

Principal Secretary to PM Impressed with Strategic Seaweed Farming Sites



New Delhi: Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister was impressed with the innovative and strategic seaweed farming sites developed by ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI) along Indo-Pak border marine waters of Kori and Padala in Gujarat's Kutch district. During his visit to the site, he reviewed the developmental activities in the region. The visit marked a pivotal moment in India's

mariculture history in the larger context of ensuring political and social security coupled with farmer well-being, thereby accelerating the seaweed mission of India.

The developmental activities such as region specific customised indigenous HDPE seaweed raft design developmenprashant.jaysinh@gmail.com, cultivation technology, its production performance and sustainable farming practices developed by the ICAR-CMFRI were briefed to the Principal Secretary.

The Principal Secretary expressed his keen interest in discussions pertaining to the economics of production and the socio-economic implications of this project. The project has introduced custom-made HDPE rafts, dedicated to cultivating the resilient seaweed species *Kappaphycus alvarezii*. Each raft, valued at Rs 16,000, has a remarkable lifespan of 20 years, promising a bountiful harvest to the enterprising seaweed farmers involved.

Grounded with technology attributes such as flexibility, manoeuvrability, and ease of operations, the grid technology heralds a new era of efficiency, surpassing conventional methods employed in states like Tamil Nadu. Its capacity to withstand weights up to 0.3 to 0.5 tons per raft and yield an impressive 300 to 400 kilograms per raft sets it apart as a true game-changer in seaweed mariculture scenario.

The innovative ICAR-CMFRI's grid technology showcased during the visit epitomized the spirit of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) espoused by the Prime Minister. By harnessing indigenous expertise and cutting-edge technology, seaweed farmers are set to break barriers and chart new horizons of prosperity through seaweed mariculture.

The visit of the Principal Secretary is expected to boost ICAR-CMFRI's initiatives in mariculture paving the way for new trajectories in technology innovations and farmer well-being in the times to come. Dignitaries such as Director General of the BSF; Principal Secretary, Dept. of Tourism, Govt. of Gujarat; Chief Forest Conservator, Govt. of Gujarat; District Magistrate of Bhuj, Inspector General of Police, Govt. of Gujarat; and senior officials from the Department of Fisheries, Govt. of Gujarat among others accompanied the Principal Secretary.