

## **CMFRI's research on India's marine biodiversity showcased at UN conference**

ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) research findings showcase India's commitment to conserve its marine ecosystem at the UN meeting held in Seoul, South Korea to discuss the Global Biodiversity Framework.

India emphasized its commitment to marine ecosystem conservation, especially mangroves and coral reefs, identification of marine protected areas and promotion of sustainable marine fishing.

The Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) workshop, held from September 5-8, aims to accelerate the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). SOI is a global platform that seeks to build partnerships and enhance capacity to achieve global goals and targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity.

The India report presented at the meeting highlighted CMFRI's efforts in developing a framework for estimating the conservation value of Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs) for mitigating threats to marine biodiversity. In this effort a total area of 34,127.20 sq km was mapped as ESA, which included mangroves (5,590 sq km), coral reefs (1,439), sea grasses (518), salt marshes (600), sand dunes (325), Mudflats (3,558). even more.

Dr. Subhdeep Ghosh, Assistant Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi and Dr. Grinson George, Principal Scientist and Head, Marine Biodiversity and Environment Management Division, ICAR-CMFRI presented the India report, which included National Conservation Priorities and goals.

The report highlighted CMFRI's research in developing a deep learning-enabled image recognition model to classify underwater coral images as part of efforts to restore marine ecosystems. Dr. Grinson George mentioned about the restoration of coral reefs through transplantation in Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kutch and Lakshadweep areas. It also mentions the efforts of CMFRI to map the spatial distribution of aquatic invasive species in the northern Indian Ocean region.