# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

## THEME : ECOSYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Book of Abstracts

## BDU 20 : Observations on the impact of bottom trawling on benthic biota with special reference to molluscan resources and their utilisation in the Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar, south-east coast of India

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Observations on the benthic biota by bottom trawlers in the Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar were made during January 2006 – October 2007. Data was collected from by-catch of trawling at Rameswaram (Palk Bay) and Pamban (Gulf of Mannar) landing centres. The average composition of benthic biota to the total trawl landings was 57.3 per cent and 48.2 per cent at Rameswaram and Pamban respectively whereas the average composition of molluscan biota to the total trawl catches was 17.3 per cent and 16.59 per cent at Rameswaram and Pamban respectively. Though the number of units operated varied greatly of these two centres, the average rate of trawl discards for both the centres during the observation period was more or less the same. The monthly average rate of trash catches ranged from 104.4 to 419.4 kg/unit at Rameswaram while at Pamban it ranged between 40 and 640 kg/unit during the

observation period. Among the different groups of organisms in by-catch, fishes were the dominant followed by crustaceans, molluscs and other benthic biota at both landing centres. Among the molluscan biota, *Hemifusus* sp., *Murex* sp. and *Placuna placenta* were represented in higher magnitude compared with other components at Rameswaram. Whereas, at Pamban *Pinna sp.*, *Murex sp* and *Turritella sp.*, were dominating. This paper discusses the composition of this by catch and its present utilization.