science (Marine Zoology) degree at the University of Beirut. He completed his Diploma in Education (Teaching of Sciences in Secondary Schools) at the American University of Beirut. Hassan Maniku is survived by his wife, Mariyam, and three children. 3

This obituary has been written by Dr. Faathin Hameed (fish1@fishagri.gov.mv), Director, Fisheries Development and Extension Section, Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources, Republic of Maldives