

Formulate policy to check marine debris, Centre told

Global conference concludes at CMFRI

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A two-day national conference on marine debris here has called for the formulation of a policy by the Centre to combat the menace of growing marine debris in oceans, which the meet described as one of the biggest threats to the aquatic ecosystem.

The conference, which concluded at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), was organised by the Marine Biological Association of India. The plenary session of the conference stressed the need for a policy to protect the marine and estuarine ecosystem and fishery resources, said a release.

Researchers had found the presence of micro-plastics in fish, indicating that they had entered the marine food chain. "Stringent rules are the need of the hour to control the situation of accumulating plastic debris in the marine ecosystem," the conference said.

Regulatory councils

The meet also recommended that regulatory councils be set up at the Central and State levels to coordinate activities to curb marine and estuarine debris, along with



Marine debris is seen as the biggest threat to the aquatic ecosystem.

sub-centres at corporation, municipality and panchayat levels.

"A helpline should be established to report 'ghost nets' [abandoned nets]. There should be concerted efforts to upscale successful models of waste management, plastic recycling, waste processing, and value-addition from waste. Considering the quantum of biomedical waste being generated, more biomedical waste treatment plants should be established along with conducting public awareness campaigns," the meet said.

Experts who spoke at the plenary session also called for coordinated efforts to strengthen e-waste management initiatives at various levels. A collaborative industry partnership was suggested to increase recovery and recycling of plastics and curb their accumulation in the water ecosystem.