

National Conference on Fisheries & Aquaculture
“Harnessing the Untapped Potential of Fisheries and Aquaculture”
13 December 2019, New Delhi

Brief Report

Fisheries and Aquaculture provide nutritional security and employment to over 16 million people in the country. With diverse resources ranging from deep oceans and rivers, to in-land and mountainous lakes, and home to over 10% of the global biodiversity in terms of fish and shellfish species, India has shown continuous and sustained increments in fish production since independence. In 2017-18, the total fish production was 12.59 million metric tonnes, accounting for 6.3% of the global production.

Yet, despite its inspiring performance, the sector faces several issues throughout the value chain, relating to world-class infrastructure, technology, safety and regulatory framework, cold-chain facilities, value addition, global demand etc.

To deliberate on the key interventions needed to strengthen and sustain the Fisheries and Aquaculture Industry, and pave a roadmap with implementable actions, CII jointly with the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India organised a **National Conference on “Harnessing the Untapped Potential of Fisheries and Aquaculture”** on 13 December 2019 in New Delhi.

Ms. Rajni Sekhri Sibal, Secretary, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India presented Fisheries Vision 2025. Highlights of the vision, for responsible and sustainable fishing and doubling fishers and fish farmers' income, are:

- Enhance Fish Production to 20 Million tonne
- Attain average annual growth of 9%
- Reduce post-harvest losses to 10%
- Double export earnings to Rs.1,00,000 crore
- Double aquaculture productivity from 3 tonnes to 6 tonnes per hectare

Noting that the future of agri and allied sector lies in growth of fishery component, the Secretary pointed out that fishery grew at CAGR of 7% over the last 5 years, clocking 10.23% last year, while growth in agriculture is now less than 1%. India has already harnessed 57% of its inland potential and 70 -80% of marine potential, with the target to produce 20 million tonnes of fish from the current level of production of 13 million tonnes”, she said, emphasizing that while Government would create an enabling environment, there would be no interventions in the form of MSP or subsidies like those in agriculture.

The Marine Fisheries Regulation Bill envisages responsible and productive fishing within Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with the right gear and vessels. The government is also working towards a National Marine Fishery Policy that encompasses marine, inland, aqua, mariculture and post- harvest technologies, added Ms Sekhri Sibal.

“Freshness is the key in fisheries sector. Quality seed and quality feed is the responsibility of all”, said **Dr J Balaji**, Joint Secretary (Marine Fisheries). **Mr Sagar Mehra**, Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries), explained that the Department at the Central level works as a facilitator and coordinator responsible for policy formulation, carrying out the fishery research, providing financial support, and handholding the States and Union Territories (UTs) for their individual fishery development plans.

The establishment of a separate Department of Fisheries by the Government clearly indicates that the priority of this sector for the Government, said Mr Arabind Das, Chairman, CII National Committee on Allied Sectors in Agriculture and Former COO, Godrej Tyson Foods Ltd.

The Conference discussed the key policy reforms required to catalyse private investment, and urged the fishery industry to align with the Government to make the newly-announced Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana a big success.

The conference attracted a wide participation of eminent National and International speakers from Industry, Government, Agricultural Banks, International Agencies and Fishery Associations. The event was attended by more than 150 professionals from government, industry, banks, progressive farmers, academia as well as representation from several state governments like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Gujarat and Goa.

Outcome / Action Points

- Regional Conference / Workshop on Fisheries and Aquaculture to be organised in partnership with Department of Fisheries
- An approach paper on Blue Economy would be presented to Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India



Ms. Rajni Sekhri Sibal, Secretary - Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India flanked by Mr. Arabin Das, Chairman, CII National Committee on Allied Sectors in Agriculture – Dairy, Fisheries and Poultry and Mr. Atul Mehra , Co- Chairman, CII National Committee on Agriculture Allied Sectors and Chairman, Tasty Dairy Specialities Ltd at the National Conference on Fisheries & Aquaculture in New Delhi on 13th December 2019.