

‘Put greater effort into coral reef conservation’

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An eminent American expert in marine biodiversity has warned of a recent trend of ignoring the taxonomy (classification) of species in the marine ecosystem.

Gustav Paulay, Curator of the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, urged scientists to give prime importance to study the classification of various marine species giving it as much emphasis as other research activities.

Lack of classification

He was delivering a lecture entitled ‘Reef Biodiversity: the Inside Story’ at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

Around 80 per cent of marine organisms are not yet classified and most of the marine species are still unexplored, he said. He expressed concern about leaving marine biodiversity unexplored even in the age of technological advancement.

Unexplored biodiversity

The biodiversity in the Indian region is yet to be studied and classified and is far behind the Atlantic and Pacific regions, where a census of marine life is being conducted by scientists, he added.

Paulay, who specialised in reef biodiversity research, also pointed out that the conservation of coral reefs could be made more effective with combined efforts, including the involvement of the public and scientists.

CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan presented a memento to Paulay at the function, which was organised by the Journal Club of CMFRI.