

Fisheries sector looks at sustainable boats

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Kochi: The newly amended Kerala Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (KMFRA) is the first in the country that will address the carbon emission concerns from the mechanized and motorized fishing sector.

There are more than 21,500 marine fishing vessels operating in the Kerala waters, of which more than 4,000 vessels are mechanized and another 11,000 accounts for motorized vessels. Studies by the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology have shown that energy efficient



CARBON FOOTPRINT OF MAJOR FISH HARVESTING SYSTEMS

Fishing System	Global Warming Potential *
Trawling	5.43 kg of carbon dioxide
Purse seining	1.29 kg of carbon dioxide
Long lining	3.77 kg of carbon dioxide
*per kg of fish	

fishing systems including changes in the vessels, engine horsepower, gear and operations could reduce the carbon emissions. Fisheries scientists who have been working on sustainable fishing technology said that vessel de-

sign, construction and operation fishing gear and methods, adoption of advanced technology and fleet management conservation, management and enhancement of resources were the key. "Across the world studies

have calculated the carbon footprint of major fish harvesting systems like trawling, purse seining, gillnetting and long lining. For example, in trawling, the global warming potential is 5.43 per kilo of fish caught," said Leela

Edwin, head, department of fishing technology, CIPT.

According to a series of studies by the CIPT scientists including Leela Edwin, Dhiju Das and Renju Ravi under a project on green fishing systems for tropical seas, fisheries in India consume as much as 1378.8 million litres of fuel and releases 3.13 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year. "CIPT has worked with the Kerala government to fix optimum limits for boat engines and fishing gears. This along with other standards for the materials will ensure that we will be able to reduce the energy consumption in the fish-

eries sector. This will help in the usage of sustainable gear for the fishing sector and this is now being implemented in this sector," Leela Edwin said.

Fishing vessel hull optimization, reduction of engine rpm, periodic maintenance of hull and replacement of two-stroke petrol engine to the inboard diesel engine are recommended to reduce the environmental impact related to the fishing. Use of high durable alternative webbing materials and appropriate use of lead sinkers will increase the life of gear and reduce environmental impacts.