

## Unusual heavy landing of billfishes at Chennai

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Billfishes are regularly landed by mechanised gillnets and hooks and line at Chennai Fisheries Harbour. An estimated catch of 65 t, 80 t, and 60 t of billfishes were landed by mechanised gillnets during July, August and September 2010 respectively. On 24.06.2010, about 5 t of billfishes were landed unusually by mechanised gillnets operated at a depth of 50-60 m in the north-east direction.

Among the billfishes, Indo-Pacific sailfish *Istiophorus platypterus* (Shaw, 1792) locally called as “mayil kola” dominated the catch followed by the Pacific black marlin *Makaira indica* (Cuvier, 1832) locally called as “emen kola” and swordfish *Xiphias gladius* (Linnaeus, 1758) locally called as “panni kola”.

About 90% of the billfish catches were recorded in mechanised gillnetters, and remaining 10% were



Fig. 1. Billfishes landed at Chennai on 24.06.2010

landed by hooks and lines. The large size billfishes were landed by mechanised gillnetters, whereas the smaller ones were landed by hooks and lines. Fishes were auctioned and taken to the sheds for removing the head portion, dorsal fin and gut. Flesh portion was cut into pieces, preserved in ice and transported to Kerala.

Table 1. Particulars of billfishes landed on 24.06.2010 by mechanised gillnetters at Chennai

Species	Catch (kg)	Percentage (%)	Size range (mm)	Weight range (kg)	Price (₹/kg)
<i>I. platypterus</i>	3500	70.0	120-329	20-65	50-60
<i>M. indica</i>	1350	27.0	180-349	60-120	80-100
<i>X. gladius</i>	150	3.0	80-149	12-25	40-45
Total	5000	100			