



Fisheries sector hit by slump in sardine catch

The price of sardine in the state has increased on an average 60 per cent, rising from ₹26 per kg to ₹ 65 per kg

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THE State's fisheries sector suffered a loss of ₹150 crore in 2015, due to a sharp fall in the catch of oil sardine, according to results of a joint study conducted by the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) and the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

"Due to last year's sardine famine, the fisheries sector incurred a 28.2 per cent decline in employment.

"The price of sardine for consumers in the State increased on average 60 per cent, rising from ₹26 per kg to ₹65 per kg.

"The famine had a multifold and disastrous effect on the fisher-folk," states a report on the study which was submitted by Fisheries Minister J Mercykutty Amma on Thursday.

"Disruption in breeding and environmental factors like upwelling in the Arabian sea, coupled with excessive fishing beyond the maximum sustainable yield and excessive juvenile fishing during the 2010-12 period, led to the famine.

"Climatic changes post the 2015 cyclone, characterised by reduced rainfall

and increased sea surface temperature, also contributed to the steep fall in catch," stated the report.

The report, prepared under the leadership of CMFRI Fishery Environment Management Division head V Kripa, also indicates that the chances of a full recovery in sardine catch is unlikely this year.

The CMFRI has proposed that the State Government introduce effective precautionary measures, including stringent curbs on juvenile fishing and regulation to reduce the size of fishing net.

Directors and scientists from the CMFRI, Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Central Institute of Fisheries and Nautical Engineering Technology (CIFNET) the National Institute of Fisheries Post Harvest Technology and Training (NIFPHATT) and the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (KUFOS) attended the meeting.



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Report on the study, which was submitted by Fisheries Minister J Mercykutty