

Marine Fisheries of India

Area of the country	3.29 million sq. kms
Length of coast line	8118 kms
Exclusive Economic zone	2.02 million sq. kms
Continental shelf area (approx)	0.53 million sq.kms
Fish production (2016) in million tonnes	3.63 MT (increase of about 0.23 million tonnes (6.6%) compared to 3.4 million tonnes in 2015).
Export of Fishery products (2016-17)	11,34,948 tones

The total marine fish landings from India for the year 2016 was 3.63 million tonnes registering a increase of about 0.23 million tonnes (6.6%) compared to 3.4 million tonnes in 2015.

Indian mackerel occupied the first position among the major resources landed all over the country, with an overall production of 2.49 lakh t ahead of oilsardine (2.45 lakh t).

For the first time since 1998, oilsardine was not the top ranked species in terms of catch as it fell below Indian mackerel. Since 2012, oilsardine landings continued to show a decreasing trend, with an estimate of only 2.45 lakh t.

A significant change observed in 2016 is in the landing pattern of bull's eyes (*Priacanthus* spp). It has been escalated to a six times high of 1.30 lakh t in 2016.

- A state-wise analysis of the estimates indicates that the maritime states of West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat and the U.T. of Daman & Diu registered increase in landings.
- Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Goa recorded a decline.
- For the first time Karnataka attained the third position pushing down Kerala into 4th position with 5.30 and 5.23 lakh t respectively. Karnataka registered a maximum of 19.6% increase.
- The state of Odisha recorded a decrease of 16.7% registering a total catch of 1.17 lakh t due to cyclone.
- Total landings of West Bengal increased with a remarkable hike to reach 2.72 lakh t from the 1.19 lakh t obtained in 2015.

- Almost all the main resources in the state have shown the increasing trend but the major contribution was that of Hilsa shad, the most favourite fish in the state. The estimated landings for Hilsa shad have touched a new record of 89,109 t from 16,273 t of previous year (WB).
- In spite of a continuing decline in oilsardine landings, Kerala attained 8% increase in the total landings in 2016 with an upsurge in the landings of other resources such as scads and bull's eye.
- Tamil Nadu recorded 7.07 lakh t with a slight decrease of about 2000 t from the previous year.
- The state of Andhra Pradesh recorded a massive decline (35%) of about 1 lakh t in 2016 registering the total catch of 1.92 lakh t due to cyclone.
- Over the years, pelagic resources had been the major contributor in Indian Fishery. They maintained their top status in 2016 accounting 52% of the total landings.
- This was followed by demersal (29%), crustacean (12%) and molluscs (7%).

Fishing craft and gears

- The mechanized sector accounted for 75%, motorised sector 22% and artisanal sector merely 3% of the total marine fish production during 2015.
- Motorisation of traditional crafts commenced during 1970's with plank-built boats in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu followed by dug-out canoes and catamarans fixed with out board motors in Kerala.

The highest contribution was from trawlers, which was around 57% in 2016. In both 2015 and 2016, the catch per hour of multiday trawlers were more or less the same. The motorised sector was replete with use of gillnets, seine nets, hooks & lines and bagnets.

- The principal traditional fishing gears operated is cast net, beach seine (shore seine), bag net, boat seine, gill net, trap, hook and line and other gears to suit the local conditions.
- Modern fishing gears operated are ring seine, purse seine, shrimp trawl, bottom and mid-water trawl, large gill net, long line etc.
- In addition to this, unconventional methods such as electrofishing, light fishing, fish finders, echo-sounders are also used.
- A number of other methods such as spearing, harpooning, roping etc. are used to capture fish in certain areas.
- Perch traps used in Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay area are made with bamboo material and are used for trapping perches.