

Production of Green mussel increased in North Kerala: CMFRI

Kochi, June 23 (IANS) Production of Green mussel (kallummakkaya) in the North Kerala districts of Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod registered a substantial increase in 2022, according to the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI). While the production from farming recorded 160 per cent increase last year compared to 2021, a 15 per cent increase was registered in the landings of green mussels from the sea. Increase in the availability of mussel spats (seeds) in the sea caused many entering the mussel farming enterprises which consequently helped increase the production from culture.

However, CMFRI scientists observed that rise in production did not help mussel farmers and pickers reap proportional income owing to slump in the price. In order to solve this issue, CMFRI suggested focusing on developing value-added products from the green mussel. The report was presented at a stakeholder workshop held at CMFRI's Regional Station in Kozhikode.

According to CMFRI, marine fish landings of the region during the 2022 calendar year there was a 38 per cent increase over 2021 as the total production touched 1.99 lakh tonnes. The northern region contributed 29 per cent to Kerala's marine fish landings which was 6.87 lakh tonnes in 2022.

Dr K. Vinod, Head of the Regional Station, Kozhikode said that habitat degradation in estuaries are affecting the coastal fish production. "Sand bar formation in the bar mouth of the estuaries causes disruption of natural flow of water and environmental balance affecting the fish resources. Restoration of the estuarine ecosystem and mangrove wetlands are also crucial for healthy marine fish production in the coastal waters," said Vinod. However fishermen expressed their concern over the recent trend of fall in price for export shrimp varieties. They said that ways for utilising the prospects of deep sea resources should be explored. For them, extensive exploitation of seer fish in an unscientific manner would harm the sustainability of the resources. They also demanded that Malabar region be given proper representation in policymaking and fisheries infrastructure support.