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Public participation sought in lake research project

CMFRI initiative to widen extent of data collection

**STAFF REPORTER
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The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has sought to involve the general public in a study on pollution in the Vembanad Lake. The CMFRI has sought the participation of residents along the banks of the lake, fisherfolk, tourist boat operators, commuters and environmental activists.

Developing models

Participants in the project will be required to use a Secchi disk, a simple hand-held device, that measures the turbidity of water, said A. Gopalakrishnan, Director, CMFRI.

The study, which began

last year, will examine the extent of pathogenic vibrio (a type of bacteria) pollution in the lake.

The project will also attempt to identify the reservoirs of these pathogens in the ecosystem, map the distribution of vibrio carriers using remote-sensing techniques and develop forecast models that can anticipate hotspots of microbial infection.

Sharing info

Around 300 students are currently part of the project, sharing data with researchers using the Secchi disk.

Public participation could widen the extent and frequency of data collec-

tion. Besides the CMFRI, the National Institute of Oceanography, Nansen Environmental Research Centre-India, and Plymouth Marine Laboratory, U.K., are part of the project taken up under the India-U.K.

Water Quality Initiative of the Central Government's Department of Science and Technology.

Training session

A day-long training session on using the Secchi disk for data collection will be provided to those willing to participate in the project.

The session will be held at CMFRI on December 20. Phone: 9895125529 or 6235369399.