



MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE

No. 171

January, February, March, 2002



TECHNICAL AND EXTENSION SERIES

CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE

COCHIN, INDIA

(INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH)

Management of Scombroid Fisheries

Editors:

N.G.K. Pillai

N.G. Menon

P.P. Pillai

U. Ganga

Scombroids, an economically important fishery resource consisting of 15 genera and 49 species of tunas, billfishes, seerfishes and mackerel; are a dominant exploitable resource in the coastal as well as oceanic pelagic realm. Although the annual catchable potential of scombroids in the Indian EEZ is estimated to be around 758,000 t, the present yield is only about 300,000 t, worth more than Rs.10 billion, and their demand in the domestic and export markets is on the increase. This group acquires special relevance and significance in the context of global responsible fisheries for migratory and straddling stocks. A thorough knowledge on the status of the exploited stocks, population parameters, stock structure, exploitable potential harvest, post-harvest technologies, product development and marketing is a prerequisite for further development of the scombroid fishery in our country. The National Workshop on Scombroids organised and conducted by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute at Kochi in September 2000 was intended to provide

a common platform for researchers, entrepreneurs, industrialists and policy planners to discuss and debate our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for exploration and exploitation of valuable scombroids like tunas (skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye, albacore), billfishes, seerfishes, mackerel etc. and to empower our capture fisheries subsector with more meaningful information and data support, besides identifying the information lacunae and prioritizing areas of research needs. The papers presented at this workshop along with basic information like field identification of scombroids, fishery status in the Indian Ocean region and a bibliography on scombroids have been included in a comprehensive publication entitled Management of Scombroid Fisheries. The book which includes 32 papers dealing with status of exploitation of the scombroid stocks, their stock assessment, harvest and post-harvest technologies and trade along with a number of colour plates would definitely serve as a reference book for students, researchers, policy planners and industries.

Size : Demy 1/8

No. of pages : 280

Binding : Case binding

Published by : Prof. (Dr.) Mohan Joseph Modayil
Director
Central Marine Fisheries
Research Institute
Kochi - 682 014

Price: Inland : Rs.300

Overseas : US\$100

For copies of the above publication, write to the Director, CMFRI, Kochi - 682 014, along with a DD for Rs.300/- drawn in favour of Director, CMFRI, payable at Ernakulam.

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The Director
CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE
P.B. No. 1603, Cochin 682 014, Kerala, INDIA
Telephone: (0484) 394867, 394357, 393192, 394794
Telegram : CADALMIN, ERNAKULAM. Fax : 0091-0484-394909
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