

# Frequent landing of bull sharks at Vizhinjam

\*Ambarish P. Gop, S. Surya, N. K. Midhunranj, K. K. Suresh, T. G. Kishore and M. K. Anil  
Vizhinjam Research Centre of ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Vizhinjam  
\*e-mail : gopidas.ambarish@gmail.com

Unique and continuous landing of bull shark, *Carcharhinus leucas* was observed at Vizhinjam landing centre during the February - March, 2018 period (Fig. 1). 16 numbers of bull sharks measuring 110-359 cm (total length) and weighing 90 - 330 kg each were landed. Of these, only 3 sharks were immature. The landings of *C. leucas* along the Vizhinjam coast is usually occurs only once or twice in a month, but such steady landings as recorded was a rare occurrence. Plywood boats of around 7-8 m OAL fitted with fitted with 25 hp out board motor or two 9.9 hp combined motors conduct the single day fishing using hook and line. Bull sharks as by-catch in the bottom set gillnets (targeting rays) were also observed on a few days. The fishers venture upto 25 nautical mile from the shore and are operating the gears up to the depth of 135 meters for catching bull sharks. The fishers recorded from the shore during the early morning hours and returned in the afternoon. The landings of bull shark at the Vizhinjam landing centre fetched good returns which were a relief to the fishermen who were



Fig. 1. Bull sharks landed at Vizhinjam landing centre on different days

resuming fishing after the cyclone *Ockhi* which had recently occurred. Most of the days, the sharks were auctioned off at the rate of ₹ 40,000 - 90,000 per piece. The bull sharks landed were transported to Thoothoor for further processing and marketing. These processing plants process the shark as dried and salt cured based on the demand from neighboring states. Kerala is one preferred state with Calicut, Changanassery, Kottayam and Ettumaanoor being prominent areas of dried shark consumption and market demand.