



Enforce minimum size of fish species, says scientist

CONTINUED FROM P1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

POINTING out the need for stricter enforcement of minimum legal size (MLS) of important fish species, Najmudeen said 31 per cent of threadfin breams caught from the state's coast last year were juveniles. "This alone caused a loss of ₹74 crore to the sector," he said. There was a 117 per cent rise in juvenile fishing in 2021.

Though implementation of MLS had helped improve marine resources of the state, fishermen resorted to destructive practices after the lockdown which harmed the marine ecosystem, say experts.

"We have been pleading the government to strictly implement the ban on fishing nets with small mesh size. The trawling ban is enforced in June-July which is the breeding season of pelagic species like oil sardines and mackerels. However, Kerala allows country fishermen to continue fishing during the ban. It should enforce complete ban," said

KERALA FISH LANDING OVER THE YEARS

2012: 8,39,185 tonnes	Major species caught in 2021
2013: 6,71,361 tonnes	
2014: 5,75,644 tonnes	Lesser sardines: 65,326 tonnes
2015: 4,82,499 tonnes	Mackerel: 56,029 tonnes
2016: 5,22,550 tonnes	Indian Scad: 53,525 tonnes
2017: 5,84,686 tonnes	Threadfin bream: 42,604 tonnes
2018: 6,42,084 tonnes	
2019: 5,43,836 tonnes	
2020: 3,60,742 tonnes	Penaeid prawns: 52,237 tonnes
2021: 5,54,976 tonnes	

former CMFRI scientist Sunil Mohamed.

Kerala Matsya Thozhilali Aikya Vedi president Charles George said fishermen should stop juvenile fishing as it would deepen their crisis.

"Fishermen are in deep crisis due to steep hike in fuel prices and dwindling catch. The government should provide special aid or subsidy," he said.