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Dip in shark stocks: CMFRI recommends curbs on catch

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EXPRESSING concern over the dwindling stocks of sharks in the Indian waters, scientists at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have suggested self-imposed restrictions on catching the species for conservation of the threatened species. There has been a sharp decline in the catch of sharks and rays compared to the catch data for the past 20 years, said Demersal Fisheries Division head P U Zacharia while speaking at a stakeholder workshop on conservation and trade of sharks at CMFRI here on Saturday.

Lack of regulatory measures and overfishing may even lead to the extinction of some shark stocks, he said.

“Though there was no practice of fishing for the lone purpose of shark fins in the country, the meat and other parts of sharks have a huge demand within the country. The CMFRI has submitted a National Plan of Action on sharks to the Centre regarding the management of sharks,” said Zacharia.

Representatives of fishermen and those involving in shark trade attended the workshop. Representatives of shark traders demanded to lift the ban on exporting shark fins as they were suffering huge financial loss. “The fin has huge demand in foreign markets and neighbouring countries export it. India loses a good amount of foreign currency due to the ban,” they said.