



Oct 3, 2016

Popularising mariculture

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

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TO give a fillip to fish production in the country, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) will now focus on popularising mariculture activities in all the maritime states. The annual review meeting of All India Network Project on Mariculture (AINP-M), co-ordinated by CMFRI, has formulated an action plan for developing and popularising marine grow-out systems, farmer-friendly hatchery technologies for commercially important fishes and establishing a centre of excellence in mariculture research in the country.

AINP-M is a major research programme with a financial outlay of Rs 42 crore undertaken by CMFRI with the centres from all the maritime states to strengthen the mariculture initiatives in the country.

Apart from the three species—cobia, seabass and pompano— for which currently commercial level hatchery production is available in the country, CMFRI is in the process of developing technologies for three more marine species which will boost mariculture activities. CMFRI Director Dr A Gopalakrishnan said due importance would be given to popularize the farming technologies developed by conducting demonstrations in the farmers fields. “At a time when capture fisheries production is undergoing through a stagnation period, the mariculture can be considered as the only option to meet the ever increasing demand for the marine food products,” he said adding that open sea cage farming method developed by CMFRI is one of the best farming models which could be effectively popularized among the fishermen community in the country.

“The mariculture sector will address the ever increasing demand for the quality seafood for human consumption and, to some extent, bridge the gap between demand and supply in marine fish production as the amount of wild caught fish has been remaining stagnant for the years and scope for increasing prosecution form capture sector is very little,” he said.