

Fisheries crucial for food security and livelihood, says former ICAR DG



KOCHI, 12 March 2024: Fisheries sector plays a crucial role in ensuring the food and nutritional security as well as the livelihood of millions of fishermen in the country, former Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Padma awardee, Dr S Ayyappan said.

“Fish, fishers, and fisheries are key areas that require focused attention”, he said, terming that fisheries is central to the Blue Economy, a concept promoting sustainable ocean development. Dr Ayyappan, a recipient of Padma Shri in the field of science and engineering, was speaking at the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) after receiving an honour for his outstanding contributions to the Indian fisheries sector.

Emphasising the critical role of fisheries research in enhancing food production, he urged scientists to focus on safeguarding the livelihoods of fishermen and strengthening India’s food production system. Dr. Ayyappan acknowledged the undeniable challenges of climate change and marine pollution, underlining the need for research efforts to prioritise solutions for these issues.

A stalwart in India's fisheries research, Dr Ayyappan was conferred with the prestigious honorary fellowship from the Marine Biological Association of India (MBAI) during the function. CMFRI Director and MBAI President Dr A Gopalakrishnan presented the award to Dr Ayyappan.

On the value of research funding, the former ICAR DG said investment in the field of research is returned to society more than ten times over in terms of societal benefits. Appreciating CMFRI for its pioneering research in the sector, he stressed the need for continued innovation and collaboration in the field.

Dr Ayyappan urged scientists to strive for innovation, bringing new ideas and technologies to the sector. He also emphasized the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-based tools in future research. Dr Ayyappan served as DG of ICAR and Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) during 2010-2016.

The event also marked the launch of CMFRI’s refurbished website. Dr A Gopalakrishnan presided over the function. ICAR Assistant Director General Dr. Shubhadeep Ghosh, Dr VVR Suresh, Dr Grinson George and Dr Rekha J Nair also spoke on the occasion.