

Landing of a tagged black marlin *Istiompax indica* (Cuvier, 1832) at Tharuvaikulam, Tuticorin

Sivadas M., Sathakkathullah S., Suresh Kumar K. and Kannan K.
Tuticorin Research Centre of CMFRI, Tuticorin

In Tharuvaikulam(8°53'42"N,78°09'56.6"E), Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, India, there is a regular drift gill net (mesh size 120-140 mm) fishery targeting mainly tunas and seer fishes. The fishing trip is multiday (5 to 6 days) and the operation is only during night, with normally one haul per day. In this gear, bill fishes are also landed being entangled and not gilled. Normally four species of billfishes are landed such as *Istiophorus platypterus*, *Tetrapterus angustirostris*, *istiompax indica* and *Xiphias gladius*. On 1.2.13, two numbers of *I. indica* was landed along with other fishes. Out of this two, one was



Fig. 1. Black marlin with the tag

with a tag which was on the body immediately below the dorsal fin. This was actually caught on 31.1.13 off Mandapam (8°30'04"N; 79° 14'06"E) where the depth was more than 300 m.

The size of the fish was: Body length (From tip of lower jaw to fork length): 268 cm, Eye - fork length: 237 cm. The fish was released by African Billfish Foundation on 3.2.2012 at 3° 41'S; 40° 12'E (near Tanzania). The days at liberty was nearly one year and this is the first report of a tagged bill fish recovered from Indian waters.



Fig. 2. The tag with the number and other details