

CMFRI Launches Shark Aware App for Marine Conservation

Kochi, July 27: In a significant step towards marine conservation and the promotion of digital technology, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has launched two technology-based platforms aimed at raising awareness about endangered sharks and rays while ensuring compliance with related regulations.

On Monday, the institute unveiled the 'Shark Aware' mobile app along with an interactive e-learning module. This initiative is seen as a crucial move to strengthen the conservation of marine biodiversity and promote the use of digital technology in this field. The launch took place at the CMFRI headquarters in Kochi, officiated by the state's Fisheries Minister V.E. Abdul Gafoor. Developed with financial assistance from the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), these platforms aim to assist fishermen, fisheries department officials, wildlife conservation agencies, researchers, and students in accurately identifying protected species of sharks and rays, thereby ensuring better compliance with conservation regulations.

Dr. Livy Wilson, a senior scientist in the Finfish Fisheries Department at CMFRI and the project leader, stated that the app aims to bridge the information gap among those involved in marine fisheries and wildlife conservation. She said, "This app will help people accurately identify protected sharks and rays, while also strengthening the enforcement of the Wildlife Protection Act and conservation efforts for these species."

The app is expected to be available soon on the Google Play Store. Alongside it, an interactive online learning module has been developed, allowing users to take training at their convenience through quizzes, instant assessments, and tracking their learning progress. This digital platform provides information related to the Wildlife Protection Act, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), methods for species identification, and the importance of conserving protected sharks and rays.

This initiative demonstrates CMFRI's ongoing commitment to promoting sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation through the use of digital technology. The institute believes that making scientific and legal information easily accessible will enhance public awareness, encourage greater participation in conservation efforts, ensure compliance with regulations, and improve the protection of endangered marine species.