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Striving for sustainable marine ecology

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Thiruvananthapuram-based Friends of Marine Life (FML), a voluntary organisation working among coastal communities, has raised various issues plaguing coastal societies, especially the fishing community, at the just-concluded Ocean Conference organised by the United Nations.



Yesudas

Of the three-member FML delegation - one of the only two groups from India which attended the conference held in New York - Lisba Yesudas, an assistant professor at St Xavier's College, Thumba, also got an opportunity to address the plenary session of the conference, FML convener Robert Panipilla said. Apart from Panipilla and Lisba, the FML delegation also consisted of Johnson Jament.

In her speech, Lisba called for control measures undertaken on the basis of marine policy and blue economy in order to encourage sustainable fisheries. Lisba hails from a fishermen family in Pulluvila, Thiruvananthapuram. "We believe solutions to sustainable fisheries and conservation of blue planet lies not only with modern scientific advancement but also with Indigenous and local knowledge of fishing communities such as Mukkuvas," she said.

FML was one of the 112 organisations accredited by UN for the Ocean Conference. It was also one of only two Indian organisations which attended the conference held at the UN HQ from June 5 to 9. A volunteer with FML, Lisba is an assistant professor of Malayalam at St Xavier's College, Thumba. Panipilla, who headed the team, was also a panelist on the discussion on small-scale fisheries.

The highly-productive marine ecosystems in the Indian Ocean region attract encroachment by both domestic and foreign large-scale fishing vessels, Panipilla said. Increasing demand for fish meal production, climate change and ocean pollution are other causes for depleted marine resources, he said.

Jament spoke at partnership dialogue held as part of the UN conference on sustainable fisheries.