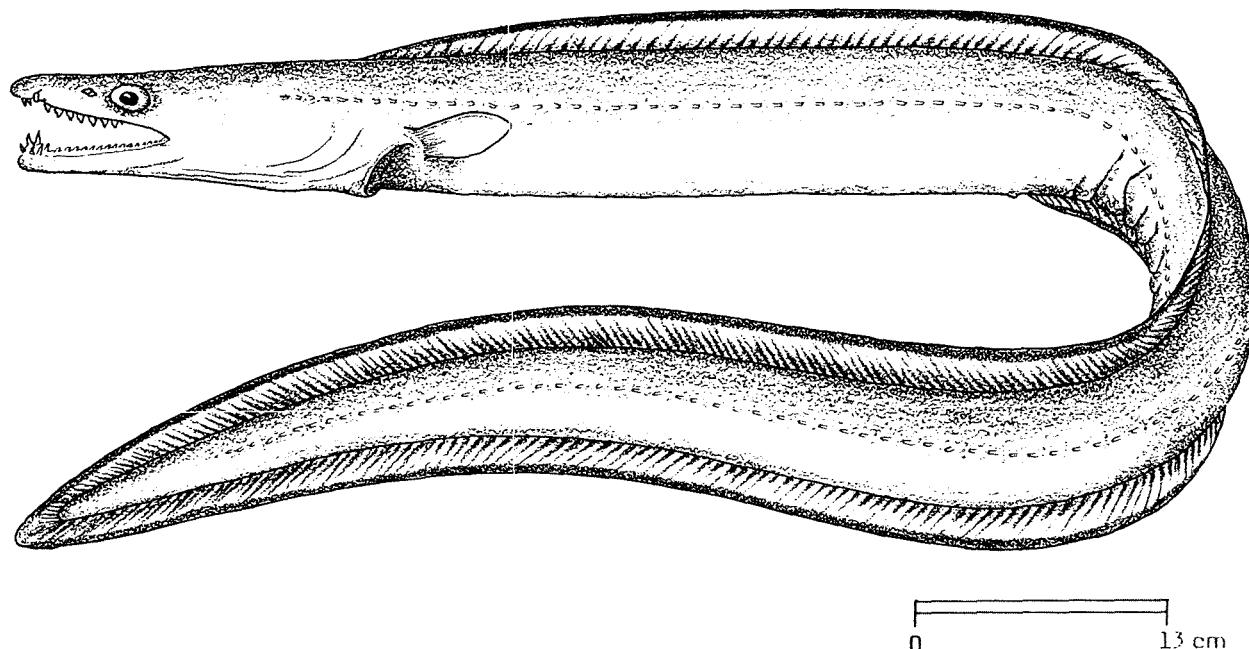


FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: MURAENESOCIDAE

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean)

<i>Muraenesox bagio</i> (Hamilton-Buchanan, 1822)

OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE : *Muraenesox yamaguchiensis* Katayama & Takai, 1954

VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Common pike conger
Fr - Morénésoce commun
Sp - Morenocio corriún

NATIONAL:

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

Body elongate, cylindrical in front, compressed along tail. Head sharply conical, with the snout and lower jaw lengthened forward so that the mouth is large, extending to beyond eye; no lips; eye moderate; interorbital space about 10.7 times in head length; teeth generally large, conspicuous, sharp, more or less in 3 longitudinal rows on jaws and vomer (roof of mouth); those on middle row of lower jaw and of vomer triangular, laterally compressed, with a prominent basal cusp in front and behind; tip of lower jaw with its large canines fits into a notch in underside of snout when mouth is closed. Dorsal and anal fins continuous with caudal fin around tip of body; dorsal fin rays before level of anus 47 to 59; pectoral fins well developed. Lateral line pores before level of anus 33 to 39. Vertebrae 128 to 141.

Colour: light greyish-brown shot with olive-bronze above, lighter below; dorsal and anal fins with narrow black edges.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Muraenesox cinereus: attains only about 80 cm in total length; a shorter, broader snout, so that the interorbital width is about 8 times in head length (10 or 11 times in M. bagio); more lateral line pores (39 to 47, against 33 to 39 in M. bagio) and more dorsal fin rays (66 to 78, against 47 to 59 in M. bagio) before level of anus; vomerine teeth more closely packed so that the bases are usually in contact; more vertebrae (145 to 159, against 128 to 141 in M. bagio).

Congresox talabon and C. talabonoides: outer (principal) row of teeth in lower jaw turned outward; more pointed teeth on vomer (roof of mouth); yellow body coloration.

SIZE:

Maximum: 180 cm; common to about 150 cm.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:

East Africa from Natal to Tanzania, eastward to include the Mozambique Channel, Madagascar, Mauritius, the west coast of India and Sri Lanka. Also east Indian coast throughout Indonesia to Japan and southward to Sydney, New Caledonia and Fiji.

A nocturnal fish inhabiting soft bottoms to 100 m and estuaries, feeding on bottom fishes and crustaceans.

PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

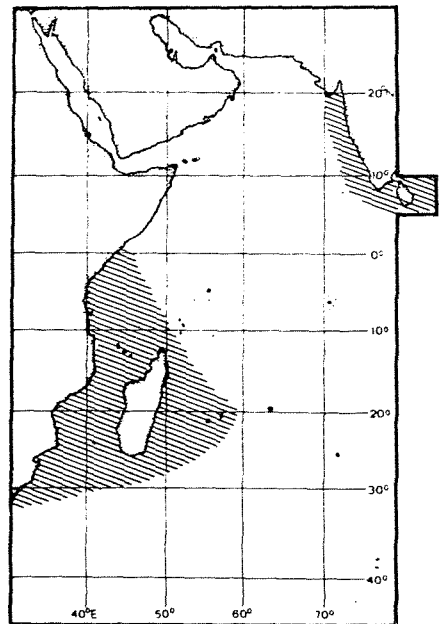
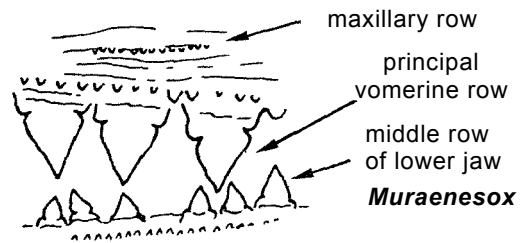
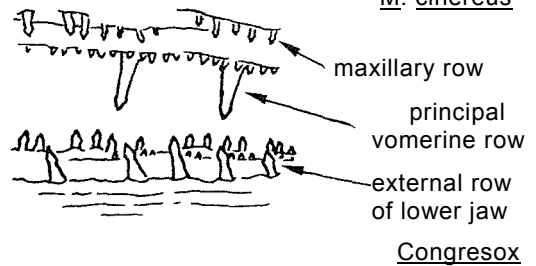
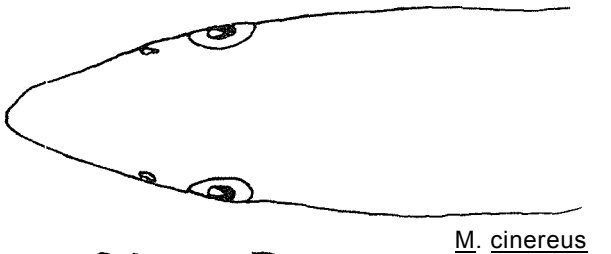
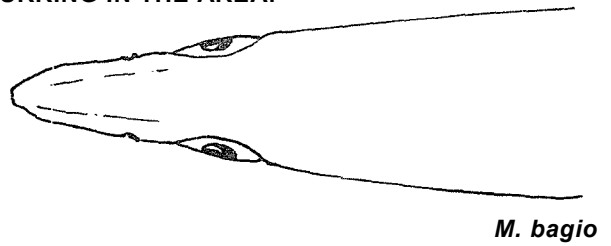
No definite fishing grounds in this area. Caught mainly in coastal waters down to 100 m throughout its range.

CATCHES, FISHING GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

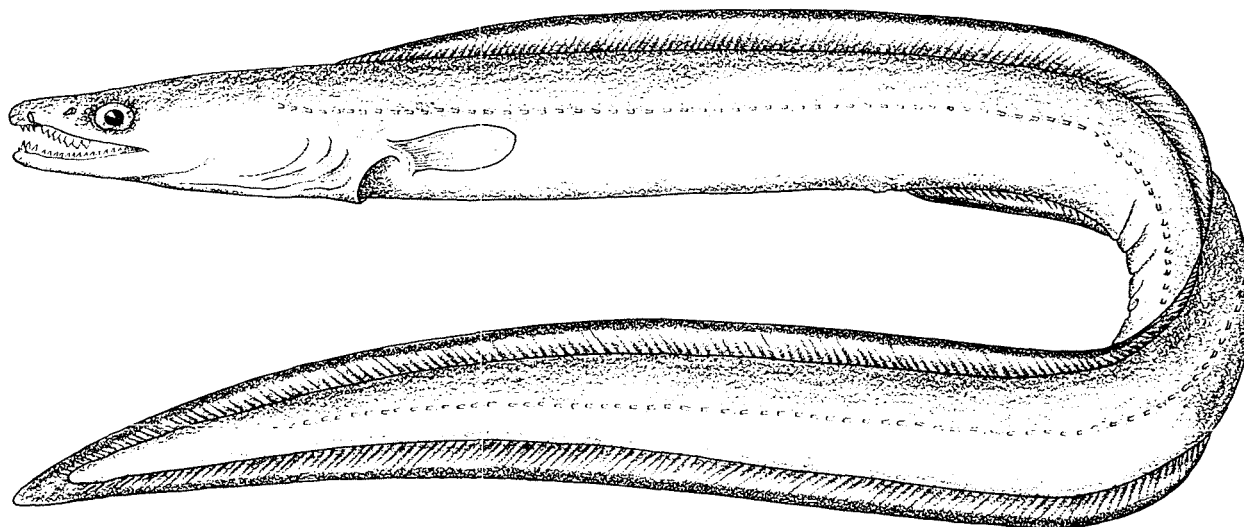
Caught mainly by longline and trawl, but also by drift net and bag ('dol') nets (India).

Marketed mainly fresh.



FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION SHEETS

FAMILY: MURAENESOCIDAE

FISHING AREA 51
(W. Indian Ocean.)Muraenesox cinereus (Forsskål, 1775)OTHER SCIENTIFIC NAMES STILL IN USE: Muraenesox arabicus (Schneider, 1801)

VERNACULAR NAMES:

FAO : En - Daggertooth pike conger
Fr - Morénésoce dague
Sp - Morenocio dentón

NATIONAL:

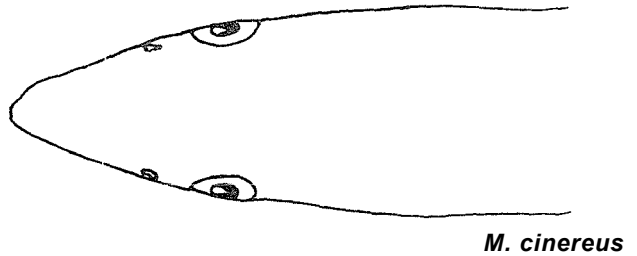
DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS:

Body elongate, cylindrical in front, compressed along tail. Head sharply conical, with the snout and lower jaw lengthened forward so that the mouth is large, extending to beyond eye; no lips; eye moderate; interorbital space about 8.2 times in head length; teeth generally large, conspicuous, sharp, more or less in 3 longitudinal rows on jaws and vomer (roof of mouth); those on middle row of lower jaw and of vomer triangular, laterally compressed, with a prominent basal cusp in front and behind; tip of lower jaw with its large canines fits into a notch in underside of snout when mouth is closed. Dorsal and anal fins continuous with caudal fin around tip of body; dorsal fin rays before level of anus 66 to 76; pectoral fins well developed. Lateral line pores before level of anus 39 to 47. Vertebrae 145 to 159.

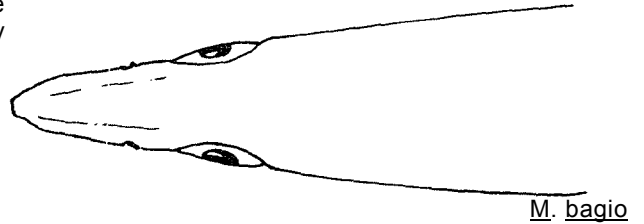
Colour: light to dark greyish-brown above; lighter below; dorsal and anal fins with narrow black edges.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF SIMILAR SPECIES OCCURRING IN THE AREA:

Muraenesox bagio: attains 180 cm in total length; snout longer and narrower, so that the interorbital width is about 10 or 11 times in head length (about 8 times in M. cinereus); fewer lateral line pores (33 to 39, against 39 to 47 in M. cinereus) and fewer dorsal fin rays (47 to 59, against 66 to 78 in M. cinereus) before level of anus; fewer vertebrae (128 to 141, against 148 to 159 in M. cinereus).



Congresox talabon and C. talabonoides: outer (principal) row of teeth in lower jaw turned outward; more pointed teeth on vomer (roof of mouth); yellow body coloration.



SIZE:

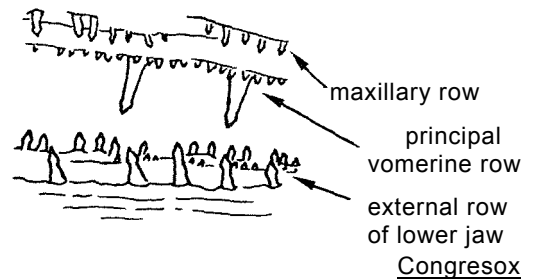
Maximum: 80 cm; common about 50 cm.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOUR:

Red Sea, the "Gulf", west coast of India, Sri Lanka. Also eastward throughout Indonesia northward to Japan and Korea, southward to northern Australia. Recently reported from the Eastern Mediterranean.

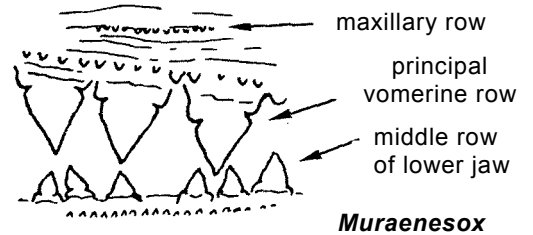
Inhabits soft bottoms to about 100 m, and estuaries.

A nocturnal fish feeding on small bottom fishes and crustaceans.



PRESENT FISHING GROUNDS:

No definite fishing grounds in this area; caught mainly in coastal waters down to 100 m throughout its range. Common at Bombay during monsoon months.



CATCHES, FISHWG GEAR AND FORMS OF UTILIZATION:

Separate statistics are not reported for this species.

Caught mainly by bag ('dot') nets (India), drift nets, trawl and longline.

Marketed mainly fresh.

