

SEA | FOOD**■ CMFRI sees urgent need for control measures to maintain harvest at sustainable levels**

India's total marine fish catch goes up by 6.6%

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI MAY 19

India's total marine fish catch has recorded a slight increase of 6.6 percent to 3.63 million tonne during 2016 compared to 3.40 million tonne in the previous year with mackerel topping in the catch.

According to Kochi-based Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) this is for the first time after 1998 sardine was not the top-ranked species in terms of catch in the country.

According to CMFRI's estimates released on Friday, Gujarat remained at the top position for the fourth consecutive year followed by Tamil Nadu.

Kerala was pushed to the fourth place as Karnataka



■ Gujarat remained at the top position for the fourth consecutive year in total marine fish catch

■ Kerala was pushed to fourth place as Karnataka took the third spot.

■ Value of the catch was estimated at ₹48,381cr

took the third spot.

The total value of the marine fish landings was estimated ₹48,381 crore, registering an increase of 20.67 per cent compared to 2015.

At the retail level, the estimated value was ₹73,289 crores with an increase of 12.44 per cent over the previous year.

Dr. A. Gopalakrishnan, director of CMFRI, said

marine capture fisheries, is experiencing more fishing pressure and there is urgent need to implement control measures to maintain the harvest at sustainable level. "Also, we have to explore the utilisation of untapped and unconventional resources to quench the demand. Further, climate change, particularly the increase of sea surface temperature

33% fall in sardine, mackerel catch in Kerala coast

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The declining trend in the catch of sardine, the favourite and common fish species of the state continued in 2016 with the landings showing a decline of 32.8 per cent compared to 2015.

According to the data released by CMFRI on Friday the total sardine catch from Kerala coast during the year was

46,000 tonne, the lowest in the past two decades.

For the first time in history, the catch of sardine slipped down to the third spot behind scads and mackerel, said a CMFRI statement. In 2012, the catch of sardine in Kerala was 3.9 lakh tonnes. After this, the availability of the fish is decreasing each year in Kerala waters. Indicating the crisis in the fisheries sector of the state, the catch of

mackerel also dropped by 33 per cent in the state compared to 2015.

Mackerel recorded 47,000 tonnes this time. Scads (Decapтерus), belonging to carangids category, placed at the first spot in the state, registering a catch of 54,000 tonne. Over fishing and impact of climate change are the main reasons for the fall in catch. CMFRI director A. Gopalakrishnan expressed the hope

that the catch of sardines is likely to show an increase in 2017 according to indications available now. Although the state was pushed to fourth position, Kerala registered an 8 per cent rise in its total marine fish catch over previous year producing 5.23 lakh tonnes behind Gujarat (7.74 lakhs tonnes), Tamil Nadu (7.07 lakh tonnes) and Karnataka (5.29 lakh tonnes).

and mean sea level rise are factors affecting the marine fisheries", he said. A sharp increase in the availability of Hilsa shad,

the most favourite fish of Bengalis, helped the West Bengal increase its marine fish production to 2.72 lakh tonnes.

The production of Hilsa rose to nearly 89,000 tonne from 18,000 tonne in the previous year. The fish catch dropped significant-

ly in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha mainly due to the cyclone which reduced fishing days in these states.