Inland Fisheries News Articles Compilation

By ICSF
Kerala: Inland fisheries take a beating after floods


There is a marked dip in inland fish wealth after floods wreaked havoc in many parts of Kerala, according to fishers here in Alappuzha district. As the fish breed in the months of June and July, schools of fish are found in inland water bodies during that period. But unfortunately this time around, heavy torrential rains and surging waters washed away fishlings and fish eggs to the polluted lakes leading to their destruction. And this adversely affected inlands fisheries, the fishermen noted. Different varieties of fish such as ‘Vaala’ (Boal), ‘Kairmeen’ (Pearl spot), ‘Varaal’ (Snake head fish), ‘Konju’ (Prawns), ‘Thooli’, ‘Kuruva’ (Peninsular olive barb), ‘Cherumeen’ (Great snake head), ‘Manjakoori’ (Yellow catfish) and ‘Arakan’ (Water eel), which were found abundantly in Kuttanad and Upper Kuttanad regions, are now becoming scarce. The prices of these fish have also skyrocketed due to depleting fish catch. One has to shell out Rs 400 to Rs 450 to buy a kg of boal which was sold at Rs 300 to Rs 350 before the floods.

The price of pearl spot has jumped from Rs 350 to Rs 450, prawns from Rs 550 to Rs 700, peninsular olive barb from Rs 100 to Rs 150 and yellow catfish from Rs 200 to Rs 250. The income from fishing is meagre as a person, who will be part of a 10-member group, can earn only Rs 1,500 in one outing. As the flood waters had taken fish farmed in paddy fields to the rivers, a good catch can be had from these water systems but there is less demand for such varieties of fish. With the influx of ‘red belly’ species of fish into the rivers, the native fish varieties are on a decline. The practice of using ‘nanju’, a poisonous fish berry, and fishing nets laced with poison have also contributed to the dip in fish catch. The inland fishers are of the opinion that the Fisheries Department should take the initiative to release more native fishlings into the rivers and other water bodies.

Sri Lanka: Inland fishermen receive housing assistance under the Inland fisheries housing development program

http://www.colombopage.com/archive_19B/Aug26_1566832303CH.php

State Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development Dilip Wedaarachchi today handed over housing aid of Rs. 100,000 to inland fisher families under the program to uplift the inland fisher community. The State Minister handed over housing aid to 34 inland fisher families today under the housing aid program "Diyawara Aruna with a Wewa and Village" implemented by the National Aquaculture Development Authority (NAQDA) to uplift the living standard of inland fisher community. Under the first phase of the Program, each family of the inland fisheries community in Tangalle division received Rs. 50,000 for the development of the houses.
The second check of Rs. 50,000 was issued today. Expressing his views at the occasion, the Minister said under the housing aid program arrangements are being made to provide the assistance to the real fisherman. "It was a great achievement to be able to help the right person. The last administration implemented a number of such assistance programs. To whom did that aid go? What they did was share the aid among themselves. There was no house built during the previous regime, nor recipient of aid. But we, as a government, are carrying out this work properly." As a Minister who knows the plight of the fishermen and loves this industry, I am committed to safeguarding the future of all of you as well as protecting the industry and will continue to commit to uplift the entire fishing community in the future."

Andhra Pradesh: Now, solar-powered boats for inland fishing, tourism promotion


An eco-friendly breakthrough by ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology will soon enable the use of solar-powered boats for fishing and tourism in reservoirs, small rivers and aquaculture ponds. Forget oars and paddles, and the smoke belching kerosene or diesel that power many small boats. An eco-friendly breakthrough by ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology will soon enable the use of solar-powered boats for fishing and tourism in reservoirs, small rivers and aquaculture ponds. The boats will be of use for reservoirs of Andhra Pradesh for both fishing and tourism in Tandava and Raiwada and Nagarjuna Sagar Dam to help small and marginal fishermen. ‘Sunny’ side up The CIFT has come out first with Sun Boat-I technology with a 3.7-mlong vessel to carry four persons for a cruise up to two hours with a battery capacity of 1.5 KW costing around ?4 to ?5 lakh as a pilot project.

Later, an improved version named Sun Boat-II has been developed which is eight-metre long with a battery of 1.8 KW and cruise capacity of five hours. It can carry 10 persons and costs around ?10 lakh to ?12 lakh. Samudra Shipyard of Kochi has built the two boats. A few boats have been ordered for construction in Kerala by various departments for fishing and tourism. Fishing, fun and more The solar boats have multiple applications as they can be of used for gill netting, long lining, recreational, fishing, transportation, aqua tourism as well as surveillance. “After successful operation of the first version in fish farms and inland waters of Kerala, a successor of this boat, CIFT Sun Boat-II with higher capacity and advanced technology has been developed as a continual improvement in the renewable energy utilisation in the small-scale inland fishing operation pan India,” ICAR-CIFT Director C.N. Ravishankar told The Hindu.

Free fuel The boat is built with fiber reinforced plastic (FRP) with a breadth extreme of 2.40 m, breadth demi hull of 0.88 m, depth of 0.75 m and draught of 0.3 m. The annual fuel consumption by the mechanised and motorised fishing fleet of India has been estimated at 1,220 million litres, about 1% of the total fossil fuel consumption in the country in 2000 releasing an estimated 3.17
million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere at an average rate of 1.13 tonne of per tonne of live weight of marine fish landed, according to CIFT principal scientist and in-charge of Visakhapatnam Regional Centre R. Raghu Prakash. Traditionally, they use wooden canoes, or coracles - small round boats made of cane covered with watertight material propelled with paddles. FRP canoes and coracles were introduced by CIFT in many places in Andhra Pradesh and in the North Eastern regions. The solar boat will help the inland fishermen. “The government could offer some subsidy to promote such eco-friendly crafts which do not cause any pollution,” said National Fisherfolk Forum general secretary Arjili Dasu.

**Andhra Pradesh: Low rainfall affects inland fisheries in north coastal**


Owing to the lack of sufficient rainfall, the prospects of inland fisheries in two of the three north-coastal districts of AP - Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam are not very promising. According to sources in the Visakhapatnam fisheries department, except in Madugula, Chodavaram and K Kotapadu areas, there is no water in any of the major reservoirs especially the two big reservoirs-Tandava and Raiwada. “We are hoping that there will be more rains in the coming one month and so that we can release the fingerlings in the next couple of months. We have stocked four and a half crores of Spawn, which will be handed over to the societies if it rains very less.” JD Fisheries, Visakhapatnam, P Lakshman Rao said. The JD further added that they have a contingency plan in place to release Fry’s of about 20 to 25 mm, in case the rains do not meet expectations as the Spawn may not survive for another week or two.

The scenario in Srikakulam district, which has the largest in-land catchment area in the three north coastal districts, is far worse. Dr VV Krishna Murthy, the JD, Fisheries said, “It’s a weird situation, we have no rains in Srikakulam district, we have had deficit rainfall, but the two main rivers, Vamsadhara and Nagavali are in spate because of the rains in Odisha. Apart from these two, all others are bone-dry and without adequate water, including the main reservoir, Maddi Valasa.” Sources in the department said that they have stocked over 10 crore units of spawn, however, they pointed that the seed stocking process was done very late and as a result, they have a time span of almost a month to wait for more rains.

“If it does not rain in next two weeks, we do not have a choice but to go for a truncated contingency plan,” Krishna Murthy added. However, as compared to the other two districts, things look far better in Vizianagaram district, where the reservoirs are full thanks to them being located close to the Odisha border. Sources in the department pointed out that all the major reservoirs such as the Thotapalli project, Peddagadda and Vengalaraya Sagar project, Vottigedda and Andra are full to capacity. “We have readied 4.5 crore spawn units in our seed banks and the
Spawn will be handed over to the farmers in a phase-wise manner in the next three weeks. We are confident of a good yield, the coming year,” M Diwakar Rao, deputy director fisheries stated.

**Andhra Pradesh: Fishing ban hits over 50,000 inland fisherfolk in Kurnool**


With the 62-day annual inland fishing ban coming into effect on July 1, the fisherfolk have once again started demanding compensation for their loss of livelihood. According to the Fisheries Department officials, over 50,000 fisherfolk families in Kurnool district would be at a loss. Speaking to The Hindu, CPI(M) leader Guru Sekhar said the fishermen in the coastal areas get a compensation of Rs 4,000 per month for loss of livelihood. However, fishermen in the inlands do not get any compensation in the ban period. “There is also a demand to increase the compensation given by the government,” he added. District Fisheries Department Joint Director (JD) Shaik Lal Mohammad said of the 50,000 families, more than 30,000 are active fishermen. “Anyone with a license or is engaged with a co-operative society is considered an active fisherman,” he pointed out. If compensation were to be given, these fishermen would be immediately eligible. Angling in fresh water Most of the fishing in takes place in the two major rivers that flow through the district - Tungabhadra and Krishna.

Apart from the rivers, the Fisheries Department also issues licences to fish in the 11 reservoirs on these rivers and their tributaries. Moreover, there are 175 tanks under the control of the department and over 450 tanks under the control of various Gram Panchayats where fishing is done. “In the western parts of the district, about 1,200 acres of farm land is being converted into fishing tanks,” said Mr. Mohammad. Big catch The fishing industry is currently on an upswing in the district producing 35,000 to 40,000 metric tonnes of fish and prawns. According to the authorities, each tonne of fish yields an average price of Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 1,20,000. The department also plans to boost the current production to one lakh metric tonnes in the next five years. “We have created an action plan to this effect, and we expect to see growth soon,” the JD said. Hunt for market space Though the government has released Rs 1 crore to set up a new fish market in the city, works have been delayed as land was not available in the city. “We require about 400 sq. m of land to set up the fish market and have asked the municipal authorities to allocate the land. However, due to the land mired in disputes, we were not able to start the works,” Mr. Mohammad said. He added that once the disputes are settled, the land would be allocated and work would start immediately after that.

**Tamil Nadu: Inland fisheries a major contributor to catch**
Governor Banwarilal Purohit said that fish production in India has seen a paradigm shift from marine domination to a scenario where inland fisheries have emerged as a major contributor. “The annual fisheries and aquaculture production in India is about 12 million tonnes. The country now enjoys the second position in the world after China with regard to fisheries and aquaculture production,” he said at the inaugural ceremony of the International conference on “Asian Pacific Aqua Culture 2019” at the Chennai Trade Centre. The three-day conference is hosted by Tamil Nadu Dr. J. Jayalalithaa Fisheries University (TNJFU), Nagapattinam, in collaboration with the World Aquaculture Society’s Asian Pacific Chapter (WAS-APC). Mr. Purohit said that inland fisheries accounts for 66.81% of the fish production in the country.

“Consequently, freshwater aquaculture, which had a share of only 34% in inland fisheries in mid-1980s, has gone up to about 80% in recent years,” he added. He said Tamil Nadu, which has the second longest coastline among Indian States, houses more than 10 lakh fishermen. “The State has taken a number of steps to promote both marine and inland fisheries and I am sure that with the assistance of the organisers of today’s function many more innovative suggestions will be available for implementation so as to promote the welfare of the fishermen of the state,” he said. Mr. Purohit presented the ‘Padmashree Prof. N. Balakrishnan Nair Environmental Excellence Award’ to S. Felix, Vice-Chancellor of TNJFU and president of WAS-APC. He released three books on advanced topics of aquaculture. D. Jayakumar, Minister for Fisheries and Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Tamil Nadu and Pro-Chancellor of TNJFU, said the State government had been taking a number of steps such as promoting deep-sea fishing and seamless communication system to ensure safety and security fishermen. The State planned to increase fish production by three times to 5.92 lakh tonnes from 1.97 lakh tonnes.

The Governor inaugurated the international trade show. The trade show has 225 stalls and displaying modern technologies, aquaculture inputs, modern machines, feeds, fish medicines, fish products, among others. K. Gopal, Principal Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries; and Dr. Farshad Shishehchian, International Co-Chair, Asian Pacific Aquaculture 2019; Dr. J.K.Jena, Deputy Director General (Fisheries); Graham C. Mair, Senior Aquaculture Officer, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Italy and other dignitaries participated in the event.

Telangana: Inland fisheries production tops 3L tonnes

Telangana achieved another milestone in the inland fisheries sector as the production crossed three lakh tonnes for the first time. It was initially estimated that the fisheries sector registered about 2.94 lakh tonnes of production during 2018-19, but the revised numbers indicate that it had surpassed the three-lakh tonne mark, which is about 37,000 tonnes more than the last fiscal’s fish
production. Further, the fish production is said to have already gone past 70,000 tonnes since April during the financial year of 2019-20. Officials said due to decreasing water levels in reservoirs, the fishermen were able to ensure a good catch during summer. Considering the good response, officials are preparing to release a fresh batch of fish seedlings into the reservoirs and water tanks across the State within the next one month. In fiscal 2018-19, about 70 crore fish seedlings were released into various water bodies in the State, which is about 45 per cent more than the 50-crore seedlings supplied in 2017-18 fiscal.

However, the fish production could not reach the target of 3.4 lakh tonnes fixed by the Fisheries Department for the financial year due to inadequate water in reservoirs, tanks and other water bodies. Due to the government’s efforts, about 3.7 lakh fishermen are getting direct employment and another 27 lakh fishermen are receiving indirect employment. The fish production has increased from an estimated 1.93 lakh tonnes in 2016-17 to 2.94 lakh tonnes in 2018-19, catapulting the State to secure a spot among top five inland fish producing States in the country. Tweeting about the achievement of the Fisheries Department, TRS working president and Sircilla MLA KT Rama Rao said the State government’s incentives to fishermen — free seedlings and marketing infrastructure — had made it possible for the department to cross the three-lakh tonne mark. He was confident that with Kaleshwaram and Palamuru lift irrigation projects on the anvil, the fisheries sector was going to receive a huge boost both from livelihood and employment perspectives. “Great work by the Department of Fisheries, Telangana,” he appreciated the officials for the successful implementation of the scheme.

Kerala: Donate a boat campaign for flood-hit inland fishermen in Alappuzha


‘I am for Alleppey’, the project masterminded by Alappuzha sub-collector Krishna Teja for rebuilding the flood-ravaged district, has come forward with another new project called ‘Donate a Boat, Donate Livelihood’ for inland fishermen. The project was inaugurated by fisheries minister J Mercykutty Amma at a function held in Punnamada. In the first phase, as many as 20 inland fishing boats have been handed over to the fishermen. This project aims to hand over 400 boats. Finance minister T M Thomas Isaac presided over the function. The boats were sponsored by a Hyderabad based NGO Abhaya Foundation and Hyundai Motors. The minister also handed over the keys of newly constructed homes by Abhaya Foundation under 'I am for Alleppey' project to the flood victims.

Abhaya Foundation is spending Rs 5 crore for the rehabilitation of Alappuzha's flood victims. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that a special legislation will be made for inland fishermen in the state. "The unscientific fishing will be prevented in the inland waters through the laws. We will declare 20 hectares of Vembanad and Ashtamudi backwaters as protected areas
Telangana: To help Kerala master inland fishing

https://telanganatoday.com/telangana-to-help-kerala-master-inland-fishing

The success of inland fisheries in Telangana is inspiring other fish producing States in the country. Aspiring to repeat Telangana’s success, Kerala, which is the third largest marine fish producing State in the country, has decided to replicate Telangana’s model of inland fish production. Telangana has nearly 25,000 reservoirs and tanks with a water spread of 5.73 lakh sq km. But, the fisheries sector in Telangana region was neglected in undivided Andhra Pradesh with the then governments focusing on Coastal Andhra region where fisheries flourished. However, after formation of Telangana State in 2014, attempts were made to improve fish production in the State. To make best use of these water bodies and turn them into revenue sources for the fishermen community, Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao promoted the release of fish seedlings into the water bodies, including reservoirs and village tanks, to promote inland aquaculture.

In the fiscal 2017-18, about 50 crore fish seedlings were released into various water bodies in the State. With good results, the State government released nearly 70 crore fish seedlings into water bodies in 2018-19. As a result, the inland fish production in Telangana reached about 2.94 lakh tonnes during 2018-19, registering a sharp rise from an estimated 1.93 lakh tonnes in 2016-17. The State was also able to double the fingerlings production to four crore during the corresponding period. “Though Kerala is the third largest marine fish producing State, its inland fish production is nominal. With more than 1 lakh sqkm of inland water spread, which is one-fourth of Telangana’s fishing area, Kerala is yet to tap these resources optimally.

Hence, the Kerala government sought Telangana’s technical and commercial expertise in inland fish production, cage fish yield and fingerling production,” said a senior official in the Telangana Fisheries department. Sources said Kerala Fisheries Minister J Mercykutty Amma already spoke to Telangana Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav on the issue. The latter promised to share Telangana’s expertise with Kerala at a meeting in Hyderabad recently. The move will come as a shot in the arm for Kerala Fisheries department, which is
launching a Rs 69.9-crore inland fisheries project. Kerala is aiming at becoming the second largest fish producer in the country in the next three years by doubling its fish production.

**Tamil Nadu: Plan for inland fishing policy could revive TN’s fish wealth**


The ayirai fish (commonly known as spiny loach), a Tamil specialty, once found in abundance in rivers and ponds in southern Tamil Nadu has become a rare delicacy now. Overexploitation and commercial interest in ornamental and non-native fish species have led to these crowding freshwater sources, edging out familiar varieties; adding to the problem is encroachment and pollution. In the absence of a policy for inland fishing, not only is the biodiversity in lakes, rivers and backwaters under threat, but the expected profit from the sector also remains unknown. At present, only 2.5 lakh tonnes of fish is harvested in TN though its potential is about 4.5 lakh tonnes a year, say experts. Realizing the possibility, the state fisheries department has planned to cast its net wider by drawing up a policy. The fisheries department recently held a meeting to discuss the policy. It plans to hold a workshop in June with various departments, fishermen, activists and cooperative societies.

As per the latest report available on the government website, of the total 10 lakh fishermen in the state about, 2 lakh operate in freshwater bodies, which span about 3.83 hectares in TN. According to a Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) study in 2010, there is no dearth of fish fauna in the state. But lack of conservation measures has led to the peril of freshwater fish species. The survey recorded 83 fish species in the lakes and rivers of Chennai. It was also found that since 1916, 10% of native species have disappeared and several non-native species have been introduced. Across TN, a study by H S Mogalekar and J Canciyal, authors of ‘Inland Fish Diversity’, shows nearly 226 species were found in freshwater bodies, of which only 132 could be consumed. At least 15% of the species faced threat of endangerment. Rules in the inland fisheries department are the need of the hour, says A P Palanichamy, associate professor at Periyar EVR College.

"At the outset, the state does not know the actual number of freshwater bodies. Second, there is no study on the fish wealth. Over fishing is rampant. We have seen fishermen disregard the fishing ban season. In villages, a lot of irregularities take place, and big contractors take advantage of the lack of a policy," he says. Explaining how fish are crucial to the biodiversity of a waterbody, environmentalist Mohan Prasath says, "Due to excessive fishing many migratory birds had not visited the lakes, which serve as a pit stop for food, in the Western Ghats region." While a policy can help check exploitation, conservation can also be ensured through it. Fish are indirectly linked to the entire biodiversity of the lake. "Only if there are fish, would there be
birds, insects and reptiles. These species indirectly affect the plants around the lake. The entire system is interdependent," says Palanichamy.

Taking the example of Singanallur lake in Coimbatore, environmentalist Arthur Steele says though the state had banned commercial fishing and declared it an urban biodiversity conservation zone, in the absence of any penalties, a contractor continues to harvest about 3 tonnes of fish daily. "Our complaints have not yielded any action," he says. "Each contractor makes about Rs3 lakh to Rs6 lakh every day, even if the fish is sold for Rs200 per kg. Most of the fish is sent to Kerala for manufacturing animal feed. The African cat fish, a non-native species, though banned, is introduced by contractors. This has led to the disappearance of native fish," says Steele. Officials in the fisheries department, however, say they act on complaints. There are more than 40,000 lakes in Tamil Nadu under various departments such as HR&CE, rural development, PWD and local bodies. "We need to integrate and bring in legislations to ensure that fish is conserved. The process has begun," says a senior fisheries department official.

**India: Adopt Inland fisheries and aquaculture policy in India, says Neelkanth Mishra**


India offers a huge potential for aquaculture development. Different species of Indian carps catla roho and mrigal contribute between 70% and 75% of the total freshwater fish production. In the 1950s, fish from the seas accounted for over 70% of India’s production, but now its share is halved. The freshwater aquaculture production in India comprises about 2.36 million ha of ponds and tanks and accounts for nearly 55% of the total fish production in India. Currently, only an estimated 40% of the available area is in use because of technical and market access issues. In freshwater fisheries sector, Production is mainly destined for the domestic market and processing of freshwater aquaculture produce is rare. Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries under Order F.No.35027/14/2016 drawing up a National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture has been welcomed by sector experts and stakeholders.

All stakeholders including Scientists, Academician, Social sector organisation and aquaculture industry submitted input to help the process led by Expert Committee to finalise draft National Inland and Aquaculture policy on 26-27 April, 2018 at CIFE, Mumbai. A specific, progressive and ecosystem facilitating policy for Inland fisheries and aquaculture sector are need of the hour. During last seventy year, Inland fish production has grown manifold now contributes 70% of national fish production. Government of India created a separate department for fisheries is a welcome step. New department, proposed inland fisheries policy along with Blue revolution scheme and Fisheries and Aquaculture development fund (FADF) will boost sector to be able to produce food, nutrition and employment opportunity for millions of people. We submit request
to the ministry and department to adopt proposed inland fisheries policy at the earliest and provide a specific timeframe to adopt same through all Indian States and UTs.

**Kerala: Natural hatcheries to boost inland fisheries**


To address the lack of hatcheries for spawning of fingerlings (2-8 cm in length), the fisheries department has decided to give fingerlings directly to fish farmers in the district. The farmers can cultivate the fingerlings in small ponds till they reach an average size to put in large waterbodies. Instead of investing in hatcheries, the fisheries department is now focusing on interested farmers who can turn themselves into hatchery specialists. “We have initially identified select fish farmers who will cultivate them. These fingerlings can be sold directly by the farmer or can be given back to the department. But from the next financial year, the fingerlings will be given to whoever wants them,” said Ignatious Mandro, joint fisheries director, Aquaculture. The fisheries department was forced to look into the issue as farmers have started cultivating exotic species such as African Pacu as it is easy to get their fingerlings for not more than one rupee a piece; exotic species have the risk of eating local species and eating into their feeds.

Officials said good quality fingerlings were available of only species such as Gift Tilapia while carp is no longer economically viable. “The feed that they get is also not of much value,” an official said. Meanwhile in ponds and canals, low-value fishes are being nurtured and it is being operated as a side business. Even officials agree that under the department’s subsidy schemes, fishlings of 1-2 cm size are being given and they cannot survive the natural waters. “Around 90% of them die. Ideally, they should be given fingerlings of 8cm length which can be put in ponds. They have to give more impetus to the distributions of fish seed (fingerlings) and fish feed,” an official said. Scientists at the Centre for Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI) said farmers are not aware of the catastrophe created by cultivating banned fish species. “The seeds are easily available, cost is much low and the growth rate is faster. But it would be good for the fishermen to cultivate local species.

Unlike marine sector where there is more production because it is more organized, inland fishers are scattered and there are more anthropological issues such as pollution, constructions, habitat loss and decline in the open water area, affecting the inland fisheries,” said CIFRI scientist Rani Palaniswamy. The inland fisheries have been dominated by shrimp farming which has been promoted by Agency for Development of Aquaculture, Kerala (ADAK), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and Fresh Water Fish Farmers Development Agencies (FFDAs). More than 78% of the total area under shrimp culture is distributed in Ernakulam district and almost 70% of the total aquaculture production of the state is also contributed by Ernakulam district. It is followed by Alappuzha (9.40%); Kannur (5.44%) and Thrissur (4.68%)
districts in area coverage. Alien species reach natural waters by escaping from aquaculture systems. Indian major carps and common carp have also reached the natural waters also through regular open water ranching done by the state department of fisheries and agencies under it.

**Kerala: Inland fisheries suffered massive losses in floods**


A workshop organised by the School of Industrial Fisheries and Industrial Fisheries Students Association, Cochin University of Science and Technology, here on Monday took stock of the fisheries sector in the State, especially against the backdrop of the mid-August floods that caused massive losses to marine and inland fisheries sectors. Leela Edwin, senior scientist at the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), who made a presentation on the impact of the floods, said that a team of CIFT scientists had made a rapid assessment of the fisheries sector. She said a report had been submitted to the Union government in this regard. Inland fisheries, where fishermen are less organised than in the marine sector, had suffered massive losses.

Fishing equipment and implements were lost, she said. S. Sarma, MLA, who inaugurated the workshop said though financial gains from fisheries sector had considerably improved, the condition of traditional fishermen had not improved. The impact of recent natural calamities has worsened the situation. The State has to frame strategies for empowering traditional fishermen in deep-sea fishing and coastal mariculture activities. R. Sasidharan, Vice Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology, presided at the inauguration. B. Madhusoodana Kurup, first Vice Chancellor, Kufos, delivered the keynote address. K. Gopakumar, former Deputy Director General (Fisheries), ICAR, and A. K. Chaudhury, Director, CIFNET, were among those who spoke.

**West Bengal: Fishermen call for national policy on Inland Fisheries & Aquaculture**

[http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/fishermen-call-for-national-policy-on-inland-fisheries-aquaculture-330682](http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/fishermen-call-for-national-policy-on-inland-fisheries-aquaculture-330682)

Various fish workers' forums in the state have written to the Union Agriculture minister, urging him to immediately prepare a national policy on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture. As the fishermen from Bengal have seen an unprecedented growth in Inland fisheries in the state, the demand for a national policy has been strengthened. Pradip Chatterjee, convener, National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (Inland), said that fishermen in the state are disappointed at the inordinate delay in publication of the draft of the National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy. The National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (Inland) has submitted a memorandum to the minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare at the Centre and the
Secretary of the department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, to expedite the process.

The department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare had formed an expert committee on October 21, 2016, under chairperson Dr Dilip Kumar, former V-C of CIFE, Mumbai, to collect stakeholders' responses towards developing a National Policy on Inland Fisheries. The committee collected stakeholders' responses through two sets of questionnaire and held 4 regional consultations with stakeholders at different places of the country. A national level consultation was organised on April 26-27, 2018, at ICAR-CIFE, Mumbai, to finalise the recommendations towards a draft National Policy for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture. The expert committee also submitted its recommendations on the draft policy to the department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. But the draft policy is yet to be published by the Centre.

"Almost 2 years have passed, but the draft policy has not come out. The inland fisheries sector of our country is yet to get a comprehensive policy document to guide its management and protection. By contrast, the marine fisheries sector of India had its National Policy way back in 2004, which has been revised in 2017. It may be worth mentioning here that the inland fisheries sector of our country is almost twice as large as the marine sector, in both production and employment," Chatterjee maintained.

**India: Cabinet okays Rs 7,522 crore fund to boost marine, inland fisheries sectors**


The Union cabinet on Wednesday gave the go-ahead for the creation of a Rs 7,552-crore fund to boost infrastructure facilities in the marine and inland fisheries sector and also approved the setting up of six Indian Institutes of Skills (IISs) in different parts of the country. Law minister Ravi Shankar, while addressing a press conference here, said beneficiaries’ contributions and budgetary support would be used for the formation of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF). The FIDF would help achieve 15 million tonnes of fish production by 2020, a target set under the Blue Revolution scheme, and help generate over 940,000 employment opportunities, said a statement issued by the Centre.

The cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also decided to set up six IISs in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, Prasad, who addressed the media with finance minister Arun Jaitley, said. In the official statement, the government said by leveraging advantages of private sector enterprises and public capital in terms of government land, it would create new institutes of expertise, knowledge and competitiveness. The cabinet also approved the constitution of a high level steering committee to periodically review and refine the National
Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with associated targets, Prasad said.

Odisha: Employing thousands of landless farmers, this man has revolutionized inland fishery


Ever wondered how the smoking fish tikka ended up on your plate? The story is not limited to a kitchen and some condiments; it intricately laces the sweat, dreams and aspirations of hundreds of men and women whose lives depend on how much you enjoy your fish delicacy. And if you do, you ought to be thanking Neelkanth Mishra, the man who single-handedly pioneered a revolutionary change in the inland fisheries industry of India, generating ample employment opportunities for thousands of landless farmers and labourers. Jaljeevika, the fishery-based non-profit organisation operated by Mishra and his team is the first of its kind, creating an elaborate network of aquaculture enterprises in India. Ashoka honoured Neelkanth Mishra in 2017 for his groundbreaking work, which is yet unnoticed by most of the Indians. In an exclusive conversation with The Logical Indian, he shares his journey, struggles and the millions of smiles he brought forth. Born and brought up in the steel city Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, Mishra had consistently been a diligent student.

After graduating in Mathematics from the prestigious Banaras Hindu University (BHU), he pursued his higher education in social work and rural development from abroad. During his school days, he joined hands with his friends to set up a General Knowledge and Debating Society. Thousands of job aspirants from his town, who lacked exposure to the global news, benefited a lot through a platform for group discussion. He organised a literacy club for slum children, collecting funds from the local community, which also encouraged co-curricular activities among underprivileged kids. He also operated the Akanksha science club in college, which survives in all its glory even after two decades. While still in college, Mishra got actively involved in youth politics and participated in many student movements, paving the way for his full-time dedication to a variety of social causes in later life. Freshly graduated, Mishra engaged himself with the tribal community in Bihar where many women were being ostracised and tortured in the name of being witches. He realised that the underlying reality of witch hunting was merely to acquire the properties of widowed and single women without a family.

Registering the help of a legal association, Mishra advocated these helpless women to stand up for their rights. Through community theatre, he extensively spread awareness about this malpractice. He collected over 150 case studies which served as ground evidence in his report to the State government. Within one and half years, the Bihar government became one of the first states to pass Anti Witch-Hunting Bill, which was soon replicated in Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan and a number of other states. In 2001, a lot of media reports were surfacing about
hunger deaths in Jharkhand. Determined to find a solution to this painful crisis, he pursued a meticulous social audit for two long years. Unscrupulous land-owners were taking advantage of the illiterate tribal farmers and deceiving them of their rightful land. Mishra talked and listened to the helpless families, promising them a healthier tomorrow. His active participation in the “Right To Food Movement” bore fruit when tribal farmers were successful in exercising their land rights. Later he joined Hyderabad based NGO Centre For World Solidarity and co-ordinated their human rights campaigns in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar.

“I learnt a lot about the socio-economic rights and how to exercise them. I realised that a decent livelihood is also one of our fundamental human rights”, shares Neelkanth Mishra. In 2006 he joined Oxfam where he was exposed to fisheries and aquaculture-based livelihood opportunities. The journey of Jaljeevika Working with Oxfam in drought-ridden Bundelkhand, he urged the grieving farmers to turn to inland fishery, utilising the unclaimed water bodies in the area. “I approached many NGOs working in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka to promote fishery among the unemployed population. Lack of technical know-how in pisciculture was the biggest challenge.” Mishra shares, “With minimal resources, it took me 5 to 6 years to scan through remote tribal areas, where I found over 15-20 lakh unused water bodies and even a greater number of small-scale farmers in pangs of hunger.” Starting as a small team, Jaljeevika began their work with the landless farmers in Andhra Pradesh. On top of being severely exploited by atrocious landowners, these farmers were displaced from their homes due to a dam construction project.

“With no other option, they were collecting fish from the local reservoir and selling it to local traders at a meagre 35 rupees per kg. With our intervention, they learnt about the actual market price and negotiated with the unscrupulous traders. Finally, the traders agreed at 75 rupees per kg, which was even beyond a 100% hike.” Mishra adds, “The similar situation happened in almost 40-60 places.” He recalls, “In many places, the farmer-turned-fishermen had no idea about differences in quality and rates of the fish feed. They were buying feed at up to Rs 3000/lakh from Andhra Pradesh and Bengal, whereas the standard rate was not more than Rs 500/lakh. Jaljeevika started teaching these farmers how to prepare own feed from locally available resources. This became a hugely remunerative activity with just 2-3 months of feed culture yielding an entire year’s profit.” “This year itself more than 600 people have left farming to join fisheries.” he shares with a smile. Infamous for being a Naxal-affected area, the villagers in Gadchiroli in Maharashtra were counting their days in terror.

With three years of effort, Jaljeevika engaged over 3000 women providing them with a regular income source. “Today we are employing more than 5000 people every year,” says a proud Mishra. Present projects of Jaljeevika Feed culture still dominates Jaljeevika’s primary focus. Apart from this, they have also demystified the research and development in aquaculture. “Our R & D initiative has promoted the use of low-cost, locally procured eco-friendly materials like bamboo and wood in making the cages for fish cultivation. Can you imagine that we have
reduced the cage prices from 2 lakh to 30 thousand?” Mishra expresses. Decorating and marketing of indoor aquariums is a very profitable activity for hundreds of tribal women working under Jaljeevika. Azolla (an aquatic weed) propagation is the latest addition to their list of projects. It generates fodder for fish, livestock and poultry in around 700 farming families in Maharashtra. Jaljeevika has introduced the concept of aqua-entrepreneurship which intricately connects all fish-based enterprises like hatcheries, feed cultivation and fish farming.

“In the next 1-2 months, we are planning to start an open source digital platform to share all our fishery-related knowledge and experience with the public”, informs Mishra. Memories made along the way “In Vijayanagara, we trained a group of tribal women whose joy knew no bounds when they were handed 20 thousand in cash for the first time in life. After one year, the Central Fisheries Institute of Bhubaneshwar awarded them the title of Best Women Entrepreneurship Group of the year. It was a great moment of pride for us,” recalls Mishra. He adds, “In Vizag, we were approached by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra for signing a cage-building contract with them. It was an inexplicable joy for me considering that the Krishi Vigyan Kendra itself is mandated to train the local farmers about cage-building.” Journey with Ashoka Mishra shares that his engagement with Ashoka has been immensely rewarding. Ashoka provided him with the insights on how to implement his ideas on a larger scale.

“I learnt that a system must be designed rather than controlling the knowledge, that is how we are expanding today. Thanks to Ashoka, our dreams have turned into reality.” In his own words, “It is sad to see how most of the technically skilled people are unwilling to venture into a rural area and help people at the ground level.” Neelkanth Mishra sacrificed a life of comfort to ensure a good night’s sleep to thousands across the length and breadth of India. His name truly deserves to be resonating in people’s hearts.

World News: Use value of inland fisheries is USD 39 billion, says FAO review


FAO have now published their latest update of their Review of the state of world fishery resources: inland fisheries (Fishery and aquaculture Circular C942 Revision3). The FAO Fishery and Aquaculture Circular C942 Revision 3 (C942 Rev. 3) updates and expands the scope of previous revisions of the circular and is an important baseline document, intended to assist in the global understanding of inland fisheries and inform dialogue on their current and future role. The third revision reviews the status and trends of inland fisheries catch at global, continental and subcontinental levels. It places inland capture fisheries in the context of overall global fish production, and calls attention to the importance of inland capture fisheries with respect to food security and nutrition and the Sustainable Development Goals. It quantifies global inland fisheries resources in terms of food production, nutrition, employment, economic contribution with respect to those countries/regions or subnational areas where they are important. A
characterization approach to distinguish large-scale and small-scale fishing operations and their relative contributions is provided.

The review provides estimated economic values of inland fisheries, as well as a valuation of potential replacement cost of these (in terms of dollars, other resources such as land and water, feeds). There is also an analysis of the extent and economic value of recreational inland fisheries. The contribution to employment and the gender differences related to this are quantified. The linkages between inland fisheries and biodiversity are also explored. C942 Rev. 3 discusses ways to measure and assess inland fisheries, in particular, how to establish more accurately inland fishery catches in the many situations where there are challenges to collection of catch statistics. This review is necessarily rather brief on the national descriptions and is intended to encourage researchers in inland fisheries to extend and deepen the analysis of inland fisheries resources with which they are familiar. Full text available online: http://www.fao.org/3/CA0388EN/ca0388en.pdf

Bangladesh: World's 3rd inland fish producer

https://www.thedailystar.net/city/bangladesh-now-worlds-3rd-inland-fish-producer-1607770?

After being self-sufficient in fish production for the first time this year, Bangladesh has started to get global recognition as one of the biggest fish producers. The country was ranked third in producing fish from inland water-bodies, behind China and India, according to a report of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The country was the fifth on the list last year. Bangladesh is now also the fifth biggest aquaculture producer in the world, said the report titled “The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2018”. Fisheries and Livestock Minister Narayon Chandra Chanda cited the report findings yesterday at a press conference, organised by the Department of Fisheries at Matsya Bhaban in Dhaka, marking National Fisheries Week, to be observed from July 22 to 28. “The continuous effort of the government for the country's fisheries sector has resulted in such achievements,” said the minister.

In the 2016-2017 fiscal, Bangladesh produced a total of 41,34,000 metric tonnes of fish, including a first-time surplus of 84,000 tonnes. It helped the country to achieve the rank, he said. The production of hilsa stood at around five lakh metric tonnes that year, twice the amount in 2008-09, he added. Citing a report of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Narayon Chandra claimed that the country’s per capita fish consumption -- about 63 grammes per day -- has exceeded the required daily demand. To ensure continuity of the success, the government will prioritise conservation of jatka (small hilsa), protection of natural fish-breeding grounds, extension of shrimp cultivation, and collection of marine fish at a tolerant level, he said in a written statement. The government will also bring all fishing trawlers and vessels under licence within 2030, and establish 20 marine surveillance check-posts in coastal areas within 2020.
“Approximately 60 percent of animal protein that we consume every day comes from fish. And the fisheries sector contributes 3.57 percent to the country's GDP,” the minister said. The minister also said the fisheries week will be observed across the country through several programmes, like fair, seminar and rally. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will wrap up the observance of the week by releasing fish fry in Gono Bhaban lake, he said. Fisheries and Livestock Ministry Secretary Raisul Alam Mondal and Director General at the Department of Fisheries Goljar Hossain, among others, were also present at the press conference. In getting the third position, Bangladesh produced a total of 10,48,242 tonnes of fish from inland water bodies in 2016, about 2.4 percent higher than 2015, according to the FAO's fisheries and aquaculture report. China topped the list with 23,18,046 tonnes, while India was in second place with 14,62,063 tonnes, found the report which was made public on July 9. Myanmar and Cambodia secured fourth and fifth positions. In overall aquaculture production, Bangladesh was placed fifth by producing 22 lakh tonnes in 2016, said the report. China topped that list with a production of 4.92 crore tonnes. The report also said Bangladesh produced 1,13,200 tonnes of fish from marine and costal sources, and ranked 11th in the list.

India: Consultative meeting with civil society organisations on livelihood issues of inland fishworkers organised by National Platform for Small Scale Fishworkers (Inland)

A total of 57 participants attended the meeting. They came from fish workers’ organisations working in different states and from civil society organisations of different regions. It was unanimously observed that the National Consultative Meeting in Delhi organised by the National Platform on livelihood issues of inland small scale fishworkers has been the first of its kind. The meeting has been fairly successful in highlighting the inland fish workers’ issues as well as in primary sensitisation of friendly and responsive organisations on those. Important suggestions for future activities were made with offers for support from different civil society organisations.

At the beginning Soumen Ray, Coordinator of the National Platform, welcomed all the participants to the National Consultative meeting and described the backdrop and perspective of the meeting. He mentioned the context of the inception of the National Platform in 2016 and its second meeting in 2017. He also mentioned the purpose for which the National Consultative Meeting in Delhi has been convened and requested the participants to strive together to make it a success. Neelkanth Mishra was given the responsibility to coordinate the first session of the meeting. After that there was a brief session on self introduction of the participants. All the participants mentioned their names, respective work areas and organisations in the house. The Hindi version of the National Platform’s booklet on policy position "National Policy on Inland Fisheries: Why We Need it? What do we need in it?" was released by Suman Singh (Bihar), Munna Barman (MP), Sheikh Ghulam Rasool (Jammu & Kashmir) and Adinarayana (Andhra Pradesh). N. Venugopalan from International Collective in support of Small Scale Fishworkers (ICSF) delivered the inaugural speech.
He quoted Robin Welcome, an inland fisheries expert “Inland fisheries is affected by all other sectors, except inland fisheries” to mention the all pervading interconnection of fisheries harboured in water bodies and courses. He pointed out a few important issues for management and up keeping of inland fisheries like equitable resource access and support for processing and marketing for vulnerable sections of fish workers including women. Mentioning the all important role of policy and legislation in the management of fisheries he exclaimed that the fishers could conserve, protect, restore and co-manage inland water bodies if they had effective tenure rights. He also mentioned the need for policy coherence among the sub-national, national and international sectors. The importance of flood plain wetlands, establishment of an environmental flow regime and policy for inclusive growth for inland fisheries were stressed by him. He also talked about the need for unison between state and national policies on fisheries. He stated that creation of better marketing channels and marketing infrastructure are needed for the whole sector.

He concluded the inaugural speech by stating that there should be a paradigm change from revenue generation through the prohibit-and-use model to better social development through co-management means. Pradip Chatterjee, Convener of the National Platform, made the Key Note Address to the meeting. He first mentioned the vast and varied water bodies of our country that hold enormous quantities of fish. He then mentioned the importance of the sector highlighting the major role Inland Fisheries plays in total fish production, food security and nutritional status of the country as well as the huge workforce employed in the sector. He also mentioned that the potentialities of water resources in production of fish are largely unutilised. Then he went on to indicate the massive threats to our water bodies and fisheries as pollution, encroachment and diversion of water for consumptive use. He repeatedly mentioned the small scale fishers and fish farmers as the largest primary non-consumptive stakeholders of the water bodies and their natural custodians because Good Fish Needs Good Water.

He said that this community is the primary victim of so called development initiatives that cause large scale encroachments and pollution as well as of the official conservation initiatives that evict them from traditional fishing grounds. In mentioning the policy requirements for inland fisheries he first indicated the livelihood needs of different categories of fish workers like fishers, fish farmers and fish vendors including the women fish workers. He then went on to identify the basic policies and overarching concerns of inland fisheries management. He also stated administrative requirements like a separate fisheries ministry in the central government and a national fisheries commission. Pradip Chatterjee also presented the history of the National Platform with the context of its establishment. He highlighted its role in the process for preparation of the National Policy on Inland Fisheries and stated the need to keep up the pressure on the Government of India for its final adoption incorporating the policy positions advocated by the National Platform.
He concluded his address with an appeal to the civil society to stand by the small scale fishers in their unequal fight with money and political power to save water, save fish and save fisher people. The house then had an open discussion with the participation of civil society organisations and fish workers' representatives. The session was coordinated by Soumya Dutta of Pairovi, Anil Singh of SANSAD and Arti from FES. Fish workers' representatives from Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Maharashtra raised their issues and stressed the need for immediate action on those. Speakers from fish workers' organisations included Suman Singh from Bihar, Gobinda Das and Swapan Bhowmik from West Bengal, Munna Barman from Madhya Pradesh, Braja Behera and Maguni Jana from Odisha, Adinarayan from Andhra Pradesh and Ghulam Rasool from Jammu & Kashmir.

Issues raised included devastation of river ecology and fisheries in the name of development, destruction of flood plane wetlands and fisheries, security of tenure for small fishers and fish farmers, market access and facilities for small fish vendors, degradation of fisheries in lakes like Chilika and Wular, transborder management of rivers like Mthabhanga and Churniban on fishing in protected areas like Sundarban and Bhitarakanika. Ranja Sengupta from TWN, raised the need for awareness on international trade agreements being processed under WTO and RCEP that aim at reducing subsidies to the fisheries sector and opening up of fishing grounds, fish production and fish markets to international companies. She offered to help organise workshops on the issues. Ashok Sharma from Delhi Forum welcomed the initiative. He spoke about the long association of Delhi Forum with fisheries movement and National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF).

He said that Delhi Forum will definitely support and work with the National Platform for Inland Fishworkers. Soumya Dutta from Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha & India-Climate-Justice, stressed the need for mapping of fisheries relating to both Himalayan and peninsular river systems with special reference to climate change, encroachments, diversion of water etc. that affect ecology and fisheries. He called for development of understanding and capacity building for identification of problems of pollution. He also suggested that the first users' right on water bodies and fish resources should be claimed by the fishing communities. He offered to help in pollution detection and mapping of fisheries resources and threats in the rivers and flood plain wetlands and said that the process is already underway for Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum (DMF). T Peter, General Secretary of National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF), welcomed the initiative to organise the inland fishworkers and raise their issues.

He proposed that the National Platform for Small Scale Inland Fishworkers join in NFF and function as an autonomous body within NFF. He said that many National Platform leaders are also in NFF, so it is also organisationally very close to NFF. Pradip Chatterjee, Convener of the National Platform, welcomed the proposal and said that the National Platform has developed its positions on the basis of the teachings of leaders like Father Thomas Kochery, Harekrishna Debnath and Matanhy Saldanha who, as leaders of NFF, laid down the main principles of small
scale fishworkers' struggle. He also said that while the National Platform would definitely fight together with NFF, the proposal for joining NFF would be considered by the National Platform constituents in the earliest. Dipak Dholakia from ICAN said that the fisheries issues have not been much in discussion in the civil society. It has been a scope for learning for him to be associated with the initiative.

He also said that ICAN as an organisation has already resolved to support the small scale fishworkers' cause and many of the leading activists in fisheries are ICAN members. Anil Singh of SANSAD felt the need for an effective national level organization of small scale fishworkers to work for their issues not only at national or regional level but also at international and sub-continental level. He said that as the Lok Sabha elections and formation of a new government are due in next year, this is the right time to raise the demand for a small scale fish worker friendly national policy for inland fisheries. He also warned the house saying that India is a country which is very good in introducing legislations but very poor in implementing those. Arti from FES gave an introduction to the supportive role they play for the workers in Unorganized sector. She raised the issue of implementation of Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act 2008 for all the Unorganized Workers including the Small Scale Inland fishworkers. She agreed that the fishworkers should be equipped to move for their rights as per the norms of ILO. She also said that NGOs can't support the movements of the workers but can help them to improve their knowledge and capacity through workshops or seminars. Neelkantha Mishra summed up the day's proceedings. Sasanka Dev moved the vote of thanks.

**Kerala: Govt eyes bigger catch from inland fisheries**


The government is working on a plan to double the output from inland fisheries by bringing more land under aquaculture. Fisheries Minister J. Mercykutty Amma said on Monday that moves were on to launch a programme targeting a production of 80,000 tonnes, double the current output from the sector. Addressing the media here, she said the fisheries policy to be announced soon would spell out measures to harness the immense potential of inland fisheries for the economic development of the State. “Aquaculture is confined to less than 4,000 hectares in Kerala, while studies have shown that 68,000 hectares can be used for the purpose. The State currently exports only Rs.5,400 crore of fish, with production unable to match the demand for domestic consumption and export.”

New methods The government, she said, was committed to promoting aquaculture. Modern methods like cage culture, recirculatory aquaculture, and zero water exchange shrimp farming would be widely adopted. The Minister said the government would intensify the drive against chemical contamination of fish. Formalin-laced ice The next step of the campaign would focus
on investigations to detect the presence of formalin in the ice used for preserving fish. “Traders are reported to be using formalin-laced ice to maximise the quantum of fish in containers. Checks will be carried out to identify the source of contaminated ice and action taken against traders.” The Minister said Kerala would take the initiative to create a consensus among south Indian States against destructive and unsustainable fishing methods. “Efforts are on to convene a meeting of ministers in August to discuss the issue,” the Minister said. Rs.2 crore as fine She said the government had collected a fine of Rs.2 crore from fishing boats violating the ban on juvenile fishing. The crackdown had succeeded in curbing the practice among fishermen from Kerala, she said, adding that it would take similar action by other States to arrest the decline in fish stocks.

**Maharashtra: Government seeks to extend support price to inland fishing**


The fisheries sector could soon benefit from a Minimum Support Price (MSP) system on the lines of the agricultural sector, according to a report on inland fishing by the Maharashtra Animal & Fishery Sciences University (MAFSU). The report, which also recommends establishing riverine fisheries co-operative societies, was submitted to the State government on July 5. The report contains findings of a first-of-its-kind survey by MAFSU of all 30,650 inland water bodies in 11 Vidarbha districts to estimate potential and promote inland fishery resources. Dr. Ashish Paturkar, Vice-Chancellor, MAFSU, said Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has asked them to prepare a similar report for the rest of the State. The suggested action plan includes allotment of fishing rights to conventional fishermen. Taking a cue from the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act, which covers farm produce, the report has suggested marketing fish. Also recommended is a dedicated Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Act to regulate inland fishing.

Dr. Paturkar said, “An MSP for fish and fishery products would also mean extending benefits to the fishermen involved in inland fishing. The Act will be on the lines of the APMC Act. We have also suggested establishing a fish market price information system.” The survey, he added, aimed to identify the exact number and spread of inland water bodies. “In this report, we have also collected data on soil, which will be useful for implementing various schemes. For Vidarbha, the aim is to increase fish production from 68,000 metric tonnes (MT) to 1.78 lakh MT per year.”

Dr. Paturkar said the project received help from the Vidarbha Development Board. “We are in talks with the Marathwada Development Board for their support in a similar exercise for the region. This will be done in other regions as well, and a State-level report will be submitted soon.”

**Kerala: Plan to extend inland fish cultivation to more areas**
The district fish farmers’ development agency (FFDA) is set to extend inland fish cultivation project to more areas in the district. Following the success of the first phase of the Blue Revolution, the agency, the nodal firm for implementing the project, is set to roll out the second phase of the Blue Revolution in Kozhikode. According to figures available with FFDA, they already have 10 units of aquaponics, four units of brackish water fish cages and another two hectares of under fresh water fishery. The units started operation nearly 10 months ago and are continuing its operation in the district. The agency, however, is getting fewer takers for genetically-improved farmed tilapia (GIFT) cultivation. Though the target for the first phase of was three hectares, they could not find farmers to achieve the target. “The limited number of fresh water ponds having 50 cent area in the district is the major reason why we could not achieve the target in GIFT cultivation,” said Dhanya Sunny, district project coordinator of Blue Revolution.

Besides, the pond for cultivation should not be situated in flood or other calamity-prone area, and should be completely disconnected from other water bodies, she added. Though the central government-aided Blue Revolution invites individuals, groups and farmers’ clubs for inland fish cultivation, over 90% of the takers in Kozhikode are individuals. The farmers either use own ponds or lease ponds for cultivating fish. The agency is planning to expand inland fish farming by inviting more farmers for brackish water-caged fish cultivation, re-circulatory aquaculture system and other methods. Individuals, groups and farmers clubs can participate in the project. The plan is to utilize maximum number of private ponds and other facilities in the district for achieving Blue Revolution. The project also aims to ensure better market facilities for fish farmers from the district. The coordinators hope to tap the potential of unused water bodies by introducing fish cultivation. Though GIFT farming requires ponds with not less than 50 cent area, any pond with more than 10 cent area could be used for cultivating other varieties, said the project coordinator.

Telangana and Kerala: Barter notes on inland fishing, road safety

Just as the Telangana government is planning to come out with a Kerala model road safety legislation, the Kerala government is readying to pay back the compliment by taking a leaf from Telangana’s success with inland fish harvest. While the exchange of development tips were inadvertent, in a happy coincidence, the initiatives from the two states have come about at the same time. “Kerala has been eyeing the technical and commercial expertise of Telangana in
inland fish production, cage fish yield and fingerling production for some time,” Kerala fisheries minister J Mercykutty Amma told FE. Telangana enjoys four times the area of fishing reservoirs in Kerala and the latter is yet to tap the resources optimally. In tune with the fast-escalating demand, Telangana has been able to double the fingerlings production to 40 million in just two years. “Telangana fisheries minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav has promised to share the expertise with Kerala at a meeting in Hyderabad”, said Mercikutty Amma.

This teaming up would come about at a time when Kerala is launching Rs 69.9-crore inland fisheries project, with a target of generating 14.4 lakh mandays. The co-operation with Telangana farmers is expected to help increase inland fish production in Kerala to 25,000 million tonne and harvest Rs 1,270-crore revenues from the sector. Meanwhile, it was Telangana ministers who first came up with the idea of synergy with Kerala on road safety. Telengana, worried by the State’s road accident dead toll of 7,000, has been considering enforcement of initiatives as in Kerala. Kerala has a Road Safety Vision in place which targets to reduce road accidents and fatalities by 50% within 2020, said Rajiv Puthaleth, secretary, Road Safety Authority, Kerala. Compared to the last year, there has been nominal progress towards this goal in Kerala since the fatalities are down 6.5% and road accidents by 2.5%. In a meeting of high-level committee, comprising road and transport ministers, the Telengana government has decided to have a similar goal of reducing road accidents and fatalities by 50% within 2020.

**Kerala: Rs 69.90 crore project to boost inland fisheries of Kerala**


The inland fishing sector is set to receive a fillip in the state as the Fisheries Department is planning to launch an umbrella project named ‘Development of Inland Fisheries’ with an outlay of Rs 69.90 crore. The project to be launched on a state-wide basis will be implemented by Fish Farmers Development Agency and Agency for Aquaculture Development in Kerala. According to the Fisheries Department, other than that of conserving and managing the inland natural fish resources, the project also aims at generation of 14.4 lakh man-days of labour and generating a revenue of R270 crore from the sector. “The project mainly involves seven components - conservation and management of inland fisheries, additional infrastructure facilities for fish seed farms, development and operation of existing farms and hatcheries, development of aquaculture and support services for aquaculture.

The project is expected to be completed within one year,” said an officer with the Fisheries Department. It is learned as part of the project, there will be programmes like one paddy, one fish; fish farming in reservoirs, tiger shrimp farming, Indian white shrimp farming, Vannamei shrimp farming, integrated fish farming and others. “Through this project, we are planning to appoint 400 aquaculture promoters. They will be appointed on a contract basis and will be
provided with a salary of Rs 5,000. These promoters will be asked to initiate programmes that could enhance the production to 25,000 tonnes and to double the aquaculture productivity of the state,” said the officer. At the same time, the department also has plans to attain self-sufficiency in seed production by creating additional infrastructure facilities and by producing good quality seeds for better yield.

The other major initiatives being planned under the project includes establishing nine demonstration units and setting up 10 aquatic animal health care centres. Earlier, the Fisheries Department had embarked on a programme to develop the aquaculture farming practices in the state, by introducing new species in the existing aquaculture scenario of the state. Considering the immense scope of fisheries and aquaculture, the Central Government had launched a Central Sector Scheme on Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries for focused development and management of the fisheries sector and to increase both fish production and productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources of the inland and marine fisheries sector, including deep-sea fishing.

**Tamil Nadu: Inland fishermen decide to boycott local body polls**


Tirunelveli District Inland Fishermen Association members announced that they would boycott the local body elections as the district administration and the State government “have not taken any positive action on their genuine demands” for fishing rights in waterbodies and compensation for the loss they suffered after Cyclone Ockhi. In a petition submitted to Collector Sandeep Nanduri on Monday, the fishermen, led by their president P. Murugesan, said the fishing rights in the irrigation tanks under the control of Public Works Department and the village panchayats in the district were being auctioned when the fishing rights in inland waterbodies in Kanniyakumari district were being given only to inland fishermen cooperative societies. When Cyclone Ockhi hit Kanniyakumari district and caused cloudburst in the Western Ghats, it triggered heavy floods in the Tamirabharani on November 30 and December 1 last.

Consequently, the inland fishermen’s fishnets spread at various spots across the perennial river were washed away to cause heavy loss to the fishermen. “Though officials from the Department of Fisheries inspected the spot after we narrated the damaged caused by Ockhi, no compensation has been given to the affected fishermen so far,” Mr. Murugesan said. He also said no fingerling was available in the Manimuthar dam hatchery even after State Government allocated ₹13.65 crore in 2016 for breeding fingerlings in six hatcheries across Tamil Nadu, including Manimuthar Dam hatchery. Consequently, the fish farmers had to rely on the private hatcheries that were charging exorbitant price for fingerlings.

“While the government hatchery charges ₹375 for 1,000 ‘katla kendai’ fingerlings, the private hatcheries collected anywhere between ₹2,000 and ₹2,500. For the ‘roghu and mirgal kendai’,
the farmers have to pay ?1,000 to ? 1,200 to the private hatcheries while it costs about only ? 252 in the government hatcheries. Hence, we appeal to the State Government to ensure adequate stocking of fingerlings in the Manimuthar dam hatchery with the funds allocated by the government,” Mr. Murugesan said. The petitioners also said no action had been taken on their demand for giving two-wheelers with iceboxes for the past three years. ‘Take action’ Shanmugasundaram of Sivagiri, in his petition, alleged that three usurers from the same area had driven his family out of his house even after he had repaid to them the loan of ? 1.50 lakh with interest. Since the Sivagiri police were refusing to take action on the complaint, the Collector should instruct the police accordingly, he said.

West Bengal: Fishworkers demand inland fisheries policy

The draft National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy is yet to see the light of the day. More than six months have elapsed after the expert committee was formed last year. As you know, the National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (Inland) has already submitted recommendations on the National Policy for Inland Fisheries. It is high time to remind the government of its commitment.

West Bengal: Govt to develop roadmap for inland fisheries


The West Bengal Fisheries Department is going to prepare a roadmap for the better development of inland fisheries in the state and develop a comprehensive strategy to protect the interest of small-scale fisherfolk across the state. An advisory committee has been appointed to prepare the roadmap. The roadmap would focus on the utilisation of potentialities of inland fisheries in the state, augment the production of fishes and sustainably use the fish resources. The guideline will also focus on the protection of waterbodies and their catchment areas. This roadmap by the State Government will help the Central Government to implement the National Policy on Inland Fisheries. A national-level meeting was conducted in Paschim Medinipur recently, after which the advisory committee was appointed. The state Fisheries department will also conduct awareness campaigns to check the water bodies and ponds from being polluted and encroached upon.

World News: WFFP report on inland fisheries published

worldfishers.org

In June 2017, WFFP organised a successful Inland Fisheries Exchange at the Vanderkloof Dam in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa -10, in preparation for the workshop on Inland Fisheries to be held at the 7th General Assembly of the WFFP in November 2017. The Exchange
was organised by the WFFP Working Group on Inland Fisheries, with the support of the WFFP international secretariat. The exchange was hosted by Masifundise and participants from local communities of Keurtijeskloof, Petrusville and Luckhoff, who fish at the Vanderkloof Dam.

The international participants were Christiana Louwa, El Molo Forum (Kenya) and WFFP. The participants, both local and international, provided case-studies that focused on their local context, contributing to an overview of the characteristics of inland small-scale fishing and the challenges inland fishing communities face around the world. Such an overview led to the identification of key points of entry for actions, particularly within WFFP. As a result of the exchange, this report and a position paper about inland small-scale fishing have been produced. The full report is available at: http://worldfishers.org/2017/10/15/groundbreaking-report-inland-fishing-inland-fishers/

**West Bengal: Soon, state govt to develop roadmap for inland fisheries**

http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/soon-state-govt-to-develop-roadmap-for-inland-fisheries-260788

The state Fisheries department is going to prepare a roadmap for the better development of inland fisheries in the state and develop a comprehensive strategy to protect the interest of small scale fisherfolk across the state. The main purpose of the roadmap would be to focus on the utilisation of potentialities of inland fisheries in the state, augment the production of fishes and sustainably use the fish resources. The guideline will also focus on the protection of waterbodies and their catchment areas. It may be mentioned that the state government may urge the Centre to implement the national policy with an aim to help marginalised and poor fishermen in the state to get rid of deprivation. The main purpose behind setting up the platform by the Centre is to fight for the interest of small scale fish workers throughout the country, meet the demands of the fishing community and protect their livelihood and the waterbodies.

The National Policy on Inland Fisheries will mainly focus on the assessment of the potentialities of inland fisheries and a roadmap for utilisation of the potentialities. The state government will sufficiently sensitisce the need of a National Policy on Inland Fisheries and may raise the issue with the Centre. Earlier, there had been attempts to organise the fishing communities but no major development had taken place in this regard. A national level meeting was conducted in West Midnapore recently and an advisory committee has been appointed to prepare a roadmap. The state Fisheries department will also conduct awareness campaigns to check the waterbodies and ponds from being polluted and encroached upon. In some cases, it has been found that various lakes have shrunk. The roadmap will also address all the issues pertaining to small scale fishermen which have been unaddressed for a long time.

**Telangana: Inland fisheries receive a boost**
An effort to ramp up the production of quality fish seed for promoting inland fisheries, the State government has released Rs. 53 lakh to develop the existing fish seed farm at the Kinnerasani reservoir in Palvancha mandal. Developmental work According to sources, the amount would be spent on excavation of seed rearing ponds and breeder ponds, renovation of other existing ponds, construction of packing sheds, among other development works at the fish seed farm near the Kinnerasani dam. In a statement, Kothagudem MLA Jalagam Venkat Rao said the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries has accorded administrative sanction for taking up development works at the fish seed farm near Kinnerasani reservoir. It has an outlay of Rs. 53 lakh. Strengthen infrastructure He asked the officials of the Fisheries Department to immediately begin the development works. The work would include strengthening of the infrastructure at the fish seed farm. The farm is situated close to the Kinnerasani medium irrigation project.

**Tamil Nadu: Inland fish production too affected by NE monsoon failure**


The failure of the North East monsoon in Tamil Nadu last year has not spared the fisheries sector too, with the state witnessing a steep decline in inland fish production. Fisheries department statistics put inland fish production reduced from 2.42 lakh tonnes in 2015-16 to 1.97 lakh tonnes the next year. "The failure of north east monsoon during 2016 resulted in scarcity of water in all water bodies which affected inland fish production of the state," it said. The failure of northeast monsoon, besides the scanty rainfall received in the earlier southwest monsoon also, had resulted in an unprecedented drought, with the government declaring all 32 districts as 'drought-hit.' Tamil Nadu had 3.83 lakh hectares of "effective" inland water resources, which included reservoirs, major and minor irrigation tanks, ponds and short seasonal tanks, Fisheries department said.

The potential of inland fisheries sector was estimated at 4.50 lakh tonnes during normal rainfall, it added. It said the state's total fish production in 2016-17 was about 6.69 lakh tonnes and that about 79,400 tonnes of marine products worth Rs 3,914 crore were exported. Marine fish production was an estimated 4.72 lakh tons, it added. The department was also taking up a slew of initiatives to benefit fishermen, including those affected by the Sri Lankan Navy by way of apprehension.

"During the year 2017-18, Rs 286 crore has been allocated as subsidy assistance for construction of 500 Deep Sea Tuna long liners cum gill netters. In this scheme, priority will be given to fishermen who were affected by the Sri Lankan navy," it said. In this scheme, the Centre will
contribute Rs 200 crore while the rest will be the state’s share. Fishermen will also get 70 per cent subsidy assistance for diversification of trawl fishing boats of Palk Bay into deep sea fishing boats. The Centre will contribute 50 per cent while the state will share 20 per cent, the Fisheries department added. Further, the World Bank has sanctioned Rs 321.30 crore for implementing various initiatives, including improvements to civil infrastructure under Coastal Disaster Risk Reduction Project (CDRRP), it said.

**Karnataka: Govt. framing policy to promote inland fisheries: Pramod Madhwaraj**


The State government is in the process of framing a policy for the promotion of inland fisheries. It will be a pro-farmer policy, Pramod Madhwaraj, Minister of State for Fisheries, Youth Empowerment and Sports, said here on Monday. Addressing a gathering at the National Fish Farmers’ Day at the College of Fisheries, the minister said that the policy will be aimed at removing middlemen and arranging direct marketing link for the produces of inland fish farmers. The policy would lay stress on increasing fish production by at least 10 times though there is scope for increasing the production by 100 times. The lakes and other inland water sources should be exploited for increasing the production, he said. Around 5.73 lakh hectares of inland water bodies were available in the State for the promotion of inland fisheries, Mr. Madhwaraj said. Asking Fisheries Department officials to encourage aquaculture he said that the officials were citing the rules pertaining to coastal regulatory zone (CRZ) as hindrance for promoting it in the coastal districts in the State.

“But I don’t agree with you. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha are far ahead in aquaculture when compared to Karnataka. Why are CRZ rules not an issue in those states?,” the minister questioned, adding that there was ample scope for aquaculture promotion in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada. Stating that the fisheries sector in the State was facing a peculiar situation, the minister said that on the one side marine fisheries was over exploited and on the other side inland fisheries was under exploited. “We have not used even one per cent of the potential of inland fisheries in the State,” he said. Mr. Madhwaraj said that the State was producing 60 crore fingerlings against the demand for 90 crore fingerlings per annum. Steps were being taken to increase fish seed production. The minister released a book on fisheries on the occasion. M.N. Venugopal, dean, College of Fisheries and Shivakumar Magada, head, Krishi Vignana Kendra, Mangaluru spoke.

**West Bengal: Govt to facilitate development of inland fisheries in Bengal**

[http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/kolkata-251574](http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/kolkata-251574)
The state Fisheries department will soon chalk out a guideline to help the marginalised fish farmers through development of inland fisheries. It will also assess their potentialities which may be developed as an alternative source of income for many in the villages. The department will ensure that sources of water in rivers are not cut down due to poor watershed management in the catchment areas. It has often been found that natural water drainage is obstructed by the construction of roads, railway tracks and the like. Another important issue is the usage of chemicals in agriculture which is destroying the fish resources of wetlands and paddy fields. It is the small fishermen who are worst hit if the quality of waterbodies are not good. According to a senior official of the state Fisheries department, the guidelines which will be formulated will mainly focus on the protection, augment and sustainable use of the fish resources in all inland waterbodies.

Guidelines will also be chalked out for protection of waterbodies and for the incorporation of fisheries in all development planning that affect them and watershed management. Efforts will be made to sensitise the fisher folks and also create awareness about the need of developing inland fisheries in larger scale as 20 million fishermen are involved in this. A platform will also be set up to fight for the interest of small-scale fish workers throughout the state, meet their demands and protect their livelihood. A national policy on inland fisheries will be formulated in order to ensure that the concerns mentioned in it are addressed. Earlier, there have been several attempts to organise the fishing communities, but they have till date remained unsuccessful. A national level meeting was conducted in West Midnapore recently and an advisory committee has been appointed to prepare a road map on the areas that need attention of the Centre and state government and how to develop the inland fisheries.

Various organisations of fishermen in the state have been demanding setting up of a national platform by the Centre which, they believe, will address several issues pertaining to small-scale fishermen which have been unaddressed for a long time. Statistics show that rivers and canals, reservoirs, ponds and tanks, oxbow lakes, wetlands, backwaters and estuaries yield 6.14 million tonnes of fish, which is more than 64 percent of the total fish production in the country. The potential of inland fishery resources has not been utilised yet properly. Less than 10 percent of the country's natural potential is used for fresh water aquaculture, while for brackish water aquaculture the area under cultivation is just above 13 percent of the potential area available.

**Tamil Nadu: Inland fishermen demand dole**


With reservoirs, ponds and tanks parched everywhere, inland fishermen say they are finding it extremely difficult to earn even Rs. 50 a day. They are demanding drought relief and a dole similar to that given to sea-faring fishermen during the fishing-ban period. An inland fisherman
of Mettur, P. Ramar, says the dam has only a few feet of water and the young ones of the fish have not grown. “Usually, we will have a minimum of 40 feet of water but this year with no rains, fishermen who have bought annual licences from the Fisheries Department are travelling to Karnataka as labourers where they are paid Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per kilo they catch,” he said demanding urgent drought relief. They fish either using coracles or wading in water. In many places, the fish that is caught in dams, tanks and ponds are sold through fishermen cooperative societies. V. Velmurugan of the Kulithalai Vatta Ull Naattu Meenavar Kooturavu Sangam in Karur district said the 700 members affiliated to his society were finding it very difficult this year.

India: New guidelines for inland fisheries


Encroachment and pollution of waterbodies to be punishable offence in proposed Bill. The Union government has issued guidelines for the States on framing a Bill on inland fisheries and aquaculture, amid mounting concern over the pollution and encroachment of waterbodies in Kerala and the long-standing demand to protect the traditional rights and livelihood security of inland fishers. Waste dumping The guidelines were issued by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DADF) under the Union Ministry of Agriculture to address the inadequacies in the existing regulations by States. According to the guidelines, encroachment or reclamation of rivers, lakes and wetlands and pollution of water sources is to be treated as a punishable offence. Dumping of solid waste in lakes, wetlands and lagoons has also been recommended for punishment. The guidelines propose regulations on the use of fishing craft and gear to protect commercially important fish species from exploitation.

States have been asked to notify protected areas and fishing holidays in waterbodies during the fish breeding season and ensure safe passage for migration of fish brooders to wetlands. The Centre has also instructed States to consider aquaculture on a par with agriculture and ensure uniform incentives, tax benefits and concessional tariffs for both sectors. Certification of fish seed and fish feed, disease monitoring and control and curbs on exotic species and destructive fishing practices are other provisions recommended for inclusion in the Bill. NGOs’ role A participatory approach with the involvement of NGOs and self help groups has been mooted to ensure sustainability of inland fisheries. Sources in the sector point out that though the number of inland fishers in Kerala is larger than those in the marine sector, they are scattered and poorly organised, unlike their counterparts in Odisha and West Bengal. The pollution and encroachment of waterbodies are two major issues that threaten sustainable inland fisheries in Kerala, says T. Peter, General Secretary, National Fishworkers Forum.
Demand on pokkali Inland fishermen in the State have also been clamouring for protection of their traditional rights for fishing activities in pokkali fields where farmers rotate paddy cultivation and fish farming. They feel that they have been sidelined by farmers who reap more profits from shrimp farming than paddy. The NFF is organising a consultative meeting at Kolkata to discuss the Centre’s guidelines. Mr. Peter said the response would be submitted to the government. States asked to consider aquaculture on a par with agriculture, ensure uniform incentives. Fishing holidays have to be notified during fish breeding season.

**Maharashtra: Maharashtra Fisheries department tries hard to push inland fishing across state**


The Maharashtra fisheries department is working on all projects to increase fish production of the state. At present it gets through marine (sea) fishing 4.5 metric tonne fish while from ponds and lakes it gets 1.5 metric tons a year. This, however, is equal to the consumption level of the state. Therefore, to increase the production level it is now concentrating more on inland fishing activity. VV Naik, joint commissioner of fishing department, said, “We are focusing more on inland fishing as marine fishing has some restrictions. We can expand inland fishing. Hence, a cage culture is been adopted. At present the state is doing inland fishing on 4.18 lakh hectares of water spread area.” To increase fish production, the state is providing fishing seeds to farmers, Mahdev Jankar, state minister, told FPJ. “Currently our state purchases seeds from West Bengal and some other states for which we spend Rs 3 crore. To save that Rs 3 crore we are developing seed-producing hatchery centres. Currently, we have 30 such centres which produce seven crore seeds of sweet water fish.

Also, we have artificial mini portable hatcheries.” Across Maharashtra there are 12,000 mechanised boats and 1,200 non-mechanised boats; both types hold licenses. There is a 1.92 lakh-strong fishing community in the state and they have been provided biometric cards, Naik said. He added, “In Maharashtra, four types of fishing are done. First is through bag net, the traditional way to catch small fish like Bombay Duck. Second, gill-net fishing to catch big fish like Pomfret. The third method is trawl-net fishing which also means bottom fishing (dragging). The fourth technique is by using purse seine net.” Naik said, “For purse seine net we have increased the size of the net so that small fish do not get trapped. Also, the state government passed on the circular to use the net only for a restricted period, from September till December. The net can be used during this time as the breeding period finishes.” “The cost of purse seine net is from Rs 15 lakh to Rs 20 lakh. Currently, the state requires 282 nets. However, we have 444 nets which are more than the requirement. Hence we are not giving any more licences for purse seine net fishing,” he said.
Maharashtra: Maha mulls to double inland fish production


The Maharashtra government is mulling to double the inland fish production from the current Rs 1.5 lakh metric tonne, Fisheries Minister Mahadev Jankar said today. Jankar said there are 30 fish seed production centres in the state with 2,414 lakh spawn production capacity per year for catering to inland fishing. The government will now set up 53 portable hatchery centres on co-operative basis all over the state close to large ponds, reservoirs and lakes, Jankar told reporters here. He said the cost of setting up each facility would be Rs 3.5 lakh. Jankar said earlier the state government would procure fish seeds from West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. "With the hatchery set up of our own, we will save Rs 3 crore on seed purchase," he said. Jankar informed that the marine production is 4.5 lakh metric tonne annually which has remained stagnant for a few years.

"One-third of the marine production is exported," he added. The Minister also said new licenses for Purse seine nets are not being given. These nets are to be used for fishing mackrel (bangda) and Sardin (Tarli) fish since they move in groups. Purse seine nets can stretch from 500 metres up to 1 kilometres and sometimes fishermen attach two or three such nets and cover an area of 3 kilometres, pulling out a large proportion of fish population. The nets have codend size (mesh) spanning from 25 mm to 35mm that blocks small fish, fishlings and fish eggs from falling back into the ocean, thereby stopping them from multiplying. "Now, the codend size has been expanded. There are 494 purse seine net licenses in the state," he added. Out of the 1.92 lakh fishing community members, biometric cards have been given to 1.86 lakh, Jankar said.

India: Guidelines for the States for framing a bill on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture

http://dahd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20the%20States%20for%20framing%20a%20bill%20on%20Inland%20Fisheries%20and%20Aquaculture%20%201.pdf

Inland fisheries including aquaculture have been a vital source of food, nutrition, employment and economic gain for humanity, since ancient times. However, the sector has assumed more significance in recent years, especially in developing countries due to the large contributions to the overall fish production, nutritional security and gainful employment generation. India is bestowed with vast and varied inland fisheries resources comprising rivers and canals (191 024 km), reservoirs (3.1 million ha), ponds and tanks (2.3 million ha), floodplain lakes and wetlands (0.79 million ha) and brackish-waters (1.4 million ha). Besides, substantial area amenable for coldwater fisheries exists in the medium and higher-altitudes of the Himalayan belt. Presently, the annual fish production in India has been estimated at 6.4 million tones, of which nearly 3.4 million tonnes (53%) comes from Inland sector. The contribution of fisheries sector to the total
Gross Domestic Product (GOP) of the country is about 1.4 percent in which the contribution of inland fisheries is nearly 50 percent.

The accelerated pace of human interventions during the last 4-5 decades has severely impacted inland fisheries resources. On the other hand, unplanned development in some forms of aquaculture has led to adverse impact on the environment. Presently, activities pertaining to inland fisheries are regulated in most of the States through an Act, which is based on the antiquated Indian Fisheries Act of 1897. Most of the Acts promulgated by the States lack the provisions necessary for sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture. Recognizing the economic, social, nutritional, environmental and aesthetic importance of inland fisheries and aquaculture, the Government of India through these guidelines on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture intends to ensure sustainable gainful employment in rural sector, improving the socio-economic condition of the target groups and increasing the export earnings.

Therefore, to draw the economic, social and nutritional benefits from inland fisheries and aquaculture in a sustainable manner, it is essential to adopt a judicious combination of implementation of implementation and effective regulatory framework, eco-friendly fishing and aquaculture practices with the larger involvement of the fisher communities and fish farmers. Since these guidelines give directions for sustainable development and management of inland fisheries and aquaculture in the country, all concerned stakeholders are encouraged to give due cognizance effect to these guidelines while framing a legislation on inland fisheries and aquaculture...

The full guidelines is available at: http://dahd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20the%20States%20for%20framing%20an%20bill%20on%20inland%20fisheries%20and%20Aquaculture%20%201.pdf

India: National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (NIFAP) 2016-17 questionnaire is available online


Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DAHDF), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India has constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Dilip Kumar, Retired Vice Chancellor, ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (Deemed University), Mumbai. The Expert Committee intends to collect detailed feedback / inputs on various aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors of India from different stakeholders such as Fishers / fish farmers / fish workers / Fishermen associations / Fish market intermediaries / Fisheries Co-operatives / SHGs / Self-employed or Entrepreneurs / Industry / Researchers / State & Central Government Organisations / NGOs / Civil society groups / Field Technicians / Aquashops / Aquaclinic / Aqualabs and others.
Two QUESTIONNAIRES for STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK (1) Inland Capture Fisheries Sector including Rivers, Reservoirs & Wetlands and (2) Inland Aquaculture Sector including Brackishwater aquaculture have been prepared and circulated to different State Fisheries Departments for collecting necessary feedback. The Questionnaires are also uploaded in http://dahd.nic.in/ Stakeholders Feedback Questionnaire: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NIFAP_Aquaculture https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NIFAP_InlandFisheries

Tamil Nadu: Inland fishermen seek relief


Inland fishermen have appealed to the State government to give relief to them “as the dry waterbodies had wiped out their livelihood.” Led by P. Murugesan, the fishermen, who submitted a petition to Collector M. Karunakaran on Monday, said over 2,500 of them used to catch freshwater fish in the Tamirabharani and in channels and tanks being fed by the river. Since flow of water in the river had dwindled owing to a drought-like situation prevailing in the district, it had seriously affected their livelihood. “Since we have lost the means to earn even the meagre money we got by selling the fish, we are not able to feed our children. Hence, the government should give us relief to tide over the situation and a subsidised loan of ?1 lakh,” the petitioners said. “Ensure pay parity” Temporary sanitary workers of urban civic bodies submitted a petition to the Collector seeking an increase in wages on a par with permanent workers.

“We are working on a contract basis for the past 13 years on a daily wage of ?168 to ?228 while the permanent workers get up to ?700. There should not be pay disparity,” they said. Services of those who had worked for 2 to 13 years must be regularised with benefits such as health insurance and provident fund, they said. “Seize motor pumps” Residents of Mela Meignanapuram in Tenkasi taluk submitted a petition seeking action against those who had fitted motors in the domestic drinking water connection. The petitioners said they had been getting drinking water either from domestic connections or public tap. After the water supply dwindled with the onset of summer, some of the residents had fitted motor pumps in the domestic drinking water connection, thus denying water supply in other connections and in public taps. Hence, the officials should seize the motor pumps, they said.

India: India should raise inland fisheries productivity

http://bigwire.in/2017/01/26/india-should-raise-inland-fisheries-productivity/

One may add to this the area under the numerous wetlands in the eastern parts of the country with an approximate area of another 1 million hectares. From the 6 million hectares, the total reported production of inland fish in India is barely 6.1 million tons. This is about a sixth of what could be achieved if the ponds and tanks were converted from stagnant smelly waters to vibrant
production centers of fish. The scope to utilize small household ponds in eastern parts of the country also appears to be robust. At a rough guess, the country could be producing 25-30 million tons fish from inland bodies against the current 6 million tons, an annual opportunity loss valued at over Rs 4 trillion. Why is it that despite this potential gain, inland fisheries production enhancement does not happen? Low productivity The reasons can be broadly divided into three classes — resource quality issues; socio-economic issues around the resources; and techno-managerial issues connected with the production of fish.

The resource quality issues pertain mainly to the length of time for which adequate water would be standing in a water body, alternate demands on the same water body and water quality issues resulting from these alternate demands. Socio-economic issues pertain to usufruct rights over the water bodies; security and length of tenancy when these are leased; and issues of poaching of fish. Techno-managerial issues pertain to the availability of spawn, seedlings, and fingerlings in time, availability of necessary feed and medicines, access to markets and access to working capital. Let us look at these three issues and where and how have people overcome them. In drought-prone areas, ponds acquire an adequate water depth by end of the monsoons and the condition may last till the end of April. Thus fish production would be best done if this entire period were effectively used. The length of the productive period for wetlands starts from October end when the floods recede and continues till the end of May. Reservoirs are more reliable.

The length of standing water in small household ponds etc. is also a function of monsoons but water in these can be augmented much more easily. Multiple uses There is a major issue with ponds and tanks in most parts of the mainland in India — these are typically multiple use water bodies. Humans and animals bathe there, utensils and clothes are washed in the same water and there is also a recreational use since people swim in them and the elderly enjoy evenings or mornings around their banks. In South India, the tanks are essentially looked upon as sources of irrigation and regulated by the famous office of the neer-katti. These multiple use water bodies, therefore, render themselves unreliable for fish production unless managed well. There often is the nub. Socio-economic issues arise because a bulk of the water bodies is common or at least public goods regulated by the local self-government agencies. Gram panchayats govern them if they are smaller than 100 hectares in size and the district level bodies govern them if they are larger. Guidelines in most states require these governing bodies to allot the fishing rights to the dead or fictitious co-operatives of the fishermen (or other marginalized and Dalit) communities.

In most places, such co-operatives are poorly managed. Since the ponds have a perimeter that could exceed a few kilometers, guarding the pond fish against poachers at night is a tough proposition and seldom acted upon by these co-operatives. Techno-managerial imbalances Techno-managerial issues are similar in texture to issues of any commercial activity. There is an imbalance between the number of hatcheries capable of giving quality seedlings and the area in which these may be grown. Like most other forms of farm activities (backyard poultry, raising
small and large ruminants), people are used to treating fisheries too as near zero input enterprises. As such efficient markets for the supply of inputs such as feed have not come up. The market for fresh fish itself is so grossly underserved that downstream processing is absent for inland fisheries. And there is the universal absence of formal working capital arrangements with banks for funding smooth and efficient fisheries on business principles. Some interesting but location-specific efforts have shown that the production potential can be realized.

Gujarat shifted from insistence on co-operatives as lessee of ponds and tanks to a public auction and changed the tenure of lease from a single to several years. This created a huge incentive to the entrepreneurs. This alone increased the production many fold since the private entrepreneur found a way to strengthen the ponds, replenish water when it started drying up, managed the demands for alternate uses by making suitable arrangements that would not damage fish and spend money for protection against poachers. Cage fisheries Cage fisheries in large reservoirs seem to be yielding good results in Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh. The massive thriving enterprises of Koleru are a testimony to the ease with which techno-managerial issues can be solved.

What appears important is to recognize that the role of government is basically in designing intelligent lease agreements and enabling working capital supply. The trouble is, rather than doing that, fisheries departments are bent upon schemes for spending money on creating infrastructure, which then does not function or give subsidies that are often wasted. Because this sort of engagement makes both the bureaucracy and the ministers in charge feel they are doing something. Will the government get out of the way in operations, just stick to setting tenancy rules and let fish and fish enterprises grow? On the answer to that question hinges the fate of the blue revolution.

**Karnataka: Government to develop inland fisheries in State**

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/Govt.-to-develop-inland-fisheries-in-State/article17025968.ece

Pramod Madhwaraj, Minister of State for Fisheries, has said that the department is planning to develop inland fisheries on 5,000 hectares across the State. Addressing a gathering after inspecting a newly developed fish farm at Bhosga (B) village in Jewargi taluk of Kalaburagi district on Wednesday, he said that of the waterbodies spread across 1.8 lakh hectares in the State, around 5,000 hectares would be identified for developing semi-intensive freshwater aquaculture. Mr. Madhwaraj said that farmers, whose land had become unfit for agriculture due to water-logging and saline soil conditions, would be encouraged to take up fish farming to boost their income. Appanna Bhovi, a farmer who had taken up inland fishing on three acres, released about 25,000 fingerlings of species such as Catla, Common carp, Mrigal and Rohu into the pond.
They would be ready for harvest in eight months and an average income of Rs. 3 lakh was expected after one harvest, Mr. Madhwaraj said. Mr. Madhwaraj said that many farmers in Andhra Pradesh had adopted fish farming because of favourable conditions such as availability of water, good weather and fertile soil. “As the demand for fish is high in the domestic market and abroad, it can help farmers make a regular earning,” he said. The department would guide and provide technical support to farmers to take up inland fisheries on their farms. Mr. Madhwaraj said that the department would hold talks with representatives of banks to release loans to farmers who were willing to take up fish farming. Earlier, he inspected the Aquarium Centre located at Children’s Park in Kalaburagi that was closed a decade ago. Mr. Madhwaraj said that the Kalaburagi Zilla Panchayat had spent around Rs. 12 lakh for the renovation of the centre. Another Rs. 25 lakh would be released either by the Tourism Department or through the Hyderabad Karnataka Regio Development Board for the work. He instructed officials to set up a counter to sell fish seeds.

Karnataka: Experts from Thailand may be invited to give a boost to inland fisheries in State


Minister of State for Sports and Fisheries Pramod Madhwaraj has said that his Ministry was contemplating inviting experts from Thailand for promoting inland fisheries in the State. Addressing presspersons here on Tuesday, he said that experts from Thailand would be invited here and their suggestion taken on how this industry could be developed for higher employment and revenue. “Inland fisheries has tremendous potential but unfortunately we have not tapped it properly. The Ministry wishes to give the required boost to it,” he said. Mr. Madhwaraj said that while the annual turnover from inland fisheries in the State was Rs. 8 crore, it could be augmented to at least Rs. 100 crore. “For which we need the right guidance and the right technology, and we hope the experts from Thailand would help us,” he said.

Admitting that his Ministry often received complaints that the officials do not release the quantum of fish in tanks as they claimed to have done, Mr. Madhwaraj said that the government has directed the officials to videograph the release of fish into ponds or lakes. “It is not possible to keep track of these people, they simply give a big figure and we have no choice but to believe them,” he said. Earlier, he visited a mini aquarium near the district stadium. During a meeting, he said, he asked officials to start selling ornamental fish and containers from the place for common people instead of only showcasing fish. “The government pays good salary to around six staff who maintain the aquarium; sale of fish, its feed and containers would generate some revenue. People could buy ornamental fish at an affordable rate instead of buying them from private pet shops at a higher price,” he said and added that it is going to be the first of its kind government aquarium where fish and related products would be sold.
Tamil Nadu: Government aims to double inland fish production


Announcing her government’s objective to increase inland fish production to 4.5 lakh tonnes from 2.4, Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Wednesday said the six fish seed farms in the State would be modernised at a cost of Rs. 13.65 crore. These fish seed farms run by the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department are in Bhavanisagar in Erode, Akarapettai and Tirumangalakottai in Thanjavur, Nallikottai in Tiruvarur, Manjalaru in Theni and Manimuthar in Tirunelveli district. “The modernisation will pave the way for production of two crore fishlings,” Ms. Jayalalithaa said in a suo motu statement in the Assembly.

As far as marine fisheries is concerned, she said five fish landing centres with auction halls, net repair centre, cold storage facilities will come up at Pulicat in Tiruvallur district, Jambavanodai in Tiruvarur district, Karaiyurtheru in Thanjavur, Kombuthurai in Thoothukudi and Morpanai in Ramanathapuram district. The total fund allocation for these centres is Rs 9.77 crore and they could safely house 1,379 country boats. Ms. Jayalalithaa said natural disasters such as tsunami, and cyclones had filled the mouth of harbours and estuaries of rivers with sand and Rs. 18.30 crore would be spent to desilt. “In the current year, fishing harbours at Muthunagar in Cuddlaoare, Pazhaiyar and Nagapattinam in Nagapattinam district and river mouths of Vellaru in Cuddalore and Pazhaiyar and Vettaru in Nagapattinam district will be desilted.”

Karnataka: Krishi Vijnana Kendra to promote inland fisheries


Krishi Vijnana Kendra (KVK) in Mangaluru will encourage people to set up units for fish seed production to promote inland fisheries in coastal Karnataka, according to Shivakumar Magada, Head of KVK, Mangaluru. Speaking at the ‘Fish Farmers’ Day’ celebration in Mangaluru on Wednesday, he said that most farmers in the region have ponds in their farms. This provides an opportunity for them to explore the potential of inland fisheries. However, they require quality fish seeds to take up the activity. Since there is no fish seed production unit in the region, farmers will have to depend on fish seed production centres in Bengaluru and Shivamogga to take up inland fisheries activities in their farms. Considering this, the KVK has decided to give a boost to fish seed production in the region. He said the KVK will give all technical support to interested farmers and handhold them for two years.

Apart from providing some additional income to farmers, it will also help meet the fish seed requirement of the coastal region, he said. Kubendra Naik, Deputy Director of Fisheries Department, Mangaluru, said that Karnataka needs to catch up with the neighbouring Andhra
Pradesh in inland fisheries. Though Karnataka requires around five crore fish seeds, it produces only half of that. The rest is being brought from Andhra Pradesh. He said Andhra Pradesh has the favourable factors such as water, weather and soil nature for taking up inland fisheries activities. Karnataka should explore the potential of inland fisheries, he said. Fish farmers from Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada and Hassan attended the programme.

Tamil Nadu: Inland fisheries production rises fourfold in Tamil Nadu


Inland fisheries production has shot up fourfold in Tamil Nadu in the last three years, said state agriculture secretary Gagandeep Singh Bedi on Tuesday. Addressing a gathering on the occasion of the 35th foundation day celebrations of Nabard here, he said the government had taken steps for enhancing the production in inland fisheries. Places like Mettur and Bhavani Sagar were focused and facilities at an outlay of Rs 354 crore were provided for the purpose, he added. In his keynote address, additional chief secretary, finance, K Shanmugam sought farmers to engage in mixed farming. They could also grow vegetables for short-term income, apart from concentrating on red gram which gives better returns, he said. Noting that Tamil Nadu recorded 120 lakh metric tonne of agricultural production last year, he said that the state was targeting 140 metric tons of production this year. Farmers clubs, which adopted innovative methods and technologies and played a proactive role in ensuring agricultural prosperity for bringing change in different spheres at village level, were felicitated on the occasion.