



## Popular Article

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### Post-Harvest Losses in Fisheries and Their Management

**Dr. Navpreet Kaur<sup>1\*</sup>, Jaspreet Kaur<sup>2</sup> and Tarandeep kaur<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1\*</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Desh Bhagat University, Gobindgarh, Punjab- 147301, India.

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Govt. College Malerkotla-148023, Punjab, India.

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Govt. Ripudaman College Nabha- 147201, Punjab, India.

\*Corresponding email address: [kaurnavpreet2209@gmail.com](mailto:kaurnavpreet2209@gmail.com)

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#### *Abstract*

Fisheries contribute significantly to global food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, particularly in coastal and inland rural populations. However, a considerable amount of captured fish is lost between capture and eating owing to poor handling, insufficient storage, spoiling, and ineffective marketing strategies. Post-harvest losses in fisheries lower fishermen's income, contribute to food poverty, and squander precious natural resources. This article addresses the nature and causes of post-harvest losses in fisheries, their economic and nutritional implications, and practical management options for reducing these losses. Improving post-harvest methods, developing infrastructure, and increasing capacity may dramatically increase fish quality, shelf life, and profitability.

**Keywords:** Post-harvest losses, fisheries management, fish preservation, cold chain, value addition, food security, quality control

#### **Introduction**

Fish and fishery products provide high-quality protein, vital fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals. Millions of people rely on fisheries for work and income, particularly in developing nations. Despite increasing levels of output, post-harvest losses remain a key issue in the fisheries industry.

Post-harvest losses are the decline in quantity, quality, or economic worth of fish after harvest but before final consumption. These losses might range from physical spoiling to a decrease in market value owing to poor quality. Addressing post-harvest losses is critical to boosting food availability, raising fisher earnings, and encouraging sustainable fisheries.

### ➤ Types of Post-Harvest Losses in Fisheries

#### • Quality Losses

Quality losses are caused by changes in freshness, texture, taste, or appearance. Although fish may still be edible, decreased quality reduces market value.

- **Physical Losses:** Physical losses happen when fish are rejected due to rotting, mechanical damage, or contamination. Poor handling during landing and transit is a prevalent issue.
- **Nutritional Losses:** Improper processing and storage can reduce nutritional value, especially protein quality and essential fatty acids.
- **Economic Losses:** Economic losses occur when fish are sold at reduced prices owing to delayed marketing, insufficient ice, or limited access to profitable markets.

#### • Causes of Post-Harvest Losses

There are several variables that lead to post-harvest losses in fisheries:

- \* Insufficient transportation and packing.
- \* Limited processing and preservation facilities.
- \* Poor market infrastructure and price swings.
- \* Fish are highly perishable due to their high moisture and protein content.
- \* Lack of cold storage and ice facilities at landing sites.
- \* Poor handling and sanitary habits.

Small-scale fishermen are especially susceptible owing to limited resources and technological access.

### Management Strategies to Reduce Post-Harvest Losses

- Improved handling practices
- Traditional and contemporary preservation methods assist to increase shelf life.
- Market and Policy Interventions
- The Role of Technology in Loss Reduction Cold Chain Development
- Services include packaging, transportation, training, and capacity building.

### Economic and Social Benefits of Loss Reduction

Reducing post-harvest losses has several benefits:

- \* Increased income for fishermen and processors.
- \* Enhanced food and nutrition security
- \* Enhanced availability of fish without increasing capture
- \* Increased export competitiveness.
- \* Less impact on fish stocks.

## Conclusion

Post-harvest losses in fisheries are a serious concern, but they also provide an opportunity for increased efficiency and sustainability. Losses can be significantly minimized by implementing improved handling techniques, upgrading cold chain infrastructure, encouraging value addition, and improving training and policy support. Effective post-harvest management not only increases profitability and food security, but it also promotes sustainable fishing and responsible resource use.

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