



Relationship between Prevailing Oceanographic conditions on the fishing operations in the Northern Indian Ocean

MUHAMMAD MOAZZAM KHAN
Pakistan (mmoazzamkhan@gmail.com)

Marked seasonality in fishing operation and catch composition was observed in the Northern Indian Ocean. These variations are more pronounced and noticeable in case of trawling for fish and shrimp as well as in the surface gillnetting for tuna and large pelagics. Although oceanographic conditions of the Northern Indian Ocean has been studied comprehensively, some facets of these are not well understood especially their relation with the fish distribution and abundance. Important oceanographic factors especially migration of oxygen minimum layer towards coastal areas after the cessation of South-West Monsoon seems to the most important factor responsible for the seasonal variation in the fishing intensity and species composition.

Distribution and abundance of some of the commercially important marine animals especially billfishes was observed to be associated with the physical features of the area especially their abundance was noticed along continental margin and on the ridges in the Arabian Sea. The paper describes seasonal variation in abundance and catch composition of various fishing operations in the Indian Ocean and relates its to prevailing oceanographic conditions. Fishermen traditional knowledge about the seasonality of these conditions is also documented in the paper.