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Marine fisheries panel stresses on MSC certification; identifies 10 fish varieties

OUR BUREAU

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Observing that eco-labelling certification awarded by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is crucial for bolstering export value of Indian fisheries, a panel of stakeholders in marine fisheries sector has decided to take joint efforts to obtain the certification.

During a discussion at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute under the leadership of the MSC, marine scientists, seafood exporters, fishermen representatives and retailers observed that unanimous efforts are required to implement fishery improvement projects (FIPs) prior to fulfilling the 'high bar' standards for the MSC certification.

Considering the commercial importance, 10 fisheries were prioritised by the panel as the targeted fishery for getting MSC certification. They include blue swimming crab, shrimp, red ring shrimp, squid, whelk, flower shrimp, cuttlefish, lobster, skipjack

tuna and Japanese threadfin bream. Fishery improvement projects will be developed for these fisheries.

Yemi Oloruntuyi, Head, Developing World Programmes of the MSC, said maintaining sustainability of fisheries is crucial to increase its acceptability among overseas markets. "Today, it is increasingly a risky business to sell seafood products that are not sustainable. Sustainability provides

competitive advantage creating opportunity for well-managed fisheries.

Certification and eco-labelling helps to demonstrate sustainability," she said.

Sunil Mo-

ammed, Principal Scientist of CMFRI, said the certification would bring in enhanced economic opportunities and market access for the fishing industry. The eco-labelling certification will boost India's share of seafood exports and fetch a well-accepted markets in European and North African countries, he said.

