

## Indiscriminate fishing of juveniles of commercially important fishes by minitrawlers and boat seines at Chombala Fisheries Harbour, Kerala

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Chombala Fisheries Harbour is meant for operating traditional crafts and became operational since May 1999. The harbour is situated at lat 11° 39' 729" N and long 075° 33' 062" E between Vadakara and Mahe. About 500 units of country crafts can safely anchor inside the harbour during the rough season. This facility is the main attraction for the fishermen in and around Chombala fishing village. Since the harbour has good marketing facilities, fishermen are getting better returns for their catch. Country crafts from fishing villages starting from Thikkodi to Mahe are utilising this harbour. Major gears under operation from this harbour are inboard ring seine 35 units, outboard ring seine - 30 units, mini trawl net - 125 units, pair trawl net - 50 units, driftnet - 50 units, boat seine- 100 units, gillnet - 150 units and 80 units of single day trawlers. Fishing is carried out throughout the year and during the monsoon period, *i.e.*, during June to August intensive fishing activity takes place. Crafts and gears from the adjacent landing centers camp at Chombala for monsoon fishing operations.

Juvenile fishing by minitrawl net and boat seine are frequently observed. During the month of March 2011, it was observed that about 25 units of minitrawlers were regularly bringing juveniles of fishes which were being discarded in the beach after selecting marketable size fishes (Fig. 1) On an average, 5 kg of such discard fishes were brought to the shore regularly. The amount of discard would be higher than actually landed, since they were bringing the catch only from the last haul to the shore without sorting. From local enquiry, it was informed that the same type of fishing continued till the last week of April 2011. During subsequent observations at Chombala Fisheries Harbour on 25-7-2011 and 26-7-2011, 34 and 21 units of boat seines landed 850 and 500 kg of juvenile *S. longiceps* of length ranging from 40 to 80 mm respectively.

Table 1. Size range of fishes landed at Chombala Fisheries Harbour

Species	Length range (mm)
<i>Pampus argenteus</i>	30-55
<i>Lactarius lactarius</i>	40-45
<i>Metapeneaus dobsoni</i>	35-40
<i>Parapeneopsis stylifera</i>	35-40
<i>Polynemus</i> sp.	40-50
<i>Arius</i> sp.	40-45
<i>Otolithus</i> sp.	45-45
<i>Leiognathus</i> sp.	25-30
<i>Opisthopterus tardoore</i>	40-45
<i>Cynoglossus</i> sp.	45-50
<i>Sepiella</i> sp.	26-28
<i>Johnnieops</i> sp.	35-40
<i>Sphyraena</i> sp.	90-95
<i>Terapon</i> sp.	40-45
<i>Scatophagus argus</i>	40-45
<i>Pomadasys maculatum</i>	40-45
<i>Portunus sanguinolentus</i>	20-30
<i>Scombroides</i> sp.	70-75



Fig. 1. Juvenile fishes landed by minitrawl net at Chombala Fisheries Harbour