

07 July 2017

Panel moots action plan for fisheries development

OUR BUREAU

Kochi, July 6

To solve overcapacity in the fishing sector, a panel of experts has drafted a national-level plan for the sustainable development of marine fisheries, with a call for stopping registration of new fishing vessels in Indian waters.

Aimed at implementing the Sustainable Development Goal-14 (SDG) of the United Nations in India, the experts, hailing from the marine fisheries, forests, environment, ocean development, industry, fisheries associations and coastal zone management sectors, also recommended a licencing scheme for fishing gear and boat building yards.

The action plan was formulated at the national workshop on SDG-14 organised by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute and WWF-India.

Formation of marine parks, community reserves and no-

take zones is one of the major recommendations in the action plan. It also includes a proposal to declare ecologically sensitive marine hotspots as Biodiversity Heritage Sites.

In addition, a demand for imposing the Minimum Legal Size (MLS) restrictions on all the coastal States and UTs uniformly to avoid juvenile fishing has been included in the action plan. Presently, the MLS is notified only in Kerala.

Ocean management

It also includes an urgent call to finalise an Ocean Regulation Management Act to bring uniformity in fishing in Exclusive Economic Zones with common rules and specifications.

To regulate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, a suggestion to monitor vessels and set up a surveillance system in all the coastal states has also been included in the action plan.