



BLUE REVOLUTION

CMFRI to train 5,000 fishers in open sea cage farming



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A Gopalakrishnan, director, CMFRI



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S Mahesh, Deputy Director,
Fisheries Dept

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has launched a major project for providing training to fishermen in open sea cage farming.

Considering the stagnation in capture fishery, the CMFRI plans to usher in the Blue Revolution by providing training to 5,000 fishermen across the country with a financial support of nearly ₹1 crore from the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

A three-day training programme on open sea cage farming began at the CMFRI in Kochi

on Monday. As many as 50 fishermen from Ernakulam and Thrissur districts who have registered with the Kerala Fishermen's Welfare Fund Board are attending the training. The CMFRI will provide training to 1,000 fishermen in Kerala.

"The cage fish farming technology has proved 70 times more productive than the normal fish farming methods. Conventional pond culture of marine fishes produce an average 0.5 kg/m³ (5000 kg per hectare) whereas cage farming offers a production of 35 kg/m³", said CMFRI Director A Gopalakrishnan.

Referring to the scarcity of fish seed he said CMFRI has already commenced the work to establish

a brood bank of high value marine fishes suitable for cage farming with a financial support of ₹9 crore from the NFDB.

"CMFRI will extend all technical support to the fishermen to start cage farming in the open sea which will provide an additional income to the fishermen and will help increase the marine fish production of the country", he said.

Deputy Director of Fisheries S Mahesh, who inaugurated the training programme said the State Fisheries Department had formulated plans to extend the cage fish farming in Kerala coast with technical support from the CMFRI.

"As many as four cage farming

units have already been sanctioned. According to the plan, the State government will provide ₹75 lakh to the units and the remaining ₹7 lakh will be raised by the beneficiary groups formed by the fishermen", he said.

CMFRI Mariculture Division head Imelda Joseph said the country should turn to mariculture to meet the growing demand for fish.

The species such as cobia, seabass, groupers, snappers, mullet, lobster and pearl spot are highly suitable for cage farming in sea waters, she said.

"The sea cage farming will get a major boost once the National Mariculture Policy is implemented", she said.