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Seychelles looks to CMFRI for sustainable fisheries expertise



KOCHI: Seychelles is looking to India's marine fisheries expertise to strengthen sustainable management of its ocean resources, with an eight-member delegation led by its Fisheries, Agriculture, and Blue Economy Minister Wallace Cosgrow visiting the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) here on Thursday to explore research and technology partnerships.

The delegation, comprising senior fisheries officials, held discussions with CMFRI scientists on fisheries stock assessment, sustainable fisheries management, tuna fisheries, mariculture, climate-change impact assessment, seaweed-based value addition, ornamental fish breeding, and marine bioprospecting. Cosgrow said Seychelles had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indian government and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for bilateral cooperation in agriculture and fisheries.

The delegation expressed particular interest in India's experience in fisheries management and CMFRI's long-term fisheries datasets, which could provide a foundation for collaborative research and capacity building. The visiting team was also briefed on CMFRI's National Marine Fisheries Data Management Centre, where field-level fisheries information is collected through mobile technologies and processed using modern analytical tools. A key part of the discussions was how to balance fisheries conservation with the livelihoods of small-scale fishers. The CMFRI explained its scientific and socioeconomic approach to seasonal fishing regulations and other management measures, stressing that conservation policies must be scientifically robust while remaining socially acceptable to fishing communities.

The discussions identified potential areas for joint research, knowledge exchange and capacity building, including fisheries assessment and management, tuna fisheries, mariculture, climate-change impacts and digital fisheries technologies. The proposed cooperation could help Seychelles strengthen scientific management of its marine resources while developing its blue economy and safeguarding the livelihoods of coastal fishing communities. Scientists and heads of various CMFRI research divisions attended the interaction.