

Demand for 'fish farming package'

OUR BUREAU

Kochi, May 5

In the wake of sharp decline in fish availability for the last three years, a group of fishermen have sought a fish farming package as compensation.

The demand was raised at an interactive meeting with Sudarshan Bhagat, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute here on Friday.

According to the fishermen, there has been a drastic decline in fish landings in Kerala since 2012. Quoting CMFRI studies, Charles George, state president of Matsyathozhilali Aikyaavedi, said the loss was around ₹10,000 crore to the fisheries sector in the state.

The fish farmers requested the Minister to include cage fish farming activities under the Prime Minister's Mudra Bank Loan scheme and extending insurance protection

to cage farming. The Minister promised that the government would take necessary actions after examining the issues raised by the stakeholders and would also seek the state government opinion to resolve the issues.

CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan said the institute had set up a working group of experts for framing guidelines as part of the National Mariculture Policy to be submitted to the Centre.

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