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CMFRI develops unique marine cage culture technology

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During his recent visit to the marine cage farm at Karwar, the Union Minister for Agriculture, Mr Sharad Pawar, appreciated the cage culture technology developed by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and assured supports for establishment of brood banks, increase in the number of species cultivated and also utilize the natural seed resources without hampering the environment. In this regard, an installation of artificial reefs by CMFRI to utilize the natural resources for conservation of biodiversity, habitat protection and increasing production was highly appreciated by the Minister.

The open sea cage technology developed, demonstrated and popularized by CMFRI is an example of transfer of scientific technology from lab to the field in a participatory mode for the benefit of stakeholders. Cultivation of high value fishes in sea cages in addition to fulfilling the primary need of food security by augmenting fish production has provided employment and livelihood opportunities to coastal inhabitants and increased their revenue. Sea cage farming engaging tribals in some coastal states is a positive step in empowering them with gainful occupation.

Dr S Ayyappan, secretary, DARE and DG, Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), apprised the Agriculture Minister on the capture fisheries management in India and the way forward for enhancing fish production in the country. He also updated the minister on the need for establishing brood banks, satellite hatcheries and feed production units along the west coast to meet the seed and feed demands.

Dr G C Pati, secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries assured all support from National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and Ministry of Agriculture to CMFRI for enhancing production through cage culture and establishment of seed and brood banks.

Dr G Syda Rao, director, CMFRI; Dr N P Singh, director, ICAR Research Complex for Goa; scientists from Kochi, Veraval, Mumbai, and Mangalore centres and several other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

A book entitled "Cage Aquaculture in India" published by CMFRI was also released by the dignitaries on board the vessel on April 19, 2013. Later, the dignitaries visited the laboratory-cum-office complex of Karwar Research Centre of CMFRI and the exhibition stalls arranged within the campus. The Minister interacted with dignitaries, researchers as well as with local farmers, entrepreneurs from different parts of India and tribals engaged in cage farming.