



Brief Communications

An emerging fishery for the jellyfish *Crambionella annandalei* along the coast of Andhra Pradesh

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Crambionella annandalei is a rhizostomatid jellyfish (class Scyphozoa) and locally known as *Munthakaya* (Fig.1). The swarms of this species was considered a menace to coastal fisheries as it caused damaged to fishing nets and hindered the fishing operations. However, the species is emerging as a targeted fishery resource along the coast of Andhra Pradesh due to increased demands of processed oral arms of jellyfish in south-east Asian countries and delivers additional income to coastal fisher folk involved in this activity.

An estimated landing of 0.02 lakh tons of the species was recorded in 2017, which increased to 0.033 lakh tons in 2018. The fishermen operate a gillnet (*Polusuvala*) from traditional crafts (motorized and non-motorized) at water depths of 10 to 40 m to catch jellyfish. The fishing season is during the period from March to July with the peak fishing season being June and July. On an average about 60-70 boats with 6-7 persons in each boat are going to the sea everyday to catch jellyfish. Fishermen often cut off the umbrellas while at the sea and only the oral arms are loaded into the boat (Fig.2). Sometimes when catches are less they bring the whole



Fig. 1. *Crambionella annandalei*



Fig. 2. Unloading of oral arms from motorized craft

jellyfish and sorting is done at the landing centre. A single boat can land about 150-330 kg oral arms per day with average weight of such landings being 240 kg. Fishermen sell the jellyfish at price of ₹700 to ₹2000 per crate. The oral arms constitute 30-35 % of wet weight of the body. The price of one kilogram of unprocessed oral arms of jellyfish ranges from ₹20 to ₹55 depending on the size. Local traders and processors purchase the jellyfish from fishermen. Oral arms of jellyfish are also processed into a semi-dried product through a stepwise procedure of soaking in various mixtures of salts (Fig.3). Then, semi dried oral arms are packed in 20 liters plastic bucket. Each bucket is filled with 16 kg semi dried oral arms and 4 litres salt water (Figs.4 &5) which are transported to Chennai and from there, exported to south-east Asian countries mostly China.



Fig. 3. Salt curing of oral arms of the jellyfish



Fig. 4. Semi dried oral arms



Fig. 5. Packing of salted semi dried oral arms in plastic buckets