

# Oil sardine catch drops by 75% in State

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The catch of oil sardine dropped by 75% in 2021 when compared to the catch the previous year, according to the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

In 2021, the catch was to the tune of 3,297 tonnes, which was the lowest catch of the fish since 1994 in the State.

The catch was also 98% lower than the annual average of sardine availability during 1995-2020 that was 1.66 lakh tonnes.

The data on the catch were presented at a workshop held at the CMFRI on Tuesday.

However, the total catch of marine catch fishes increased by 54% in 2021. The year witnessed 5.55 lakh tonne of marine catch being brought to the shores. Lesser sardine (65,326 tonnes) topped the list of the most landed resources in the State in 2021, followed by Indian mackerel (56,029 tonnes) and scad (53,525 tonnes), according to a

communication.

While the catch of oil sardine, silver bellies and black pomfret was found decreased, the catch of penaeid prawns, squid and threadfin breams increased significantly during the year, said T. M. Najmudeen, a scientist of the Institute, who presented the catch data.

The reduced catch of oil sardine reflected in the marine fisheries sector suffering a severe loss.

The annual value of the sardine in the landing centres plummeted to ₹30 crore from the ₹608 crore in 2014, said N. Aswathy, Principal Scientist of CMFRI, who led the analysis.

The small-scale fishermen, who venture into the sea on outboard ring seines, bore the brunt of dwindling sardine catch, the communication said. A workshop organised in this connection called for strict measures to curb juvenile fishing. Fishery experts warned that juvenile fishing practice would result in depletion of resources.