

## THE STATUS OF THE PRAWN FISHERY AT NEGOMBO

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Prawn catch statistics collected during 1978 - 1986 shows a gradual decline of the catch per unit effort (CPUE). The CPUE of 8.9 kg. per Oru per day in 1979 has dropped to a value of 4.4 kg. per Oru per day in 1986. According to Schaefer model maximum yield is 167402 kg. and according to Fox model it is 166191 kg. per annum. Optimum effort according to above models are 21362 and 18355 boat days per annum respectively. The fishing effort of 24573 boat days 1986, was well above the optimum level. The yield - effort curve shows that the present exploitation levels are at the descending part of the curve, indicating signs of overfishing.