In the 2nd week of August 2008, a new gear named “Mini purse seine” was operated at some centres of MH-1 zone such as Nivati, Kochara, Navabag-Dabhojwada and Shiroda along Maharashtra coast. The details of the gear are as follows:

- Mesh size: 16 to 18 mm
- Height of net: 18 to 21 m
- Length of net: 162 to 198 m
- Crew required: 6 to 9
- Actual fishing hour: 1 to 1½ h

Operated only for prawns especially *Metapenaeus dobsoni*, *Parapenaeopsis stylifera*, *Penaeus merguiensis*.

Fibre boat is used for this gear.

Depth of fishing ground: 7 to 12 m

The net is manufactured using Nylon and provided with floats and weights.

This gear was operated in the beginning of the season i.e., during August.

Pufferfishes are known for its poison tetrodotoxin (TTX), which is neurotoxic and considered to be the most toxic poison found in nature. It is generally known that liver and ovary are the organs where the toxin is concentrated in most cases, but lesser amount could also be found in skin, muscle and blood. Although the fish is poisonous, Japanese prepare a dish from the pufferfish which is called “Fugu”. Despite the risk involved, if prepared properly, “Fugu” remains a Japanese delicacy and is the most popular dish in Japanese cuisine.

Pufferfishes are sold at the harbour at the rate of Rs. 8-10 per kg. The fish is beheaded, viscera removed, the skin peeled off and then cured in salt (ratio 3:1) for one week. It is then dried in the sun for a day and is transported to Kerala as cured and dried product. After processing the fish fetch a price of Rs. 30 - 45 per kg. The head and the viscera together form about 60% of the fish weight.

Detailed investigations on the biology, food and feeding and toxicity are being carried out at the centre.