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App to generate database of wetlands

CMFRI ties up with ISRO to collect data

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A mobile app has been developed to collect complete datasets on smaller wetlands across the coastal region of the country.

The app was developed by the Space Applications Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation on a request from the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in line with a memorandum of understanding between them.

The mobile app is aimed to generate a centralised digital database of the smaller wetlands (2.2 ha or below) across the country.

Such smaller wetlands cover an area of more than five lakh hectares across the country, while Kerala has 2,592 smaller wetlands.

The app will be used to collect field level data of the wetlands that include geospatial profile, size, water and soil quality, farmed species, pollution status, illegal construction and biodiversity specialities.

"The concept is to integrate field-level regional wetland data to geospatial datasets so as to enable comprehensive monitoring system in the wake of climate change and wetland vulnerabilities," said CMFRI director A. Gopalakrishnan during the launch of the mobile app on Monday.

Game changer

The app could become a game changer in making wetlands resilience by bridging the gap between satellite and ground data, he said. "Continuous monitoring will help provide village-level real time advisories for aqua-farmers and alerts on climatic phenomenon in the future", he said.

Climate related events such as floods have changed the physio-chemical profile of wetlands.

"Many fish farmers and fishermen suffered economic loss due to loss of cages, salinity changes in aqua-farms and coastal ecosystem changes," he said.

A digital common platform on the health status of wetlands of the country could easily help understand such vulnerable regions, he added. The initiative of monitoring the wetlands is carried out by the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project wing of the CMFRI.

The data collection using the mobile app will be done by registered researchers, farmers, and stakeholders.