

First consignment of cage farmed fish species flagged off

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The Visakhapatnam Regional Centre of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has flagged off the first consignment carrying the maiden harvest of orange spotted grouper (*Epinephelus coioides*) and Indian pompano (*Trachinotus mookalee*) - two candidate species known for lot of demand for finfish mariculture in Kolkata.

The successful harvest is a major breakthrough in the history of mariculture. This is the first form of harvest of orange spotted grouper and Indian pompano in marine cages in the country, Dr. A. Gopalakrishnan, Director, CMFRI, told *The Hindu*.

Groupers weighing 1.2 tonne and two tonne of In-



Indian pompano along with orange-spotted grouper fish being sent after maiden harvest from the cage culture in the sea by CMFRI from Visakhapatnam to Kolkata on Saturday.

dian pompano were sent in insulated containers in a truck from the city for supply to the West Bengal Fisheries Development Corporation in the presence of CMFRI scientists here on Saturday evening.

CMFRI principal scientist

Shubhadeep Ghosh said that they would popularise the seed production technology developed by them for the two species by encouraging pond culture in a big way. Right now it is being encouraged at Nagayalanka in Krishna district and at Bhi-

mavaram in West Godavari district. The National Fisheries Development Board has identified pond culture as one of its thrust areas.

Good returns expected

The average size of the two species is put at 750 gram.

The production cost of each fish is ₹180 and it is expected to be sold at almost double the cost. Pompano resembles and tastes like white pomfret, which is sold in local market at ₹800 to ₹1,200 per kg depending on the size.

“The two species are conducive for cage culture with 95% survival as our results in stocking hatchery-produced seeds yielded nearly four tonne in a span of one year,” Dr. Ghosh said.