

**AN ANALYSIS OF RECENT TRENDS OF SMALL  
MESHED GILLNET FISHERY IN WEST COAST  
OF SRI LANKA**

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By

**DISSANAYAKE MUDIYANSELAGE INDUNIL**

**MADUWANTHI DISSANAYAKE**

**Aquatic Resources Technology Degree Programme**

**Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture**

**Uva Wellassa University**

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## ABSTRACT

An analysis of recent trends of small meshed gill net fishery in West coast of Sri Lanka is presented by this study. Approximately 93% of the surveyed sample is represented by FRP boats. Around 60% of total fishing effort on coastal pelagic resources in the study area in terms of number of boat days is provided by small meshed gill nets. The duration for which gillnet in operation (true fishing time) is normally 0.5 to 3 hours and present, the fishing depth range has become much wider and it is between 5 to 90m. FRP boats bring 3 to 42 net pieces of gillnets per fishing operation. The best fishing season in the west coast is at the latter part of the south west monsoon and higher catches are obtained in August and September. The major target fish group in small pelagic fishery in the west coast is clupeids and *Ambligaster sirm* is the dominant species in the catches over the considered period of time and it provides around 46% of the total catch in the west coast. The annual CPUE in terms of kilogram per net piece per day has varied on a range of 2 to 3.5 and CPUE in terms of kilogram per boat per day has varied on a range of 40-70. Though there is an increasing trend in the CPUE in terms of catch in kilogram per boat per day, it does not imply that there is a high abundance of fish in the studied area because this achievement may possible due to the increased usage of gillnet pieces, usage of high engine power, long fishing time and increased depth of fishing.

Key words: Recent trend, Small pelagic, Small meshed gillnets, West coast