

**APPEAL OF THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOR THE
WORLD FISHERIES DAY - NOVEMBER 21, 2018**

Fisheries has emerged as a prime source of food production sector of the State contributing to the livelihood as well as food security of a large section of the people. Fishing activity, starting as a traditional livelihood activity in early fifties has now transformed into marketable enterprise contributing to the State and National economy, livelihood and nutritional security, rural employment generation and foreign exchange earnings significantly. Every year, November 21 is celebrated as World Fisheries day across the world. Fisherfolk communities organize rallies, workshops, public meetings, cultural programs, dramas, exhibition, music show, and demonstrations to highlight the importance of maintaining the world's fisheries.

World Fisheries Day was established in 1997 to draw attention to overfishing, habitat destruction and other serious threats to the sustainability of our marine and freshwater resources. Observation can help bring awareness of the importance of aquatic environments in sustaining life both in and out of water. Each World Fisheries Day also provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the ever-increasing challenge of sustaining coastal communities and the livelihoods of those who live and work there..

As per a recent United Nations study, more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries have been overfished or are fully exhausted and more than one third are in a state of decline because of factors such as the loss of vital fish habitats, pollution, and climate change. The World Fisheries Day stress the importance of fisheries in highlighting these problems, and moves towards finding solutions to the increasingly inter-connected problems, and in the longer term, to sustainable means of maintaining fish stocks.

Tamil Nadu is one of the leading States in India showing steady increase in fish production and optimum utilisation of resources. Tamil Nadu is pioneering many innovative developmental and welfare schemes. The Government is committed to protecting the traditional fishing rights of Tamil Nadu fishermen, diversifying them to deep sea fishing, providing infrastructure facilities such as construction of fishing harbours / fish landing centres, marketing infrastructure, implementing innovative schemes such as conversion/purchase of new mechanized fishing vessels for Tuna fishing, establishing Fish Processing Parks in the coastal districts, deployment of artificial reefs, providing Seamless communication facilities to marine fishermen etc., restoration/ rehabilitation of water bodies, promoting fish seed production / seed rearing centres both in Government and private sector, integrating aquaculture in farm ponds, cage culture and leasing of fishing rights of reservoirs have been given top priority and are implemented to enhance fish production in Inland sector.

- Fisheries and aquaculture employ more than 43 million individuals worldwide.
- More than 25% of the world's dietary protein is provided by fish.
- The human population consumes over 100 million metric tons of fish annually.
- Globally, annual fisheries exports are valued at 85 to 90 billion dollars.
- A recent United Nations study reported that more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries have collapsed or are currently being overfished. Much of the remaining one third is in a state of decline because habitat degradation from pollution and climate change.
- Escalating amounts of point and non-point pollution continue to threaten water quality and fish habitat.
- All natural fish stocks today contain at least trace amounts of mercury.



As a mark of “World Fisheries Day” the Director, Department of Environment urges the general public to conserve both the inland and marine fisheries. This celebration serves as an important reminder that we must focus on changing the way the world manages global fisheries to ensure sustainable stocks and healthy oceans ecosystems.

Director of Environment