

# Business Standard

## CMFRI provides inputs on seaweed farming to Fisheries Dept

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The emerging seaweed farming industry in the country is all set to get a major boost, with a premier fisheries research institute transferring its technology of seaweed cultivation to Andaman Nicobar Islands.

Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) today said it has provided scientific inputs on methods of seaweed farming suitable to the Andaman Nicobar Islands, as a part of the institute's initiative for intensifying its consultancy services.

The seaweed cultivation is generally perceived as one of the most environmentally benign types of mariculture activity. A feasibility study conducted in the seawater inundated areas in South Andamans by a team of CMFRI scientists has revealed that these regions are highly prospective for the seaweed farming, it said.

Aimed at avoiding environmental disruptions, CMFRI selected the coastal areas devoid of coral reefs. As part of transferring the technology, the CMFRI provided practical training on methods of the farming practices to the officials of the Department of Fisheries in Andaman.

Training on fabrication of floating rafts with bamboo, tying of seed material (seaweed fragments) in the ropes, tying of seeded ropes in the bamboo rafts and positioning them in the sea were given to the participants. The CMFRI provided technical inputs on monoline culture method of the seaweed to the officials of the Fisheries Department in Andaman.

The expert group from the CMFRI also educated the officials on seaweed distribution and diversity in the Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar regions and seaweed products, besides giving training on wild collection of seaweed and identification of commercially important seaweed species.

A K Abdul Nazar, Scientist-in-Charge of Mandapam Regional Centre of CMFRI and Johnson B, Scientist at the Centre coordinated the training programme.

The seaweed farming venture, to be launched off the Andaman coast, will definitely help meet the growing demand in the industry, said Nazar. "Seaweeds are renewable source of food, energy, chemicals and medicines and valuable source of raw material for industries like health, food, medicines, pharmaceuticals, textiles, fertilizers, animal feed, etc. Seaweeds are also used for the production of Agar, Alginates and Carrageenan."

"Chemicals from brown seaweeds such as alginic acid, mannitol, laminarin, fucoidin and iodine have been extracted successfully on a commercial basis," he said.

CMFRI had developed an anti-diabetic nutraceutical, Cadalmin™ Antidiabetic extract (ADe) from seaweeds. The product is effective to combat type-2 diabetes. It also developed another medicinal product, Green Algal extract (Cadalmin™ GAe), from seaweeds to combat inflammatory pain and arthritis.