

Call to set up integrated fisheries hub in Lakshadweep

Our Bureau
 Kochi

The *Matsya Mela* concluded at Kavaratti with a call for establishing an integrated fisheries hub in Lakshadweep to act as a single-window platform for organised marketing, strengthening the fisheries value chain, and improving income and livelihood security for island fishing communities.

Experts and stakeholders said the proposed hub should focus on streamlined fish marketing, common landing and handling facilities, cold storage and cold-chain infrastructure, value addition units, and export facilitation.

Such a hub would help Lakshadweep unlock the full potential of its tuna-based fisheries and the emerging

mariculture sectors.

SCIENTIFIC DATA

Stakeholders underlined the importance of regular and scientific estimation of fish catch data across the archipelago as a cornerstone for sustainable fisheries management.

They also recommended identifying suitable sites for cage fish farming, taking into account environmental carrying capacity, ecosystem health and climate resilience.

Another major recommendation was the identification of suitable sites for cage fish farming in Lakshadweep waters, considering environmental carrying capacity, ecosystem health, and climate resilience. Scientists underlined the scope of cage farming, seaweed cultivation, and ornamental fisher-

ies as diversified livelihood options.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

The *mela* stressed the role of citizen science initiatives to strengthen linkages between fishing communities and scientific institutions in data collection, stock assessment and ecosystem monitoring.

Speakers noted that co-ordinated efforts among fishers, researchers, co-operatives, entrepreneurs and the administration are vital for translating scientific knowledge into community-driven management practices.

The event was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Lakshadweep of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in association with the Fisheries Department of Lakshadweep.