

Action plan mooted to boost mariculture

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(representative image)



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

focus on popularizing mariculture activities in all the maritime states.

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 remaining stagnant for the years and scope for increasing prosecution form capture sector is very little", he said adding that mariculture can be considered as one of the best alternate livelihood options for the coastal fishermen community. Dr. Gopalakrishnan also said that the CMFRI, under the AINP, will focus on developing viable and farmer-friendly technologies for marine fish seed production and farming especially cage farming.

"The indigenous cage farming method developed by the CMFRI for the country is well received by the farmers of various coastal districts and economically feasible. National agencies on fisheries development is promoting this activities based on the inputs given by CMFRI through various incentives like subsidies and schemes", he said. The review meeting was attended by scientists from all the collaborating centers located in 7 maritime states of the country. Dr. G Gopakumar, Emeritus scientist (ICAR), reviewed the progress of the project and suggested corrective measures for better implantation of the project.