

Protecting the Grouper: Maldives Poster Raises Awareness



Groupers are an important reef fish in the Maldives, which depends heavily for food, export earnings and tourism revenues on its coral reef system.

But stocks of grouper are said to be dwindling, and sizes of catch thinning. Earlier fished only for local consumption, groupers have in recent years been heavily fished for export to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Besides Maldives, several Caribbean, South Pacific and Indian Ocean countries have also reported dwindling stocks of grouper.

Groupers are normally solitary fish, but they gather in “spawning congregations” during full moon, normally

between September and November. Local fishermen are now aware of the exact times and days when groupers gather for spawning. This makes the spawning groupers very vulnerable.

As part of a management and awareness-raising campaign for groupers, the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources (MOFAMR) in the Maldives is using an attractive poster on commercially-exploited groupers of the Maldives. The poster was prepared by the Marine Research Centre of the MOFAMR and printed by the BOBP-IGO.



Bay of Bengal News is a quarterly publication of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO). The BOBP-IGO is a regional fisheries body, which presently covers four countries around the Bay of Bengal – Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The BOBP-IGO plays a catalytic and consultative role in developing coastal fisheries management in the Bay of Bengal to help improve the conditions of small-scale fisherfolk in the member-countries.

