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## A note on the fishery of mysid, *Mesopodopsis zeylanica* Nouvel (1954) at Mahim, Mumbai

A seasonal pre-monsoon fishery of mysids in April-May, 2003 was reported at Mahim in Mumbai. Mysids of opossum shrimps are tiny zooplanktonic organisms caught along the coast of northern Maharashtra, particularly Thane district for human consumption.

### Method and fishery :

In order to catch tiny mysids traditional small dol net operators of Mahim use hand trawl made of mosquito netting during the high tide period in April-May, 2003. The net was operated at the surface of water irrespective of neap or spring tides.

The traditional dol net fishermen at Mahim have modified the mosquito netting into a baglike pelagic trawl for catching the mysids. Earlier the fishery was reported only from the creek at Satpati fishing village, whereas, the present fishery was carried out in open sea between Mahim and Juhu in Mumbai city.

**Crafts and gear :** 25 traditional plank-built boats of 7-8 m OAL fitted with inboard engines of 2 to 50 h.p. and manned by a crew of 3 to 4 members each were engaged in this fishery. The fishing ground was 10 to 15 km. southwest of Mahim at a depth of 9 to 16 meters. Each trip was of 6 to 8 hours duration during which 15 to 25 hauls of 10 to 15 minutes each were made. Length

of the net was 5 to 7 meters with cod end mesh size of 1 mm. One net each was fitted at the front of the boat on either sides with the help of a wooden frame to keep their mouths open. The opening of the net was 152 x 60 cm to 215 x 152 cm. Width of the net at the cod end was 20 to 25 cm. Almost the entire catch was comprised of *M. zeylanica*.

**Landing and catch composition :** On an average 25 units were operating daily during season. In April 2003, on a single day out of the 443 kg of total catch 430 kg were mysids (CUPE 48.9 kgs). Analysis of the sample showed that 99.32% of the catch consisted of mysids in April and 96.08% in May. A few numbers of juvenile *Escualosa horacata* were also seen.

The cost of a net was about Rs. 1650/-. The catch was generally processed by sun drying after mixing with salt. The price of the product increased from Rs. 15/- in the beginning of the fishery to Rs. 35-40/- per kg.

A regular fishery for Mysid for two months is reported from the Mumbai coast for the first time. The size range of the specimen vary from 5-7 mm.

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