

AN ATTEMPT TO UTILIZE FISH WASTE AND TRASH FISH IN SRI LANKA

by

T.S.S. Peiris
Research Division, Ministry of Fisheries
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Although the amount of fish waste and waste fish available in Sri Lanka is not large, its conversion into useful products is important. Fish meal is produced by the public and private sectors; a portion of the country's requirement is met by imports. Some waste fish which is not utilized could be used for fish silage production in Sri Lanka. Before installing a new fishmeal plant the possible advantages of making fish silage should be investigated. Experimental trials and investigations are needed to assess the best possible means to utilize all fish and fish waste.

INTRODUCTION

Technological research in Sri Lanka began in 1953 with the analysis of the flesh, skin, head, bones, viscera and liver for moisture, ash, fat and protein on several varieties of popular fish (Lantz and Gunsekera, 1957; Peiris and Grero, 1972, 1973). Such analyses form the basis for the optimum utilization of fish in any development programme.

Total fish production in Sri Lanka for the year 1976 was 133 731 tonnes. Since the present production does not meet the demands of the population of 13.7 million, there is a need to use as much of the fish as possible for human consumption. Although the quantity of waste material available is not very high, its conversion into useful products is important.

At present, fish waste and trash fish are not fully utilized although some is converted into fish meal. A fish silage industry has not been established. A portion of discarded fish livers is used for the extraction of liver oil. Skin, heads, liver, bones, fins and skeletal parts offer a further source of material for research and investigation.

FISH MEAL

Fish meal may be defined as the solid product made by removal of most of the water and some or all of the oil from fish or fish waste. It is too valuable to be used as a fertilizer.

The Ceylon Fisheries Corporation is a state-owned organization with two small-scale fishmeal plants; one is situated in Mutwal, Colombo and the other at Pesalai, Mannar. Another small, privately owned plant is also situated at Pesalai, Mannar. At certain fish landing centres waste fish is dried and ground to obtain a product similar to fish meal. A portion of the demand for fish meal is met by imports.

Plants

State-owned plant at Mutwal, Colombo

Operational efficiency of this plant has been impaired by age and it is not running at maximum capacity due to a lack of raw material. Other activities of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation Complex at Mutwal, include catching, handling, processing and marketing of fish. Thus a major proportion of the raw material for fishmeal production is easily collected within the organization.

Source: Indo-Pacific Fishery Commission Proceedings section II:
Symposium on fish utilization technology and marketing
in the IPFC Region. Published by IPFC, 1978. 685 pp.