

How to reduce By Catch

- Use of selective fishing gears like Gill net, Long line to reduce catching unwanted fishes.
- Use improved fishing technologies like Turtle Excluder Device (TED) which allows escape of turtle from the trawl net.
- By Catch Reduction Devices (BRD) - a square mesh panel in the trawl net, allows escape of juveniles. In addition square mesh reduces drag of the fishing net and save fuel in the fishing operation.
- Trawl nets fitted with otter board severely disturb the bottom of the sea and its impact is long term.
- A reduction of trawling during breeding season will prevent destruction of eggs and juveniles of commercially important fish.
- The statutory 35mm mesh size for trawl Cod-ends should be strictly followed by the fishermen.
- Modify the design and operation of trawl gears to make bottom trawling more eco-friendly.
- Effective use of by-catches for the preparation of protein rich fishery products for making value added products.



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BY CATCH REDUCTION MEASURES



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Humans have been known to harvest fish for at least 90,000 years using technologies that have developed from simple harpoons through to huge factory trawlers. Over the last few decades the controversial fishing issues - the waste associated with the incidental capture, mortality and discarding of unwanted by-catches have increased alarmingly.

In response to these by catch issues, the field of fishing technology altered its focus to selective fishing of target species. The current practice of trawlers throwing the unwanted fish catch back into the sea creates pressure on the fish resources. It is necessary to explore ways of reducing the by catch from trawling and make it more target specific.

Gill nets and long line cause low disturbance to the bottom fauna and the ecosystem as a whole. Fishermen should adopt these eco-friendly fishing method in place of the destructive fishing practices which leave an irreparable damage in the marine environment. These fishing gears are highly targeted specific, non-destructive and can be operated with low power engines.

Stake nets are traditional fish bag nets operated widely in the backwaters mainly for catching Penaeid prawns. As stake nets are a non-selective gear, huge quantities of juveniles are removed by stake nets thereby reducing the stock. The cod end mesh size of stake net should be maintained to allow juveniles to escape.

- It is estimated that 94 per cent of the bottom trawlers are having Cod-end mesh size of 18 mm and below instead of 35 mm imposed by the Government

- 232 non-targeted species are found killed and discarded in varying proportions while trawling.

