

Jellyfish offer potential income for fishermen: CMFRI



Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 24 (IANS) Jellyfish fisheries offer a potential source of income for fishermen and contribute to the national economy, according to experts. As per ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), sustainable management practices, quality control, acceptance in the domestic market, and adaptation of jellyfish to fishing and

environmental changes are crucial for the long-term viability of this industry.

“Jellyfish play a pivotal role in marine ecosystems and hold increasing significance in recent days in the global seafood market, providing a potential source of additional income. Sustainability remains a core focus and a cautious and well-informed approach is required to their exploitation,” said Dr A Gopalakrishnan, Director of CMFRI.

He was speaking at a special session on ‘Jellyfish Fisheries and Trade: Status, Trends and Impacts on Livelihood’ at the ongoing Symposium on Jellyfish Blooms. “Given the increased fishing effort in the coastal waters along with the adverse impact of climate change, exploring the prospects of jellyfish fishery could be a highly promising alternative,” said the CMFRI director.

India has registered a landing of 11,756 tones (wet weight) of jellyfish in 2021, showing the re-emerging trend of this fishery in Indian coast. “Since 2005, the jellyfish fishery has re-emerged as a well-networked enterprise, and has grown significantly. The main species contributing to the fishery now include *Rhopilema hispidum* and *Catostylus perezii* in the northwest, *Crambionella annandeli* in the northeast, and *C. orsini* in the southwest”, added Gopalakrishnan.

He pointed out that initiatives have to take place to change consumer behavior to shift public perception and acceptance of jellyfish as a novel food item within the country. Presenting the processing technologies and the trend of jellyfish export, Dr J. Bindu, Head of the Fish Processing Division at ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology said that India exported jellyfish products worth Rs 1312.88 lakhs during 2022-23, with the majority of these exports destined for China. “Jellyfish are consumed in Asian countries such as China, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, and Thailand as part of the traditional cuisine. China continues to be the world’s biggest producer and consumer of jellyfish, contributing over 60 per cent of all landings worldwide,” said Bindu.