

## CMFRI identifies 146 potential sites along Indian coastline for sea cage farming



Kochi, Feb 7 (IANS) Aimed at empowering the coastal population through additional livelihood options, the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has chalked out plans to boost mariculture activities across the coastal states of the country.

This was announced here by CMFRI Director A. Gopalakrishnan at a session on mariculture for researchers and academicians at the CMFRI. "CMFRI has identified and geo-referenced 146 potential sites for sea cage farming

within 10 km in the sea from the coast along the Indian coastal line, with a production potential of 2.13 million tonnes per year. In these, four sites from Kerala in an area of nearly 1300 ha," he said.

"CMFRI has developed and standardised indigenous sea cage farming technology suitable to Indian coastal and open waters. On average, up to 3 tonnes of fish could be produced in a 6-diameter cage within a period of 8 months. CMFRI has estimated that farmers could earn an economic return ranging from Rs. 1.5 to 2.5 lakh depending on the species grown from each crop," he added. Citing the status of India's mariculture, the CMFRI Director said the current mariculture production from India is less than 0.1 million tonne per year against a projected potential of 4 to 8 million tonnes. "Successful expansion of inland and brackishwater aquaculture in the country could be capitalised to boost mariculture production in a phased manner," he added.