

Marine fish landings in Kerala during 2016 - An overview

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Kerala has 188 marine fish landing centres along the coastline of 590 km length and 1.2 lakh marine fishermen families. The estimated marine fish landings in Kerala during 2016 was 5,22,550 tonnes (t) contributing about 14% of the marine fish production in the country (Fig. 1).

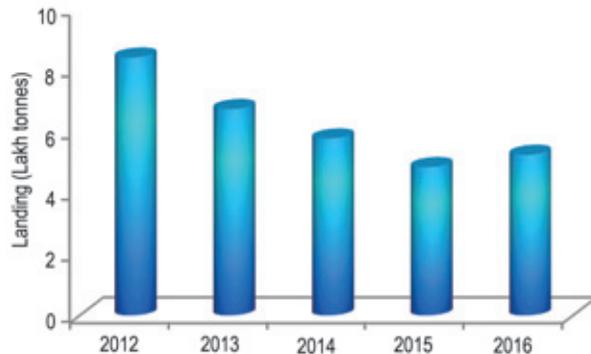


Fig. 1. Trend of marine fish landings in Kerala during 2012-2016

Pelagic finfish contributed 60% of the total marine fish landings in 2016 with scads, mackerel and oil sardine top in the list. Demersal resources estimated at 1.32 lakh t, contributed around 25% of the landings along this coast.

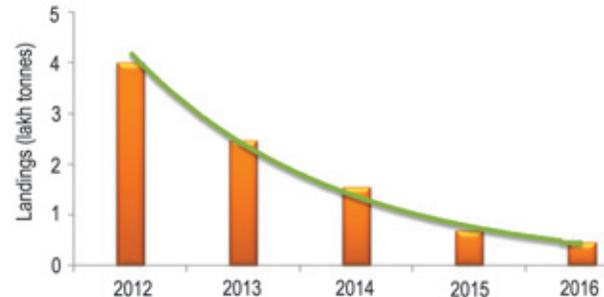


Fig. 2. Oil sardine landing trends

The major resources contributing to the landings of demersal resources were bullseye, threadfin breams, flatfishes, lizardfishes, rock cods and croakers. The landings of crustaceans and molluscs

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showed a declining trend during 2016 forming 8% and 7% portions of the total landings respectively. Nearly one-third of the crustacean landings were penaeid prawns while cephalopods formed the bulk of the molluscan landings.

Table 1. Major resources landed in Kerala

	2015	2016
Scads	28151	53990
Indian mackerel	70079	47253
Oil sardine	68431	45958
Threadfin breams	42253	37245
Cephalopods	38509	35672
Penaeid prawns	38006	31494
Bulls eye	4691	29869

The estimated landings of major resources for 2015 and 2016 are given in the table. Scads belonging to the genus *Decapterus* were the most abundant resource (0.54 lakh t) in the state during 2016. Oil sardine, the major resource in Kerala, continued its declining trend with an estimate of 45,958 t in 2016 (Fig. 2). Compared to 2015, decrease in the landings of Indian mackerel, threadfin breams, anchovies (*Stolephorous*), cephalopods and penaeid prawns was recorded. The landings of bulls eye (*Priacanthus* spp.) and scads during 2016 increased considerably. For *Priacanthus* spp., from a mere 4,691 t in 2015 a high of 29869 t was recorded in 2016. Trawlers contributed 97% of bullseye landings. The resource has become a major portion of the trawl landings (12%), along with other resources such as threadfin breams, penaeid prawns and scads.

Table 2. Gear-wise landing trend

Gear	2015	2016
Multiday trawl net (MDTN)	189347	219656
Outboard ring seine (OBRS)	98073	113534
Mechanised ring seine (MRS)	66770	58617
Outboard gillnet (OBGN)	35505	36051
Mechanised others (MOTHS)	27560	24890
Outboard boatseine (OBBS)	11780	22011
Mechanised trawlnet (MTN)	19777	13638
Outboard hook and line (OBHL)	12831	9779
Mechanised gillnet (MGN)	764	7321
Non mechanised (NM)	7921	5933

The contribution by mechanised, motorised and artisanal sectors were 63%, 36% and 1% respectively (Fig 3). Multiday trawlers accounted for about 42% of the landings in Kerala. Ring seine catches accounted for 33% of the landings. Important gears which contributed to the mechanised sector were trawlnets, ringseines and gillnets (Table 2). The multiday trawlers contributed maximum (2,19,656 t) with an increase of 30,000 t from the previous year's catch. The average catch per trawler also increased from 2 t to 2.8 t. The ringseiners popularly known as *thanguvallam* that targets the oil sardine and mackerel resources contributed a catch of 58,617 t. Compared to the previous year catch volumes showed a decline of 8,152 t and catch per boat also dropped from 2.3 to 2 t mostly because of the declining oil sardine catch.

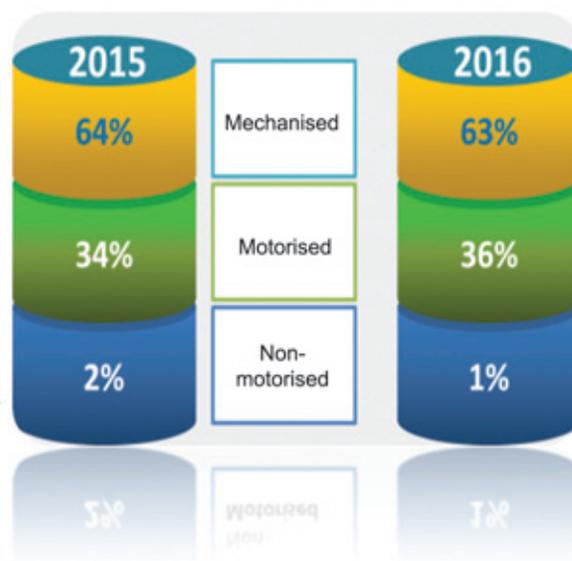


Fig. 3. Sectorwise contribution to marine fish landings in Kerala

Almost 61% of the total landings of motorised sector were from the outboard ringseiners. Their catch volume increased from 98,073 t in 2015 to 1,13,534 t in 2016. The catch per boat also increased from 855 to 890 kg as they got good catches of anchovies and scads. Non-motorised sector contributed 5,933 t of landings which is 2,000 t less than that of last year. Small thermocol boats widely used for nearshore fishing by the fishermen in Alappuzha district contributed a major share (59%) of the total landings in this sector.



Fig. 4. Seasonal catch contribution in 2016

Seasonal fluctuations in landings indicated peak in October-December period (35% of the landings) followed by July-September (Fig. 5). Among districts, Ernakulam topped with 1.4 lakh t (26%). The three fishing harbours here (Munambam, Cochin and Vypin) recorded increase in landings. Kozhikode had second largest catch with 1.0 lakh t (20%) where three major harbours, namely Beypore, Puthiyappa and Chombala contributed major share. Kollam district stood in the third place with 90,584 t which is less by 2000 t than that of the previous year. The

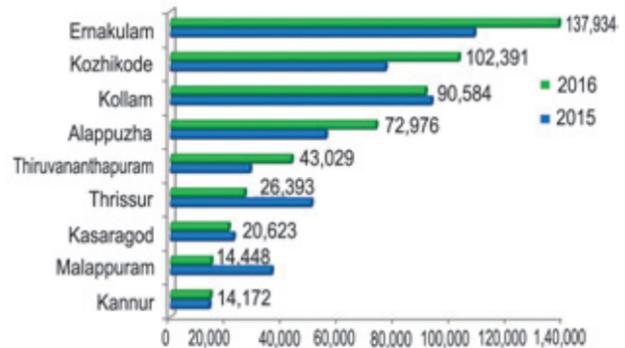


Fig. 5. Districtwise estimated marine fish catch

two major harbours, Neendakara and Sakthikulangara showed a declining trend in landings as well as the fishing effort in unit operations. In Alappuzha district, landings increased by around 20,000 t with an estimated 72,976 t. Motorised ringseine fishery dominated with scads replacing the eminence of oil sardine in the catch volumes in 2016.