



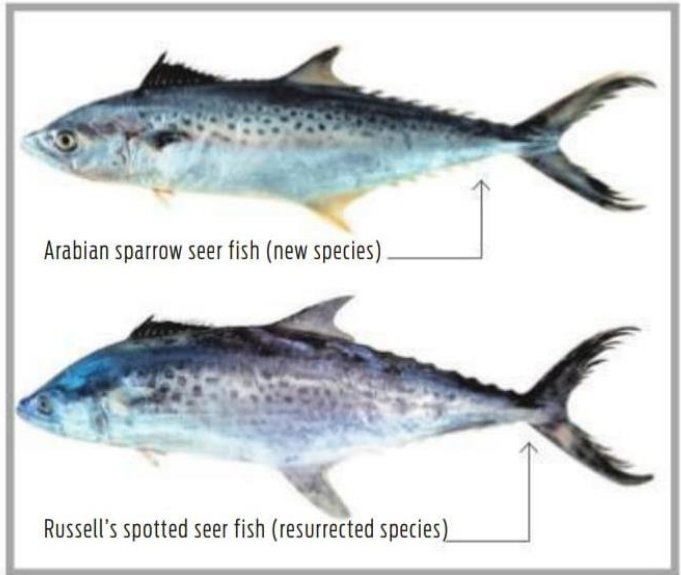
Marine fisheries research institute identifies 2 new species of seer fish

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

RESEARCHERS at the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have identified two new species of seer fish. The team of taxonomists led by principal scientist E M Abdussamad discovered Arabian sparrow seer fish (*Scomberomorus avirostrus*), which is entirely new to science, and resurrected Russell's spotted seer fish (*Scomberomorus leopardus*).

The spotted seer fish (*Scomberomorus guttatus*) which was once considered a single species, is a complex of three distinct species. These include the newly discovered seer fish, the resurrected seer fish, and the existing spotted seer fish. With this finding, the total number of top-demanding seer fish species in Indian waters rose to six from the existing four.

A comprehensive taxonomic study on spotted seer fish found along the Indian coast led to the discovery. The new species was given the common name of Arabian sparrow seer fish by the CMFRI team, owing to its typical bird-beak-like snout. The species is found along the Arabian Sea coast north of Mangalore and its distribution extends up to the Arabian Gulf. Distribution of the oth-



Six species so far

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E M Abdussamad, scientist

er two was along the Bay of Bengal coast north of Nagapattinam, including the Andaman Seas, and China Sea.

These three seer fish species are smaller in size compared to their counterparts and are mostly found in near-shore waters. Their tasty flavour and high market value make them a prized catch.

"This is a significant achievement that adds to our understanding of marine biodiversity and has the potential to contribute to the country's fisheries sector", said Abdussamad. The discovery helped shed light on the rich and diverse marine life along the Indian coast, he added.