

01 July 2020

Marginal increase in India's marine fish production

Oil sardine catch lowest in two decades in the State, Indian mackerel landings also decline

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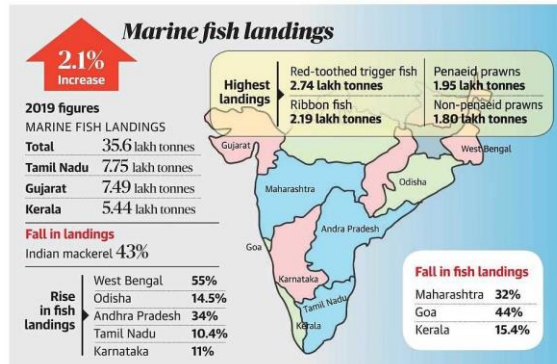
India's marine fish production registered a marginal increase of 2.1% in 2019 compared to the previous year. The country recorded 3.56 million tonnes in total landings during the year, according to the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

The figures released here on Tuesday by the CMFRI showed that Tamil Nadu took the first position in landings with 7.75 lakh tonnes. It was followed by Gujarat (7.49 lakh tonnes) and Kerala (5.44 lakh tonnes).

Oil sardine catch dropped to 44,320 tonnes, the lowest in two decades for the State.

Most landed variety

A commercially important fish became the most landed variety with the red-toothed trigger fish (2.74 lakh tonnes) registering a huge increase in landings along the coastline. The fish has little demand in the



domestic market and is mostly caught for feed mills.

Indian mackerel, which was in the first spot in 2018, suffered a setback with the landings declining by 43% during last year. While States such as West Bengal (55%), Andhra Pradesh (34%), Odisha (14.5%), Karnataka (11%)

and Tamil Nadu (10.4%) recorded increase in landings, the fish catch decreased in Maharashtra, Goa and Kerala compared to the previous year.

The second largest volume of fish landings was ribbon fish (2.19 lakh tonnes). It was followed by penaeid

prawns (1.95 lakh tonnes) and non-penaeid prawns (1.80 lakh tonnes).

The value of marine fish landings in Kerala based on price at the landing centres was ₹12,387 crore, an increase of 20.35% over 2018. The price was ₹17,515 crore at the retail level in the State.

Kerala's landings down by 15%

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Kerala suffered a drop of 15.4% in marine fish landings with the total landings of 5.44 lakh tonnes compared 6.42 lakh tonnes in 2018-19.

There was a sharp decline in oil sardine and Indian mackerel catch. While oil sardine catch dropped to a meagre 44,320 tonnes, the lowest catch in two decades, Indian mackerel (40,554 tonnes) experienced a decline of 50% compared to the previous year. In 2012, the catch of oil sardine in Kerala was 3.9 lakh tonnes.

Since then, there was a substantial decrease in the catch every year, but it moved up in 2017. Oil sardine landings again continued to decline for the past two years due to changes in ocean environment.