

## D-25: Fishing gear used in Batticaloa

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Batticaloa has one of the largest lagoons in Sri Lanka, with an area of about 13,500 ha. Invariably 54% of the population of Batticaloa engage in fisheries activities. There are no previous reports on fishing gear used in Batticaloa. An attempt was made to collect data on the different types of fishing gear used in the Batticaloa lagoon.

Data was collected by means of questionnaires where 10% of the fishing population was interviewed and from the Fisheries Division of Manmunai North, in the Batticaloa district.

Fishing methods ranging from very primitive ones to the use of nylon nets were recorded. Data was collected for each type of gear on species caught, habitat in which it is used, mesh size (where applicable), seasonality in use, area of the lagoon where it is predominantly used.

Seven primitive methods, 2 types of traps, 3 types of hook and line, cast nets of 14 different mesh sizes and gill nets were recorded. Cast net was predominantly used in most of the fishing villages where the substratum was sandy. Hook and line (nankuram type) was used in rocky substratum.

Most of the primitive methods - manual, karrapu and straining with cloth were used by women. 85.9% of fisherfolk used cast nets; 63.6% used hook and line; 31.4% used gill nets; 26.7% used crab traps; 7.8% used fish traps; 16% used brush pile; 1.7% used various primitive methods; 20.8% used dip nets, specially for prawns.