

Marine fish landings in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry during 2016 - An overview

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Tamil Nadu, with a coastline of 1076 km has 363 landing centres while the 45 km coastline of Puducherry has 26 landing centres in 2 fishing zones (Puducherry and Karaikkal). Fishing is done using different combinations of fishing crafts and gears. The recent trend of fish landings in Tamil Nadu showed a slight decrease in landings in 2016 (7.07 lakh t) compared to 2015 (7.09 lakh t). In spite of this, Tamil Nadu was ranked second among all

maritime states contributing 19.5% of the total marine fish landings in the country during 2016. The landings of Puducherry were 0.45 lakh t in 2016 with a reduction of 33,958 t compared to 2015. The major contribution was from Karaikkal region (67%).

In Tamil Nadu the contribution of pelagic and demersal fishes were 54% and 29% respectively while the crustaceans (9%) and molluscs (8%) accounted

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for the rest. Among 12 districts in Tamil Nadu, Ramanathapuram recorded 2.07 lakh t, Nagapattanam 1.21 lakh t, followed by Cuddalore 1.07 lakh t. Rameswaram-Verkode fisheries harbour, Nagapattinam fisheries harbour and Cuddalore fisheries harbour were the major harbours in these districts. The annual landings were maximum in 4th quarter (30.6%) followed 3rd quarter (30.1%) and 1st quarter (21.7%). The lean period was in the 2nd quarter (17.6%).

The major resources landed in Tamil Nadu were lesser sardines (13.4%), oil sardine (11.45%), silverbellies (10.8%), cephalopods (7.7%) and Indian mackerel (4.6%) which constituted 47.9% of total landings in Tamil Nadu (Fig. 1). Though, there was a slight decrease in the catches of oil sardine in Tamil Nadu during 2016, this species has emerged as a major fishery resource. Higher volume of oil sardine landings than that in Kerala was recorded in 2016. Ribbon fishes and tuna (*K. pelamis*) catches increased while lesser sardines declined. Lesser sardines, oil sardines and silverbellies retained their positions as top 3 resources in order during 2015 and 2016. Scads declined drastically (-70%) during 2016 compared to previous year.

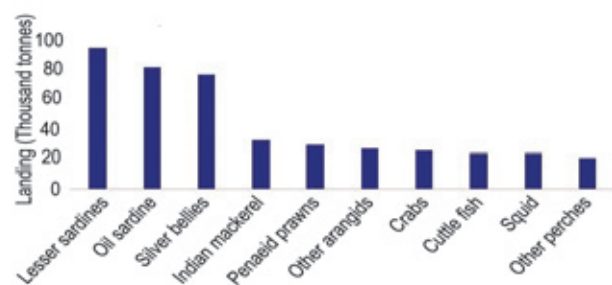


Fig. 1. Top ten resources in Tamil Nadu during 2016

In Tamil Nadu, the mechanised sector continued to dominate with contribution of 78.1% followed by motorised and non-motorised sector with 21.3% and 0.6% respectively, in 2016. The major gears operated in the mechanised sector included single & multiday trawlers, gillnetters, hooks and lines and ring seines. The landings by single and multiday trawlers during 2016 formed 75.2% of the total marine fish landings in the state. The landings of single day trawlers increased by 88,832 t and fishing effort by 60,604

unit operations when compared to last year. However the catch per hour reduced from 103 kg to 99 kg in 2016. In multiday trawlers, the landings reduced by 33,042 t and the unit operations drastically declined by nearly half. A significant decrease was noticed in the landings of mechanised ring seiners, from 10,913 t in 2015 to 171 t in 2016. Significant reduction in the unit operations of ring seines, catch per unit effort and catch per hour were also noticed in 2016. Landings from mechanised gillnetters increased from 10,508 t to 18,394 t in 2016 and the catch per hour increased from 34 kg in 2015 to 96 kg in 2016. The major gears operated in the motorised sector were bag net, gill net, hooks & lines, ring seines, shore seines and trawl nets with major contribution by motorised gillnet (85,234 t).

The major resources landed in Puducherry were penaeid prawns (10.7%), cephalopods (10.2%), oil sardines (8.3%), barracudas (5.5%) and goat fishes (5.5%). These major resources constituted 40% of the total landings of Puducherry. The contribution of pelagic and demersal fishes were about 43% and 34% respectively followed by crustaceans (13%) and molluscans (10%). The maximum production was recorded in 3rd quarter (43.57%) followed by 2nd quarter (20.11%) and 1st quarter (19.32%).

The major part of marine fish landings in Puducherry was from mechanised sector (86.7%). Motorised and non-motorised sectors contributed 13.3% and 0.04% respectively during in 2016. Multiday trawlers and single day trawlers together contributed 82% of the total landings the state. The landings of multiday trawlers in Puducherry decreased from 67,695 t in 2015 to 27,997 t in 2016. The CPUE of multiday trawlers reduced from 3103 kg per trip in 2015 to 1626 kg per trip in 2016. While considering the single day trawlers, the landings increased from 1940 t in 2015 to 8883 t in 2016. The number of trips by these trawlers also increased and catch per hour reduced from 67 kg in 2015 to 32 kg in 2016.

In Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, change in the trawl fishing pattern was observed. The fishing days in multi-day trawling reduced with compensatory

increase in single day trawling effort. A general observation is that mechanised vessels are now

operating as a team with one vessel employed for scouting fishes.