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## **'Overfishing**, killing of juvenile fish on rise along Maha coast'

WORLD OCEANS' DAY Fish not being allowed to grow caused state ₹686-crore loss in 2018: Study

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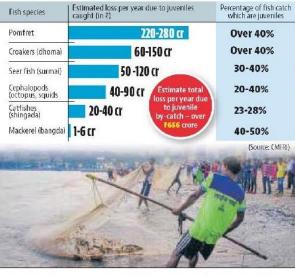
MUMBAI: Ahead of World Oceans' Day, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMTRI) released data on Friday that Shows an alarming risc in overfishing in Maharashtra, particularly of juvenile fish. Aside from posing a threat to marine life, fish notheing allowed to grow to their natural size means an economic loss of an estimated 4586 crore for the state in 2018.

After analysing data collected throughout the year, the CMFRI, Mumbai, has concluded that juvenilefish catch across Maharashtra led to an overall loss exceeding 7686 crore in 2018. The amount was 8355 crore for 2017.

"Our coastal waters remain openfor unlimited entry and nonrestricted marvest of fish. The limited management options with increasing fishing effort and high juvenile by catch is a worrying trend," said Ajay Nakhawa, from the CMFRI, Mumbai. Juvenile fish are used to make different kinds of processed food and in the aquaculture industry.

With 2.8 lakh tonnes of catch in 2018, Maharashtra is one of the leading marine fish capturing states in India. The CMFRI also found that 50% of the total amount of juvenile bycatch in the state is found in Mumhai. This is partly because of city fishermen use travkers that sweep the sea floor and also because sellers from nearby areas bring their catch to Mumbaihoping to secure

### 'INDIA NEEDS A NEW OCEAN POLICY'



#### PERCENTAGE OF JUVENILE FISH SPECIES CAUGHT AT FERRY WHARF, MUMBAI

**CMFRI also calculated** the percentage of juvenile by-catch at Ferry Wharf in Mumbai's Mazagaon, which was one of the highest for India, researchers said.

Juveniles of fish species		Percentage of juveniles caught
-	Indian Lizardfish	85.5%
	Wolf herring	64%
•	Pomfret	56.2%
~	Catfish	32-72%
-	Bombay duck	33%
- >	Shrimp	13-24%
-	Crab	17.8%

Sanjay Upadhyay, a Supreme Court lawyer, recently wrote to the central government asking it to create a new ocean policy. "Issues such fishing beyond 12 nautical miles and national jurisdiction, the complexity between the state and the Centre on the ocean and coastal resources, the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) network, traditional fisherfolk rights etc. all need to be incorporated under one policy to address rising concerns," he said.

higher prices. The percentage of juvenile bycatchatFerry Wharf in Mumbai's Mazgaon is one of the highest in India, said the CMFRI, with lizardfish, pomfret, catfish, Bonbay duck and shrimp (see box) juveniles being caught in high quantities.

AnulekshmiC, in charge of the CMFRI in Mumbai said, "It is affecting whole ecosystem. Juvenile by catch leads to economic inefficiency and an already visible drop in quantity and quality of consumable fishes," the scientist said.

To lower juvenile bycatch, Tarun Shridhar, secretary, department of animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries, issued an advisory in February, directing all coastal states to implementa minimum legalsize for catching, landing and tradeof fish. "Wechanged the use of nets to 40mm square mesh codends as opposed to traditional diamondshaped nets (size 20-25mm) that used to pick up large quantities of juvenile fish. Wherever implementation is lacking, action is being taken," said Rajendra Jadhav, joint commissioner, fisheries.

However, members of the MaharashtraPurseseineFishermen Welfare association said codend square mesh nets were not being used and alleged the state profited from juvenile fish sales. "There is a strong lobby behind the non-implementation of square mesh nets. Juveniles are being caught and sent to the fishmealindustrics. If the quality is bad, they are sent for poultry meal," said chairman Ganesh B Nakhawa.