

## AVAILABILITY OF SEEDS OF *SILLAGO SIHAMA* FOR FARMING ALONG SOUTH KANARA COAST

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### ABSTRACT

The availability of seeds of the Indian Sand Whiting (*Sillago sihama*) and the prospects of mariculture of this species on the edge of the South Kanara coast have been pointed out.

The South Kanara coast is bestowed with extensive estuarine areas which have immense potentiality for fish culture. Among the different species caught in the estuaries, the Indian Sand Whiting *Sillago sihama*, locally known as 'Kane' is important for its quality. However, not much attention has been paid for its full exploitation in this coast.

*Sillago sihama* is generally caught by gill net, drag net and cast net. The Gangulli estuary is particularly noted for the occurrence of this fish. It is caught almost throughout the year, more abundantly after the onset of monsoon rains in June. The young ones are also available in most parts of the year. Breeding is protracted (Radhakrishnan 1957), with intense spawning during the post-monsoon period, as is evident from the occurrence of fry and fingerlings in large numbers during October-January. The different size groups caught by *gorubale* (drag net) in the Gangulli estuary at this time of the year are shown in Fig. 1.



FIG. 1. The different size groups of *S. sihama* caught in the estuary.

The size range from 16 to 78 mm with the mode at 22, 32 and 62 mm (mid-point of 5-mm size group). These size groups are suitable for culture purpose. For biological investigations, 400 fingerlings weighing 45 g were transported by

road on 11th December 1973 from Gangulli to Mangalore, a distance of 100 Km (duration 3½ hours) in two conventional fish cans, each of 35-litre capacity. Water was changed en route at a time interval of approximately one hour. The salinity range was from 19.17 to 31.69‰. At the end of the journey the mortality was noticed to be about ten per cent. This indicates that the fish could withstand the strain of transport for stocking in the different estuarine systems particularly at Hangarkatta, Udyavar, Mulki-Pavanje and Netravati. The culture of this species in these coastal inlets holds good prospects. It is felt that this could be undertaken with a nominal investment and, since it is a prized fish, with encouraging results.

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RADHAKRISHNAN, N. 1957. *Indian J. Fish.*, 4 (2): 254-283.