Shaukat Hussain, J Nutr Food Sci 2017, 7:3 (Suppl)
http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2155-9600-C1-041

Large-scale drift gill-netting: Effect on food safety and environmental protection

Shaukat Hussain
M K Sons (Pvt) Ltd., Pakistan

Large-sized gill-netters engaged in catching tuna and tuna like species through drifting gill-nets on the high seas is a great threat to food security and oceanic ecosystem worldwide. These gill-netters stay at sea from two (02) to four (04) weeks and bring back this high valued fish in such a deteriorated and un-wholesome condition that it fetches only 0.6 % of the price of the international market. A part from lack of proper preservation system on-board, the retention of net with entangled / gilled fish in water for around 15 to 20 hours has great contribution towards its spoilage. The second most important factor is that these drifting nets are major threat to oceanic pelagic ecosystem. Plenty of slack of netting between float-line and lead-line encourage entanglement of non-targeted species and marine mammals during fishing operations. Besides, the lost or discarded netting continue to act as "ghost fishing" for indefinite period of time which also entangle birds and marine mammals near the sea surface. Most of the data / information were collected from different sources which include statistical data published by Government departments, NGOs, fisheries organizations, interviewing skippers & crew of the boats, direct measurement of specification of net by the author, visits of fish landing sites and conducting sensory evaluation / organoleptic examination of landed catch, press media reports etc. The technical drawing of a typical gill-net specifies the netting material, hanging ratio (E), mesh size, floatation etc. Way forward and recommendations: Although many countries have taken number of steps to reduce the overall length of the drift gill-net up to 2.5 km; however, it seems that day by day increase in length of fishing boats will not satisfy the fishermen due to the reason that a net of only 2.5 km long will not be economically feasible for such large boats. Therefore, in order to avoid over capacity and to achieve co-management (i.e. environmental protection and food safety), these boats may be converted to use alternate environmental friendly fishing methods or less destructive fishing gears & practices (like tuna long-liners) with on-board preservation / freezing facilities, which will be very much welcomed by the fishermen as they will get best prices due to quality improvement. A pilot project focusing conversion of only 5-8 gill-netters into tuna long-liners (instead of introducing new tuna long-liners or allowing foreign flag tuna long-liners to operate in the EEZs of coastal states) will automatically attract the owners of fishing boats for conversion.

Biography

Shaukat Hussain has completed his MSc in Industrial Fishing from Astrakhan Technical University of Fisheries, Astrakhan, Ex-USSR (Russian Federation). He has worked in the Marine Fisheries Department, Government of Pakistan, was the former Director General in the year 2015. Presently, he is working for M K Sons (Pvt) Ltd., for the development of new fish harbor in Gadani, as per the International Food Safety Standards as the Managing Director.

shaukat_hussain123@yahoo.com

Notes: