

D-79: Taxonomic study of snappers (Family: Lutjanidae) in demersal fish catches from southern and western coasts of Sri Lanka

R Maldeniya, T A Rajapakse

(Marine Biological Resources Div, NARA, Colombo 15)

The demersal fishery in the southern and western coasts of the island was studied with a view to updating the taxonomic knowledge and catch composition of snappers (Family Lutjanidae) in Sri Lanka.

Catch and effort data of existing demersal fisheries were collected for over one year (June, 1993 to May, 1994), at six major landing centres in the western and southern coast of the island. Random sampling was conducted on a fortnightly basis, covering 2 - 3 days in each landing centre.

A total of 35 species belonging to 8 genera were identified during the study. Two of the species identified, *Lutjanus bouton* and *Lutjanus carponotatus* were recorded for the first time in Sri Lankan waters. *L. bouton* also appears to be the first record from the western Indian Ocean.

The contribution of snappers to the hand line, bottom longline and bottom set gillnet fisheries were 11%, 12% and 4.8% of the total catch, respectively. *Pristipomoides filamentosus* was the dominant species in handline catches followed by *Lutjanus lutjanus* and *Pinjalo pinjalo*. The dominant contributing

species in bottom longline and bottom set gillnet fisheries were *L. rivulatus* and *P. pinjalo*.