INTRODUCTION

Maharashtra state is one of the major marine fish landing states in India. It has 720 km coast line spread over the maritime districts, viz., Thane, Mumbai, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg. The fish potential of state is estimated at 6.3 lakhs tonne. The productions during the year 2006-07 was 4.64 lakh tonnes and its percentage to the state potential was 74 per cent. The fishing fleet operating along the Maharashtra coast during the year 2006-07 comprised of 11,798 mechanized boats and 10,895 non-mechanized boats. In Ratnagiri, a total of 588 number of gill netters were in operation (Anonymous, 2007). A study was undertaken with the objective of documenting the design and technical specifications of the mackerel drift gill nets operated from Ratnagiri.

RESEARCH METHODS

Ten fish landing centres of Ratnagiri were selected for the present study. Mirkarwada is a major fish landing and distribution centre and Sakhartar, Kasarveli, Mirya Bandar, Bhagwati Bandar, Bhakawada, Rajiwada, Karla, Bhatye and Phansop are minor fish landing centres. Structured schedules were prepared which comprised of two major sections. The first section dealt with the particulars of gill net owner and the fishing vessel used for the gill net operation. The second section dealt with design characteristics, rigging and mode of operation of the mackerel drift gill nets used by the fisherman of Ratnagiri. The information included in the first section was recorded according to Sreekrishna and Shenoy (2001) and the information in the second section was recorded according to Thomas and Hridayanathan (2006). The net designs of the mackerel drift gill nets were presented according to Nedelec (1975).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In Ratnagiri, mackerel drift gill nets were made up of...