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Growth, mortality, recruitment patterns and the length-weight relationships of big eye shad (*Ilisha filigera*) captured by set bag nets in the upper bay of bengal off the Bangladesh coast

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Abstract: Growth and mortality parameters, exploitation rates, annual recruitment patterns and length-weight relationships were estimated from monthly length-frequency and weight samples of *Ilisha filigera*, captured mainly by set bag nets (SBNs), from the upper Bay of Bengal off the Bangladesh coast using the FiSAT program. The objective of this study is to estimate growth parameters, mortality rates, and the exploitation rate and recruitment pattern of *I. filigera* for sustainable management. The von Bertalanffy growth parameters, asymptotic length  $L_8$  (cm) and growth constant K (per year), were found to be 48.90 and 0.80, respectively. The  $L_8$  and Z/K estimates provided by the Wetherall plot were 48.487 cm and 2.517. The annual rate of fishing mortality (F = 0.91) was low compared to the relatively high natural mortality (M = 1.35). The value of the exploitation rate (E = 0.40) suggested that the species was not over-exploited by SBNs operation in the region. About 53.33% of *I. filigera* were found to be recruited during the August-October period, and 46.67% during the March-May period. The growth performance index ( $\varphi'$ ) was 3.28. The total length and body weight relationship was found to be  $W=0.0318\ L^{2.5803}$  suggesting that the growth rate displayed a negative allometric pattern (b < 3). The growth parameters derived in the current study were found to be comparable with previous estimates available for the same species from the Bay of Bengal and from other localities.

**Keywords:** Growth, Mortality, Recruitment, *Ilisha filigera*, FiSAT, Bay of Bengal

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