

CMFRI transfers seaweed farming technology to Andamans

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Kochi: Seaweed farming industry is set to get a major boost with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) transferring its technology of seaweed cultivation to the Andaman administration.

A CMFRI release issued here on Friday said this was done as part of its initiative for intensifying its consultancy services. Seaweed cultivation is currently seen as the most environmentally benign types of mariculture activity.

A feasibility study conducted in the seawater inundated areas in south Andaman by a team of CMFRI scientists that these regions are highly prospective for the seaweed farming.

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 expert group from the CMFRI also educated the officials on seaweed distribution and diversity in the Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar regions.

Training was also provided on wild collection of seaweed and identification of commercially important seaweed species.

A.K. Abdul Nazar, CMFRI scientist, said this farming venture in the Andaman coast will definitely help meet the growing demand in the industry.

“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,” Nazar said.

“It’s used for the production of Agar, Alginates and Carrageenan. Chemicals from brown seaweeds such as alginic acid, mannitol, laminarin, fucoidan and iodine have been extracted successfully on a commercial basis”, he said.

CMFRI has developed an anti-diabetic from seaweeds, which is effective to combat type-2 diabetes besides tackling inflammatory pain and arthritis.

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