



Just 3,297 tonnes in 2021: Oil sardine catch sees record dip, sparks concern



DOWN, UP, DOWN AGAIN

2012: 3.9L tonnes
2013: 2.1L tonnes
2014: 1.6L tonnes
2015: 68,431 tonnes
2016: 45,958 tonnes
2017: 1.27L tonnes
2018: 77,093 tonnes
2019: 44,320 tonnes
2020: 13,154 tonnes
2021: 3,297 tonnes

98%
decrease in
2021 compared
to average
annual catch
from 1995 to
2020

Kerala fish
landing in
2021: **5.55**
lakh tonnes

Increase in fish
landing: **1.94**
lakh tonnes

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OIL SARDINE catch in the state dropped to a record low of 3,297 tonnes in 2021, confirming fears of migration of species and highlighting the need for complete ban on fishing during breeding season.

This is also 98 per cent less than the annual catch during the 1995-2020 period, as per the figures revealed by scientists at a workshop organised by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in Kochi on Tuesday.

Experts said climate change, warming of the Arabian Sea as well as change in water current and the ecosystem has contributed to the migration of Kerala's staple fish from the state's

coast. However, Kerala, which was fourth in India in fish landing in 2020, advanced to the third position in 2021, accounting for 18 per cent of the national marine catch. Fishing harbours here recorded 5,54,976 tonnes of fish landing in 2021, 1.94 lakh tonnes more than the 3,60,742 tonnes in 2020.

Lesser sardines (65,326 tonnes) topped the list of most-landed resources in the state in 2021, followed by Indian mackerel (56,029 tonnes) and scad (53,525 tonnes). While the catch of oil sardine, silver bellies and black pomfret declined, that of penaeid shrimps, squid and threadfin breams saw a rise, CMFRI principal scientist T M Najmudeen said while presenting the findings.

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