



Research Article

Status of Fishing and Commercial Marketing of Hilsa Shad, *Tenualosa ilisha* (Hamilton-Buchanon, 1822), in Basrah Governorate, Southern Iraq

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Abstract | Due to a lack of information on the state of Hilsa shad (*Tenualosa ilisha*) fishing and commercial marketing in Basrah province, south of Iraq, this study was conducted to offer an update on the species' status. The current study seeks to analyze the capture and marketing of currently available commercial species. In 2021, the average number of fishermen per unit of effort was 2025, with 871 small fiberglass boats and 166 large iron boats. The entire catch of hilsa shad during 11 years, from 2014 to 2024, was 9095 tons, whereas the total catch of all fish, including shad, was 38187 tons. The average catch over the last 11 years (2014-2024) is 826.82 tons/year. The percentage was 5.59% in 2017 and reached a peak of 37.74% in 2023, with hilsa shad accounting for 23.82% of total captures. The current study indicates that natural conditions, variables, freshwater discharge from the Shatt Al-Arab River, and fisheries management north of the Arabian Gulf all have a significant impact on the status of hilsa shad.

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Introduction

Hilsa shad (*Tenualosa ilisha*) is a fish species affiliated with Dorosomatidae, one of the most important families in the Middle East, South Asia, Pakistan, and India (Khan *et al.*, 2025). The first identification of the present species was made by Russel (1803); he called it Palash. Then, the species was renamed by Hamilton in 1822 as *Clupanodon ilisha* (Al-Dubakel, 2011). Hilsa shad, an anadromous species locally called "Sboor" in Iraq Sboor is a

favorite and desired species in the south of Iraq; the species possesses high food value and commercial importance (Borah *et al.*, 2023). The species is widely distributed in the Shatt Al-Arab River and enters the Tigris at Al-Auzir city, south of Missan province. The fish are widely dispersed in freshwater, estuaries, and the Arabian Gulf; it is a migratory species to rivers to complete its reproductive cycle (Singh *et al.*, 2021; Mohamed and Abood, 2024).

Hilsa shad is an economically important fish for