

Giant Manta Ray, *Manta birostris* landed at Neendakara Fisheries Harbour

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Manta rays that belongs to the family Mobulidae occurs in tropical, sub-tropical and temperate waters of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. A large Giant manta ray, *Manta birostris* (Walbaum, 1792) was landed at Needakara Fisheries Harbour on 12.05.2015. The ray was 370 cm in length and weighed 1100 kg. The information collected from the fishermen indicated that it was incidentally caught in a 12 m OAL outboard (9.9 hp x 2 engines) gillnet unit. The drift gill net called *Ozhukkuvala* (70-80 mm mesh size, 200 m long) was operated at about 44 m depths. Along with the manta ray, *Coryphaena hippurus*, *Istiophorus platypterus*, *Scomberomorus commerson*, *Mobula* spp. and *Auxis thazard* were also landed. The ray was auctioned for ₹ 55,000. Globally, the population of *M. birostris* are reported to be declining due to overexploitation



Manta birostris landed at Neendakara Fisheries Harbour and IUCN declared the species as “Vulnerable” in its annual assessments (IUCN, 2014). However, this species is only rarely reported in fish landings along Indian coast.