

U.S. expert for classification of marine species

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI: The eminent American expert in marine biodiversity, Gustav Paulay, who is curator of Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, U.S., has warned of a recent trend of ignoring the taxonomy of species occurring in the marine ecosystem. He urged scientists to give prime importance to studying the classification of various marine species.

He was delivering a lecture on "Reef biodiversity, the inside story", at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

"Around 80 per cent of the marine organisms are not yet classified and most of the marine species are still even

unexplored", he said. He expressed his concern over leaving the marine biodiversity least understood even in the age of technological advance. Biodiversity in the Indian region was yet to be studied and classified, compared with the Atlantic and Pacific regions.

He advised Indian scientists to emphasise understanding the characteristics of many undescribed marine species in the Indian Ocean by intensifying research on taxonomy by using molecular tools like e-DNA or meta bar coding.

Dr. Gutsav urged scientists to develop an online database of the biodiversity, helping enthusiasts access information of the resources.