Abstract

Trawlers were introduced into the archaic of Kerala fishery through the Indo Norwegian Project (INP). The trawler Sector of Kerala has become highly complex and ramified. The trawlers of the day are ultra modern and high-tech in terms of the adoption of technology, in the size and in the investment made in trawlers. Adding to this resource depletion crisis and deteriorating profit have taken place as is revealed from various studies. In such a situation, the importance of loss making trawlers would be quite appalling. Inspite of the deteriorating catch rate, declining net profit and high investment, trawlers proliferate. Thus the economic sustainability of this sector is studied.

As per the objectives set up in the study, the first objective analysed is the proliferation of the number of trawlers. The proliferation of the number of trawlers is found in all maritime districts except Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha. The district Kollam has marked the highest growth rate followed by Ernakulam and Kozhikkode. The study has identified the waning of the vessels with Over All Length (OAL) of 32-40 feet and waxing of the vessels with 48 foot and above.

Long run economic existence of trawlers depends on the net profit that the owners of trawlers gain. Cost is an inevitable factor that determines the profit. In the calculation of the annual fixed cost, the study has found out that ₹ 5,29,480.6, 7, 10,184 and 7, 42,251.25 have incurred respectively for the small medium and large vessels. It is also found out that the N.S.belt has more fixed cost than the location Munambam because of the wide spread sale of second hand vessels to the investors outside Kerala and the tendency to acquire new vessels. In the estimation of the total variable cost it is found out that 29.87 lakh has been incurred. The location Munambam has a higher variable cost than the N.S.belt because the percentage share given to the
crew are more in Munambam than the N.S.belt and voyage in the sea is more for the owners of Munamabam. The total cost estimated is ₹ 36.57 lakh. In estimating the profit, 30.15 per cent of the owners were not able to get positive net profit and 17.08 per cent could not even attain positive gross profit. Majority (61.3%) fall in the low profit category (> 21 lakhs). As per linear regression, the independent variable fishing hours is found having the highest value followed by fixed cost, fuel and size of the boat. Fox model is used to estimate Maximum Economic Yield. BEP and ARR are also calculated. BEP is 692281.77 and ARR is 6.83 per cent. The results of the Fox model reveals that the MEY is 1.95 lakh tonnes and the effort at MEY (EMEY) is 31.56 lakh hours. The present fishing effort is 63.7 lakh hours. This brings forth that the present effort of trawling is not at economically optimum level or economically sustainable. Half of the present trawl fishing effort is necessary to catch the economically sustainable yield. The study suggests reducing the size of the trawl fishing fleet in Kerala Fishery.