

Centre eyes developing sustainable seaweed economy: Fisheries Secretary

The Union government is looking to develop a sustainable economy through seaweed cultivation, Fisheries Secretary Jatindra Nath Swain has said. As climate change was posing a major threat to human life, cultivating seaweed would help boost the economy and reduce the impact of climate crisis, he added.

He was speaking at an interactive meeting with scientists of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) held at its headquarters in Kochi. As an additional livelihood option, seaweed farming would play a major role in the socio-economic upliftment of traditional

A CMFRI communication said the Union government official asked the research institute to set up a seed bank for seaweeds to popularise the practice along the country's coastal region.

Marine scientists should come up with ways for capacity development to enhance seaweed cultivation on a large-scale, he said, and pointed out that the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana had special thrust on promotion of seaweed farming.

Mr. Swain was on a visit to Kerala to understand the issues and challenges being faced by the fisheries sector after he took over the portfolio four months ago. Apart from those at the Kochi headquarters, CMFRI scientists from various regional research stations across the country attended the meeting.

The Fisheries Secretary also said that India was eyeing to double seafood exports in the next five years. "We are hopeful of achieving this target by exploring innovative ways to increase the production that will certainly upscale the country's per capita income," he said. The government was supportive of promoting cage fish farming, which was also an alternative source of income that would help traditional fishermen double their income, he added.

Flagging his concerns on resource depletion and ecosystem degradation, Mr. Swain urged scientists to focus on ways to promote responsible fishing and to adopt appropriate mechanisms to improve sustainable fishing.