

'Participatory management councils will play a key role in fisheries sector'

Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulation Act amended to involve all stakeholders

OUR BUREAU

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Establishment of participatory management councils, one of the new amendments to the Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulation Act, will play a crucial role in revamping the fisheries management system in the State, according to experts.

Marine scientists who spoke at a workshop on scientific management of marine fisheries, held at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, observed that the proposed management councils would ensure the involvement of all stakeholders, including fishermen, in management and policy formation in the sector.

Sunil Mohamed, Principal Scientist, CMFRI, said the councils would open a plat-

form for dialogues and discussions to take decisions in a democratic way.

It will address the requirements for sustainability, equity and efficiency in fisheries and coastal resources management.

3-tier system

The participatory management council, which was included in the amendment of KMFRA following a proposal from the CMFRI, will function as a 3-tier system – village, district and State.

The council will have representations of fishermen, government officials, boat owners, boat builders, fish traders, NGOs, scientists, etc.

Through the implementation of these councils, fishermen will be empowered to be-

come active members of the fisheries management team, balancing rights and responsibilities, and working in partnership with the government, Mohamed said.

He also said intensive public awareness is required to effectively implement Minimum Legal Size (MLS) regulations to curb juvenile fishing. Consumer awareness is crucial in implementing the MLS regulation properly, he said, adding that implementing the same would increase the economic efficiency of the fishery, besides affording protection to juvenile fishes.

In his introductory remarks, Venkatesha Pathi, Director of Fisheries, said a scientific approach is essential for better fisheries management.

The fisheries department has allocated special funds for adaptive research in this regard.