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INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

843 MAJOR AND MINOR FISHERIES HARBOURS OF INDIA

9. FISHERIES JETTY AT MINICOY, LAKSHADWEEP

At Minicoy, fish catches are landed on the beach adjacent to the villages on the lagoon side during fair season, October to April-May and therefore a fisheries harbour in its strict sense does not exist there. The boats are anchored in the lagoon near the shore. However, there is one fisheries jetty which mainly facilitates the pole and line boats to come and sell the tuna to the canning factory. The details of the jetty are as follows:

Approach facility :

Length	:	147.1 m
Width	:	3.0 m

Berthing facility:

Length	:	8.5 m
Width	:	5.3 m
Cost of construction	:	Rs. 24 lakhs
Nearby processing facility	:	A tuna canning factory is located near the jetty

Remarks

Eventhough the potential yield of tunas from the seas around Lakshadweep has been estimated as 50,000 to 90,000 tonnes, the average production from this area is only 6,300 tonnes.

In Minicoy, major part of tuna catch after their local consumption is converted into "Masmin" and are sold to dealers in Calicut, Mangalore and Tuticorin. During good catch, a part of it is also sold to the canning factory for making canned tuna. As the other fishes landed at present are quite negligible, they are used for local consumption only.

TABLE 1. *Catch details for 1994-'95 (in tonnes)*

Fish species	pole & line	Trawl
Skipjack	969.0	11.2
Yellowfin	99.4	5.3
Other tunas	1.4	-
Bill fishes	-	1-1
Wahoo	-	3.3
Dolphin fish	1.1	0.6
Shark	2.9	2.0
Carangids	2.7	1.4
Barracuda	0.5	0.4
Others	1.5	0.3
Total tuna catch	1,069.8	16.5
Total fish catch	1,078.5	25.6

The tuna pole and line fishery at present operates within a narrow belt around the island. So the success depends on the availability of tuna in the ground, its response to hooking and availability of sufficient bait fishes. Hence the following line of action would help to develop and sustain the fishery.

(1) The fishermen are now unable to expand

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the area of fishing because of their inability to go to distant fishing areas that are forecast by remote sensing technique. Installation of navigational aids will help to a great extent in venturing to areas hitherto not fished.

(2) In certain months, the catch will be very poor despite the availability of fish in the ground due to a phenomenon called 'non-biting by tunas'. Moreover, the pole and line fishing is at times affected by the non-availability of sufficient baitfishes. To circumvent these problems diversification of the fishing techniques by introducing gill-netting may be tried.

(3) The high catch rates of fishing from schools associated with floatsam indicate the usefulness of floating fish aggregating devices for augmenting the tuna production.

(4) The coral colonies which harbour the livebait fishes are prone to destruction as a result of siltation from indiscriminate dredging and blasting. Therefore these activities should be minimised as far as possible.

(5) The introduction of larger boats with adequate navigational aids and storing facilities for 4-5 days of fishing mainly long lining is worth trying. Already some fishermen have come forward to try this. ❐