

Project to boost cage fish farming launched

5,000 fishers to be offered training as part of the initiative

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has launched a project to boost open-sea cage farming as part of efforts to trigger a Blue Revolution in the context of stagnating catch. The project envisages acceleration of cage fish production by providing effective training to 5,000 fishermen across the country with a financial assistance of nearly ₹1 crore from the National Fisheries Development Board under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

CMFRI has launched the first phase of the project to train fishermen in all maritime States. Accordingly, a three-day training programme began at CMFRI 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 programme. As part of the pro-



CMFRI Director A. Gopalakrishnan explaining cage fish farming to fishermen with the help of a model of a cage.

ject, CMFRI will offer training to 1,000 fishermen in the State, said a statement from the institute.

CMFRI Director A. Gopalakrishnan said that cage fish farming technology had proved 70 times more productive than the normal methods of fish farming. "Conventional pond culture of marine fish produces an average 0.5 kg per cubic metre or 5,000 kg per hectare, whereas cage farming offers a production of 35 kg per cubic metre," he said.

Fisheries Deputy Director

S. Mahesh, who inaugurated the training programme, said that the Fisheries Department had formulated plans to extend cage fish farming to the Kerala sea waters with the support of CMFRI.

Four cage farming units with 10 cages per unit have been identified at an estimated cost of ₹82 lakh. According to the plan, the State government will provide ₹75 lakh to the units, while ₹7 lakh will be raised by beneficiary groups formed by fishermen, he added.