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972 **Unusual catch of "Koth" *Otolithoides biauritus* in wagra jal at Dhakti, Dahanu and Gangwada, Maharashtra**

On 13.12.1999 three heavy landings of *Otolithoides biauritus* locally known as 'Koth' by wagra jal bottom set net were reported from Dhakti, Dahanu and Gangwada. The unusual landings of 'Koth' continued for two days. The mesh size of wagra jal which is operated mainly for 'dara' was in the range of 130 to 230 mm. The length and depth of a single piece of wagra jal net was 15 X 3mt Garware nylon. The plank built boats of 10-12m OAL with 60-90 HP uses 50-80 pieces of net. *Otolithoides biauritus* was caught at 10 to 12 meter depth within the range of 15 to 20km off Dahanu North. The total estimated landing of this species during a three days period was 36.8 tonnes, at live catch rate of 858 kg/unit.

The size range was from 1197 to 1502mm in total length weighing from 9 to 22 kg. The catch was sold at the rate of Rs. 20-22 per kg. and swimbladder at the rate of Rs.200 to 350 per each piece at the landing centre and also at Vshi and Shivaji wholesale markets in Mumbai. The total amount realised was



Fig 1 - 'Koth' landing at Dahanu

Rs.7,37,880/- with an average of Rs.17,160/- per boat.

The total value of swim bladder was Rs.9,22,625/- with an average of Rs.21,456/- per boat. Such unusual landings of 'Koth' had not been witnessed in these areas earlier.

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