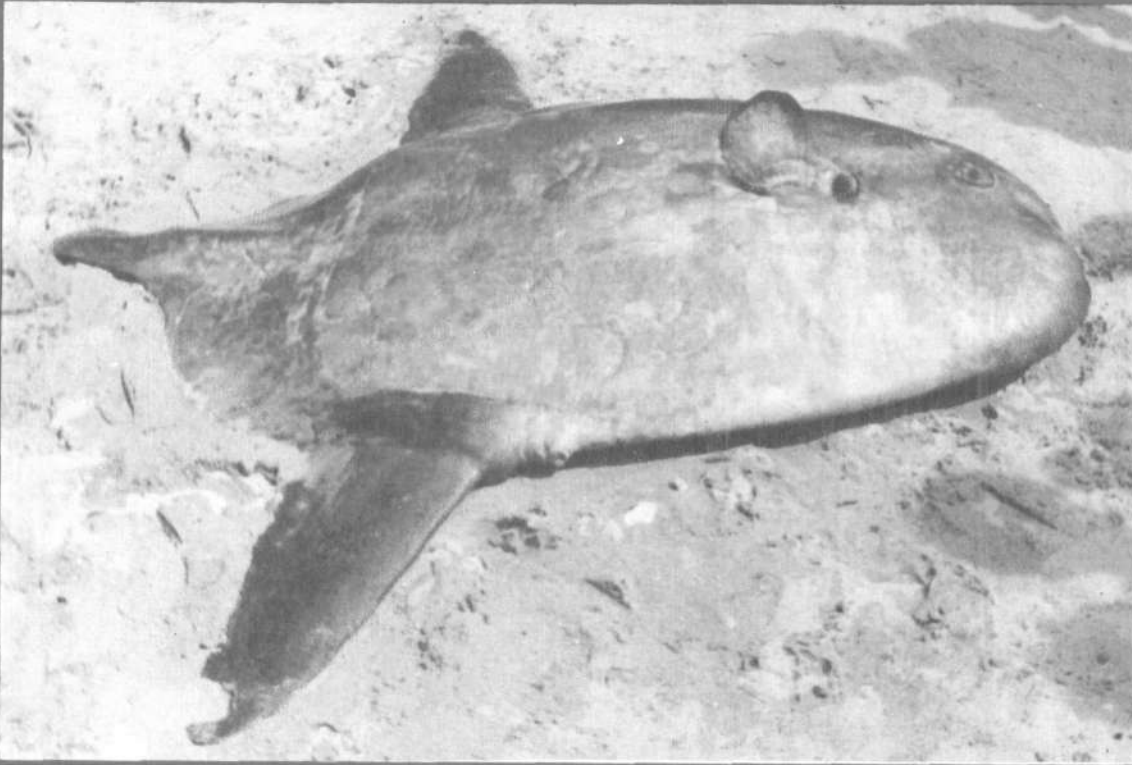




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INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

UNUSUAL LANDING OF *HILSA ILISHA* IN GILL NETS AT VERSOVA*

On 9. 12. '92, the Versova fishermen have sighted a shoal of *H. ilisha* at the surface while hauling the monofilament gill net.

The mesh size of monofilament gill net operated for *H. ilisha* was in the range of 50-90 mm (Fig. 1). The length and depth of a single piece of gill net was 30-40 x 2 m. The plank built boats of 6-8 m OAL with 10-15 H.P. engine operated 30 to 60 such pieces, dugout canoes of 5-6 m with 5-10 H.P. used 20-35 pieces and 4-6 m non-mechanised dugout canoes operated 10 to 15 pieces of gill nets. *H. ilisha* shoal was caught from 2 to 5 meter depth and within the range of 1 to 2 km off Versova. The unusual landing of *H. ilisha* continued for five days. The total estimated landing of this species during a five days period was 45.7 tonnes, with an average of 133.7 kg/unit (Table 1).

The size of *H. ilisha* landed during the period ranged from 282 to 410 mm in total length. The dominant size of the population was at 320 to 339 mm. The weight of each fish ranged from 0. 500-1. 350 kg. The sex ratio of males to females was 1. 2:1. Both males and females were in immature condition. About 55% stomachs were empty and the food items observed in the remaining stomachs were phytoplankton and diatoms mainly *Coscinodiscus* spp.

The catch was sold at the rate of Rs. 20/ kg (size range 280-319 mm), at Rs. 25/kg (size range 320-379 mm) and above 380 mm at the rate of Rs. 45/kg at the landing centre and also at Andheri, Malad and Shivaji wholesale markets in Bombay. The total value realised during the five day period has been estimated to be Rs.11,88,772 with an average of Rs. 3,476/boat

TABLE 1. Date and timewise particulars of units operated, estimated catch, catch rate and value of *H. ilisha*

Date	Time	No. of units	Estimated catch (kg)	C.P.U.E. (kg/unit)	Estimated value (Rs.)
10.12.92	Morning	45	7,205	160.1	1,87,330
11.12.92	Morning	57	12,512	219.5	3,25,312
11.12.92	Afternoon	50	7,850	157.0	2,04,100
12.12.92	Morning	59	9,529	161.5	2,47,754
12.12.92	Afternoon	50	4,635	92.7	1,20,510
13.12.92	Morning	49	1,524	31.1	39,626
14.12.92	Morning	32	2,467	77.1	64,142
5 days	Total	342	45,722	133.7	11,88,772

* Reported by : S. G. Raje and V. D. Deshmukh, Bombay Research Centre of CMFRI, Bombay - 400 001.