



## ICAR-CMFRI releases estimates of marine fish landings in India-2016 India's marine fish catch increases 6.6%

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India's total marine fish landings recorded a slight increase of 6.6 per cent during 2016 compared to the previous year with a production of 3.63 million tonnes against 3.40 million tonnes in 2015. The estimates of country's marine fish landings of 2016 released by the Kochi headquartered ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) today highlighted that for the first time after 1998 sardine was not the top-ranked species in terms of the landings in the country.



According to ICAR-CMFRI's estimates, Gujarat remained at the top position for the fourth consecutive year with a production of 7.74 lakh tonnes followed by Tamil Nadu (7.07 lakh tonnes) and Karnataka (5.29 lakh tonnes). Even as Kerala, one of the major fish consuming States in the country, was slipped down to fourth spot for the first time in the history, the state registered an 8% increase in its total marine fish catch over the previous year producing 5.23 lakh tonnes in 2016. West Bengal, Karnataka, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra and Daman & Diu witnessed a hike in the marine fish landings, whereas other states including Tamil Nadu registered a fall in the catch in varying degrees.

Karnataka boosted its landings to reach to the third spot in the country by a production of 5.29 lakh tonnes ahead of Kerala, recording 19.6% increase over the previous year. In 2015 Karnataka was in the fourth position in the country.

### Mackerel tops in India

Mackerel, the national fish was placed the first spot of the major resources obtained all over the country, after a long interval from 1999 with an overall production of 2.5 lakh tonnes ahead of oil sardine (2.44 lakh tonnes). However, the catch of mackerel dropped by 33% in Kerala.

A significant change observed during 2016 was the landing pattern of bulls eye (*Priacanthus spp*). From a mere 4,691 tonnes in 2015, the catch of the fish was escalated to a six-times-high of 1.3 lakh tonnes this year. The fish emerged as a major resource in the landings with high production in the West Coast where Karnataka contributed the maximum.

### Huge hike in Hilsa

A huge hike in the landings of Hilsa shad, the most favourite fish of people of West Bengal, helped the state to increase its marine fish production to 2.72 lakh tonnes. The fish recovered from its previous trends of dwindling catch to reach 94,000 tonnes, a four-fold increase compared to 2015. The revival of Hilsa helped the West Bengal to increase its marine fish production to 2.72 lakh tonnes in 2016 from a 1.18 lakh tonnes of 2015, a huge upsurge in the catch.

### Catch declined in Andhra Pradesh

At the same time, fish catch dropped significantly in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha mainly due to the cyclone which reduced fishing days in these states. Andhra Pradesh recorded a decrease of 35% during 2016 over the previous year, while 17% of catch declined in Odisha.

The marine fish landing estimates of the ICAR-CMFRI also showed that chub mackerel (*Scomber indicus*), the new fish described by the CMFRI last year, was limited to the Kerala coasts only. Around one thousand tonnes of this resource was landed off the Kerala coasts during 2016.

### 20% increase in value of fish

The estimate of value of marine fish landings during 2016 at the landing centre level in the country was ₹ 48,381 crores, registering an increase of 20.7% compared to 2015. At the retail level, the estimated value was ₹ 73,289 crores with an increase of 12.4% over the previous year. Even as the landings increased in the state, Kerala suffered a fall of 18.1% over previous year in the value of fish catch at the retail centres.

The Fisheries Resource Assessment Division of the ICAR-CMFRI estimated the annual marine fish landings of the country.

Dr A Gopalakrishnan, Director of ICAR-CMFRI said the marine capture fisheries is experiencing more fishing pressure and there is urgent need to implement control measures to maintain the harvest at sustainable levels. "Also, we have to explore the utilisation of untapped and unconventional resources to quench the demand. Further, climate change, particularly the increase of sea surface temperature and mean sea level rise are factors affecting the marine fisheries. The ICAR-CMFRI is carrying out research works for developing frameworks to mitigate such challenges", he added.

(Source: ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi)