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**GUIDELINES ISSUED BY KARNATAKA PURSE SEINE FISHERMEN'S
ASSOCIATION (MANGALORE BRANCH) TO AVOID CONFLICTS AMONG
PURSE SEINE OPERATORS ***

Introduction

With the introduction of purse seine fishing along the coast of Karnataka, the Karnataka Purse seine Fishermen's Association was formed in 1973 and registered in 1979 (Reg. No. 80/79-80) at Mangalore. Its objective is to serve as an

organ to redress the grievances of the marine fishing community of the area in general and to provide welfare measures to the members of the Association in particular. It also endeavours to avoid clashes and conflicts among fishermen on fishing rights and to solve the complaints and

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other problems peacefully by conducting meeting whenever it is necessary. The changes in fishing methods or any reforms are discussed at these meetings. In addition to these, the Association looks after the maintenance and cleanliness of the jetty, provides drinking water facilities and makes arrangement for ice to the night fishing boats. Further, the Association brings to the notice of the Government, the problems, such as dredging of bar mouth and subsidy for diesel and takes action accordingly. Monetary help is given from the Relief Fund of Association to the family of the deceased fishermen who succumb to the accident at the time of fishing. At present (1990-91) 96 boat owners form the members of this Association.

As the purse seine fishing became popular and competitive, clashes among them over the fishing rights started. The Association, considering the nature and reason for such clashes and discussing the same among the members issued certain guidelines regarding the operation of purse seines based at Mangalore. While the major guidelines were being followed since they were formulated, these were reviewed when night fishing was started a few years ago and certain changes were made. The guidelines mentioned in the present account are applicable to both day and night purse seine operations except item no. 1, which is applicable to night purse seine only.

The guidelines are originally issued in Kannada in the Annual Report of the Karnataka Purse seine Fishermens' Association, Mangalore for the year 1990-91. These are translated into English by the authors, with a view to make aware of the existence of such guidelines, for avoiding conflicts and also with the hope that this may be useful as guideline in other maritime states where clashes are being reported among fishermen and where such guidelines are not available at present.

The guidelines are functionally followed by the purse seine operators based at Mangalore. However, non-co-operation of these guidelines on certain occasions has been reported, but all these cases have been settled amicably.

Guidelines and resolutions

1. Purse seine operation during night time: During September - December, the purse seine should operate only after sunrise. After sunset, they should not operate the net. However, as

decided by the Association, from December first onwards, there is no restriction on fishing after sunset. If anyone goes against this decision of fishing in September, October and November those purse seiners will have to pay the value of entire fish catch to the Association. In addition, they have to pay Rs. 1,000/- as penalty. 25% of the value of the fish catch and 50% of additional penalty fee will be given to the party who have brought the complaint.

2. When two boats go together in the same direction and sight a fish shoal, priority should be given to the boat which is nearer to the inner side of the shoal and start paying off the net encircling the shoal. This boat has the right to operate first.

3. When two boats are coming in opposite directions (south-north or east-west) towards a fish shoal, preference should be given to the boat which is close to the shoal and this boat will operate first. If anybody goes against the above rule and operate the net without following it, the party that actually has the right of operating the net should not quarrel with other party. If the party quarrels with the opponent (who has the right), the quarrelled party has to pay Rs. 1,000/- as penalty, in addition to 75% of the value of the fish to the Association and 25% of the value of the fish would go to the party that has operated the net illegally. Under this circumstance, if the party which has the right to operate files a complaint against the other party with proof to the Association, 50% of the value of the fish should be given to the complained party, 25% to the boat people who have operated the net illegally and 25% to the Association.

4. If another boat is interfering in the area where one purse seine is shooting the net, the encroacher will have to pay a penalty of Rs. 1,000/-.

5. Whenever a boat is fishing for catfishes and other larger fishes, and gets a substantial catch which could not be taken by the purse seine boat or attached carrier boat and at that point, another boat can catch the excess fish from the net of first boat and the total value of the fish thus procured should be shared equally between the two boats.

6. When the shoal sighted by a carrier boat and the purse seine boat belonging to this party is not in the vicinity, the other purse seiners can

operate the net by taking permission from that carrier boat. In such cases $\frac{1}{3}$ of the value of the fish has to be given to the carrier boat that sights the shoal. If the said carrier boat is empty, they must transport the fish caught by the purse seiners. If it is already loaded and unable to transport the fish, the boat which has operated the net must give $\frac{1}{3}$ of the share to the carrier boat. If the other purse seiners operate without taking permission from the carrier boat, after taking the share of workers, 50% of the fish value should be given to the carrier boat which sighted the shoal, 25% to the purse seiners who operated the net and 25% to the Association.

7. Whenever catfish or other fishes are sighted by the trawlers of indigenous boats, they may inform the nearby purse seiners to operate the net or with the permission of the trawlers or indigenous boats, the purse seiners can catch the fish. In such cases, the fish catch will be loaded to the boat's capacity. Deducting this from remaining value of fish, 10% of the fish value should be given to the boat crew who sighted the shoal. If the catch is more, the trawlers or indigenous boats have to carry the fish to the shore but the entire value should be given to the purse seiners.

8. Purse seiners should not interfere by fishing in an area where *Rampani* fishermen are either waiting for a shoal or shooting the net. If anyone defies this rule and the information brought to the notice of the Association with proof by the *Rampani* fishermen, the purse seiners will have to pay the total value of the fish caught and an additional penalty of Rs. 1,000/- to the *Rampani* owners.

9. Purse seiners are prohibited from keeping the fish in water throughout the night and unloading the same next morning. If the fish catch is more, they should unload before midnight of the same day. If the fish has been carried by another boat, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the value of loaded fish should go to purse seiners and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the value should be given to the boat which has

transported the fish to the jetty (this rule will be applicable only in the case of oil sardine, mackerel and other small fish). If anyone goes against this rule, they have to pay the full value of the fish and Rs. 1,000/- as additional penalty to the Association. If a complaint is lodged against the boat which has not followed this rule, 25% of the impounded fish and 50% of the penalty of Rs. 1,000/- will be paid to the party.

10. No purse seiner should do the fishing inside the bar mouth (near the river or estuary) before 1st of September. If anyone contravenes it and does the fishing, the full value of the fish caught and Rs. 1,000/- as additional penalty must be given to the Association. Those who brought the complaint will be given 50% of the additional penalty (i. e. 50% of Rs. 1,000/-).

11. It has been decided by the Association on 12.8.1987 that the purse seiners should not allow more than 10% concession after auction of the fish. This has been unanimously agreed upon during the annual meeting. Necessary action will be taken against anybody who defies this rule.

12. The *Ayudha Pooja* day in the *Navarathri* festival time is declared as a compulsory fishing holiday every year.

The guidelines thus consider matters relating to fishing in the same area, sharing of the catch and co-operation with indigenous fishing operations. In view of the penalties stipulated, the purse seine operators are reported to observe these guidelines strictly. The penalty amount collected by the Association is utilised for the welfare of the fishermen. The clashes occurring between the boats based at Mangalore and other nearby centres are settled amicably at the nearest base (centre).

For further clarification on the above guidelines, the Karnataka Purse seine Fishermen's Association (Reg.) (Mangalore Branch) South Wharf, Bunder, Mangalore - 575 001, may be contacted.