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**Proposal of separate fisheries department to lift exports**

**Govt decides to start piloting vannamei shrimp farming**

**Fish Waste to be Utilized as Fish Feed**

**Application Of Renewable Energy in Aquaculture**

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- Editor



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## CMFRI issues advisory as US ban on wild-caught shrimp hits exports



With export of Indian wild-caught shrimp to the United States being affected for the past seven months due to alleged non-compliance with the US regulations to protect sea turtles, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has issued an advisory urging the fishing regulators to make the use of turtle excluder devices (TED) mandatory on all trawl nets used by trawl vessels.

Though an expert team from the US Department of State was expected to visit Kerala in January, the visit was postponed in view of the US Government shut down. According to the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), the export of wild-caught shrimp has been affected since July, 2018, due to the restrictions imposed by the US State Department. Wild-caught shrimp constitutes around 11 per cent of the Rs.1500-crore shrimp export to the US from India. "The team is expected to visit Kerala by February-end," said a senior officer.

The Department of State had certified 39 nations and one economy, and granted determinations for seven fisheries, as having adequate measures in place to protect sea turtles during

commercial shrimp fishing. Only these countries are allowed to export shrimp to the US. However, India does not feature in the list of certified countries.

"The very low intensity of turtle nesting does not warrant the use of TEDs in trawls along the west coast of India. However, as a precautionary measure, trawl fishers may be advised to use them in their trawl nets with adequate state support and incentives," the CMFRI said in its advisory.

To conserve marine turtles in Indian waters, fishery interactions with these animals have to be constantly monitored. This is currently being done through the catch recording and monitoring system by CMFRI which employs nearly 100 observers in all landing ports and beaches of the country. The CMFRI has decided to generate specific annual reports on turtle-fishery every year, said principal scientist Mr K Sunil Mohamed.

The ban came as a blow to the Indian shrimp exporters as the country was the largest exporter of frozen shrimp to the US in 2017, with 32 per cent share. India's exports jumped from 11,000 tonnes in 2016-17 to 25,888 tonnes in 2017-18.

## Proposal of separate fisheries department to lift exports

The government's proposals for the creation of a separate department for fisheries and a 2% interest subvention on loans to fish farmers will help boost shrimp production and exports, expects the seafood industry. India was the top producer of aquaculture shrimps in the world at more than 6 lakh tonnes last fiscal year, when exports of seafood, primarily shrimps, earned the country Rs 45,000 crore in foreign currency. Fisheries is at present clubbed with animal husbandry and dairy under the agriculture ministry, and having a dedicated department will help focus more on the development of the sector.

It will help in quicker decisions at the administrative level for fisheries and seafood, being an export oriented industry, will definitely benefit," said Mr S. Chandrasekhar, President of the Society of Aquaculture Professionals. This has been a long-pending demand of the

industry, he added.

"We hope that there will be a secretary for fisheries under the department whom we will be able to approach directly. For instance, our demands like quarantine facility for aquaculture can be easily settled," said Mr V. Balasubramaniam, General Secretary of the Prawn Farmers Federation of India.

Mr Balasubramaniam said 2% interest subvention proposed for fish farmers and those hit by calamities will help the industry. Recently, the Gaja cyclone had hit shrimp farmers in parts of Tamil Nadu.

Mr Kenny Thomas, Managing Director of Seafoods Exporter, Jinny Marine Traders in Gujarat, sought more clarity on interest subvention. "The announcement says farmers pursuing fisheries and animal husbandry will get interest subvention. But we need to clarify whether it applies to river fisherman or in general including shrimp farmers," he said.

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