

Resurgence of whitefish in trawl landings of Mangalore

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Lactarius lactarius, commonly known as false trevally is exploited mainly by trawlers from the inshore waters (5-30 m depth) along the Karnataka coast. Bottom-set gillnets and purseseines also land minor quantities of whitefish, besides the indigenous gears operated during monsoon. The average annual production of false travelly from multiday trawls operated along Mangalore coast remained at 416 t during the period from 2000 to 2002. A declining trend in the fishery was noticed since the year 2000 consequent to reduction in catch rates and the production reached an all-time low of 117 t in 2004. Thereafter, the catch rates in multiday trawl improved significantly from 0.09 kg h^{-1} in 2004 to an annual average of 0.33 kg h^{-1} in 2008 (Fig. 1). During the year, 50% of the annual whitefish landing was observed in October-November months, when the catch rates increased from 0.6 to 0.8 kg h^{-1} . The recent spurt in the total production along the coast was consequent to the high catch rates in the bottom trawlers operated at 10-20 m depth. It is reported that 30-60 kg of whitefish was hauled per net by

multi-day trawl in November. The trawl units landed 200-800 kg per trip during the month. The size range of the fishery during the period varied from 110-230 mm with modal length at 160 mm. Gravid and maturing fishes formed 85% during the post-monsoon period.

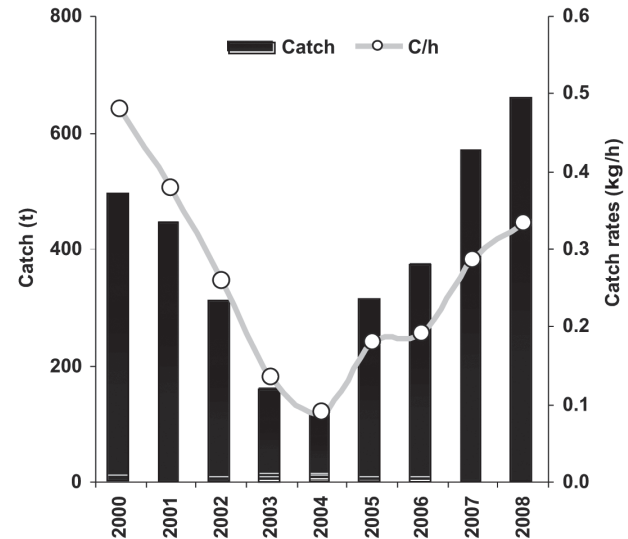


Fig. 1. Annual catch and catch rates of *Lactarius lactarius* in multiday trawlers at Mangalore