

A new and fatal 'neck out disease' recorded among lobsters farmed in small floating sea cages off Kanyakumari coast

Consequent to the successful demonstrations of farming of lobsters by the CMFR Institute, a few farmers have taken up lobster farming in smaller HDPE floating cages along the Kanyakumari coast. Such lobster farming ventures along the coast have started providing export oriented earnings to those engaged in collection of live lobsters and also those engaged in farming. However, a few farmed lobsters in rectangular cage 4.0 x 2.3 x 1.4 m size have developed inflammation, transparency of the site of inflammation and fluid accumulation below the cephalothorax in the joining area below the end of carapace (behind the thorax) and prior to the beginning of abdominal segments. Protrusion of tissues outside the shell was also noted as the prominent symptom. The length and weight of the moribund lobsters recorded at the culture site was 128.85 ± 7.63 mm and 65.24 ± 6.64 g respectively. Mortality with the additional following symptoms was recorded:

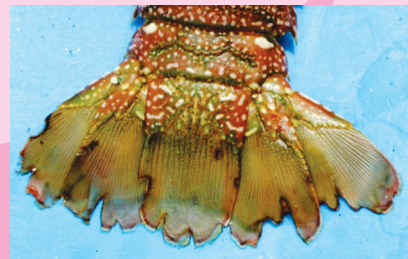
1. Black burn type spots in the central telson as well as bordering pair of uropods on either side
2. Reddening of abdomen and walking legs
3. Rot in appendages and reddening of joints and
4. Blackening at the base of the cut end of the appendages

Considering the symptoms in the diseased and moribund lobsters, the infections could be termed as 'neck out disease'. Four distinct bacteria, moderately sensitive to Gentamycin were isolated and characterized using molecular methods and the gene sequence of one viz., *Bacillus circulans* was deposited in GenBank (Acc No: JQ409560).

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Lobsters with 'neck out disease'



Petechial spots and erosions in telson