

## Blend science, business in fisheries: CM

Pinarayi inaugurates conference of Fisheries Ministers from south Indian States

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The management of fisheries resources should follow an integrated approach, blending traditional knowledge and science with business principles, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said.

After inaugurating a conference of Fisheries Ministers from South Indian States at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) here on Saturday, he sought effective engagement of primary stakeholders and those engaged in ancillary activities to ensure that fishing was ecologically and economically sustainable.

Fisheries governance should be improved to resolve conflicts between tra-

ditional and mechanised sectors.

Simultaneously, governments should provide legislative support so that rights of traditional fishermen were secured and their livelihoods not adversely impacted by developmental activities.

Union and State governments should agree upon management policies for sustainable utilisation and management of living resources in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), Mr. Vijayan said.

After the declaration of the EEZ in 1976, the sea area available to India was estimated at 2.02 million sq km. With sovereign rights on the EEZ, India was also responsible for conserving, develop-



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan with Ministers Mahadev Jagannath Jankar and J. Mercykutty Amma in Kochi.

ing, and optimally harnessing marine resources in this area, he said.

The country had 9.90 lakh active fishermen, of which 33% were employed in the mechanised sector, 62% in the motorised sector, and 5% in the artisanal sector.

Referring to Kerala's initia-

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tives in the sector, Mr. Vijayan said a plan was afoot to give emphasis to participatory management of fisheries resources, for which fisheries management councils at State, district, and village levels would be set up.

They would be having representation of fisherfolk

too. The government also plans to introduce new schemes to enhance skills and capabilities of traditional fisherfolk, to undertake deep-sea fishing, for which liberal assistance from the Central government was required.

It also had plans for modernisation of its indigenous deep-sea-fishing fleet through fishermen cooperatives and self-help groups, on-board training, and linkages to markets and export.

Fisheries Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, and Puducherry, and Fisheries Secretaries of Lakshadweep, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and a host of senior officials and scientists are participating in the conference.