

## CMFRI to work out national marine fisheries index

KOCHI: The Niti Aayog has requested the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) to initiate a slew of programmes for the development of marine fisheries of the country.

During an interaction with CMFRI director A Gopalakrishnan, Manash Choudhury, deputy advisor (Fisheries), NITI Aayog suggested that CMFRI makes a National Marine Fisheries Index (NMFI) in order to derive a comparative picture of marine fisheries development across the maritime states including islands (Andaman and Lakshadweep).

Stressing on the urgency to formulate a National Marine Fisheries Action Plan (NMFAP) covering all the maritime states and the islands, he said that it should be in tandem with 'Sagarmala'- a programme aimed to boost the blue economic growth centring the improvement in coastal logistics, skill development etc.

The action plan needs to be prepared based on the prospects and limitations of marine living resources and environmental factors prevailing in coastal states, he said, adding that CMFRI could identify the reasons for underutilisation of the potential of promising areas in the sector in each state(s) and in islands. "Large scale investments are required to fully exploit the potential of marine fisheries resources available in the sector, giving due weightage to sustainable growth. The CMFRI may find ways and means to overcome the impediments, which limit the private investments in mariculture and similar activities," Choudhury said.

"The Institute should take steps to estimate the farm-level economics of cage fish farming. By 2022, it is expected to produce Rs 4 lakh tonnes of fish through cage fish farming, subject to the translation and adoption of technology to its potential. An ex-ante economic assessment on seed and feed value chains along with estimation of investment requirements is important to achieve this target", he said and added that the Kudumbashree units of Kerala could be a viable option for successful adoption of cage farming technology across the State.