

Last year's sea catch was highest since 2012

OUR BUREAU

Kochi, June 26

India's marine fish production has demonstrated signs of revival, with annual landings registering 5.6 per cent increase in 2017 as against the previous year.

The total marine fish landings (excluding the Andaman & Nicobar and the Lakshadweep islands) in 2017 was 38.3 lakh tonnes (lt), with Gujarat remaining at the top position for the fifth consecutive year, contributing 7.86 lt followed by Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

This is the highest catch after the record-high landings in 2012, data released by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) said.

The estimate of the value of fish landings based on price at landing centres across the country was ₹52,431 crore, with an increase of 8.4 per cent. The unit price per kg of fish at landing centre was ₹137. At the retail level, the estimated value of marine fish was ₹78,408 crore. The



Net effect Fish landings improve with sustainable practices

unit price at the retail market level was ₹204.

A Gopalakrishnan, CMFRI Director pointed out that the present marine fish catch is the second historical highest in India.

“The upsurge in the marine fish production is a promising trend and it is observed that some new resources are emerging as the major fishery in many maritime States”, he said.

The sustainable fishery adopted by many coastal States, the recent fishing regulations such as Minimum Legal Size (MLS) and other regulatory measures and reducing impact of El Nino effect contributed to the higher catches, he said.

The revival of oil sardine in the western coastal States especially Kerala played a major role in improving the marine fish production this time. However, the East

Coast witnessed a decline in the oil sardine catch with 83 per cent drop in Andhra Pradesh and 36 per cent in Tamil Nadu.

Indian oil sardine, which was showing a decreasing trend for the past few years, topped the list of marine fishery resources with a landing of 3.37 lakh tonnes. The catch of Indian mackerel also increased whereas the landings of hilsa shad, threadfin breams and tuna dropped this year. The resurgence of oil sardine fishery helped Kerala attain an increase of nearly 12 per cent in the marine fish landings with a total catch of 5.85 lakh tonnes.

The Cyclone Ockhi that hit during the end of 2017 had a devastating effect on the marine fisheries sectors of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Kerala suffered an estimated drop of around 35,000 tonnes of fish due to Ockhi disaster in December 2017 with an estimated economic loss of ₹585 crore at landing centre level and ₹821 crore in retail level.