

CMFRI calls for citizen participation

Mapping hotspots of vibrio in Vembanad lake

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In a move to promote citizen science initiatives, a multi-institutional research project for optical mapping of Vembanad lake has offered an opportunity to college students and aspirant environmental conservationists to become a part of a research work, aimed at understanding the extent of pathogenic vibrio pollution in the lake,

identifying their reservoirs in the ecosystem, mapping the distribution of vibrio carriers using remote-sensing techniques and developing forecast models that would serve to anticipate hotspots of microbial infection.

The study was launched last year and is jointly carried out by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, National Institute of Oceanography, Nansen Environmental Research Centre-India and Plymouth Marine Laboratory under the India-UK Water Quality Initiative of the Department of

Science and Technology, Government of India.

The students and the public can join a massive data collection process from various parts of the lake using the Secchi disc, a simple hand-held device to measure level of turbidity of water. A mobile app has been developed to upload the data timely with geo-location information.

The study mainly focuses on mapping the hotspots of vibrio in the lake and developing a forecast model using remote-sensing technology, said Grinson George,

Senior Scientist, who is coordinating the citizen science component in the project.

Anyone who wishes to contribute to science and aspiring environmentalists can become part of the programme.

Priority will be given to college students and those residing on the banks of the lake.

A one-day training will be provided to the participants at the CMFRI on August 5. Those interested may send their expression of interest to science.cmfri@gmail.com.

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