

### New lab opened at CIFT to study fish behaviour

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Ever wondered the fish's state of mind when it is caught in the net? Well, such ideas won't anymore be alien with the Central Institute of Fisheries and Technology (CIFT) inaugurating the first 'Fish Behavioural Lab' in the country.

The aim of the lab is to study the behaviour of the fish as part of its move to promote responsible fishing.

The lab was inaugurated on May 25 in the city by Trilogan Mahapatra, Direct General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Secretary of Department of Agricultural Research and Education.

"Fish reacts differently to varied actions. Our experiments will concentrate more on the behavioural changes it shows to light, speed, sound and nets that entrap them," said Sheela Edwin, HOD, Fishing Technology Department.

Usually, a fish is caught



The Moving Gantry System at CIFT

when it gets tired after swimming with the boat and the net. So, experiments at CIFT will focus on how far a fish can swim before it gets tired and the subsequent biochemical reactions.

The fish behaviour lab uses an instrument named Moving

Gantry System to study the behaviour. "Here, we try to find out the response of the fish to the stimuli. We don't know how they react when they are at the bottom of the sea, but this lab will help understand that. Our aim is to promote responsible

fishing than improve the catch," said V R Madhu, the principal scientist.

The lab will also focus on finding if there are any differences in the behaviours of an adult and a juvenile fish. As there is a sharp decline in the availability of fish, the institute studies how the issue of bycatching can be avoided.

"Bycatching is a serious issue. The juveniles are often caught unintentionally while fishing. Certain sounds repel the fish from nets. So, this technique can be utilised to reduce bycatching," he added.

Though the lab is in a standardised stage where the experiments are carried out in fresh water, they plan to shift the fish to salt water very soon. The scientists hope the research would also help them find out the most suitable timing for fishing.

