

CMFRI study suggests ban on light fishing

‘Such a restriction within 12 nautical miles of territorial waters will protect the traditional fishers’

KOCHI: The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has suggested that light fishing (fishing using lights) be banned within 12 nautical miles of the territorial waters to protect the interests of traditional fishers.

However, a study report released by the research organisation here on Saturday said traditional light fishing practices using Chinese dip nets and boat seines and trammel nets in certain districts of the State may be kept outside the purview of the recommendation.

“Going by the study results, resource-specific light fishing such as oceanic squid fishing should be encouraged beyond 12 nautical miles through incentivised schemes by maritime States and the Central government. The use of lights should not be allowed from towed fishing gears (trawls) and static gears such as traps, pots, and long-lines until scientific studies prove the absence of impact,” it said.

According to the study, the use of artificial lights (surface and submerged) should not be permitted from Drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (DFAD) targeting tunas as resolved by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

Highlighting the new research programmes launched on the occasion of the CMFRI platinum jubilee celebrations, CMFRI Director A. Gopalakrishnan said the institute would execute a major research project to address the impact of climate change on marine fisheries. “This is part of the Third National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,” he added.

The CMFRI will launch a research programme on breeding, seed production, and farming of tuna. It will also submit mariculture policy guidelines to the Centre. The development of pelagic fish biomass estimation model for effective management of pelagic fishery in the country with the support of satellite remote sensing technology will be another major research initiative in the platinum jubilee year.