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Part Three

FEBRUARY 1991



NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN MARINE FISHERIES

MANDAPAM CAMP

16-18 September 1987

Papers Presented
Sessions V, VI & VII

CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(Indian Council of Agricultural Research)
P. B. No. 2704, E. R. G. Road, Cochin-682 031, India

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STATUS AND PROGRAMME OF MARINE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNION TERRITORY OF PONDICHERRY

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ABSTRACT

Development of marine fisheries in the Union Territory dates back to 1955-56, after the merger of the former French territories of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. The union Territory has a coastline of 45 km and a fishermen population of about 34,000. The annual fish production of the Territory has risen from a meagre 900 t in the beginning to more than 20,000 t in recent years.

This paper deals with mainly the various developmental activities such as the introduction of mechanised boats, beachlanding craft, outboard motors, provision of cold storages, transport facilities fish curing yards, construction of fisheries harbour, fishlanding platforms, subsidies provided to the fishing activities and training imparted to the fishermen undertaken since the Second Five Year Plan period. It also presents the various social welfare schemes for improvement of the fishing community and its socio-economic conditions.

The development of fishing in this Union Territory was initially taken in the year 1955-56 after the merger of this former French territory comprising the 4 regions Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. As all these regions are endowed with coastline rich in good varieties of food fishes and exportable quality of shrimps and crustaceans priority was given in developing marine fishing.

With a coastline of 45 km and a fishermen population of 34,000 out of which an estimated 13,150 are active fishermen, marine fishing was initially limited to traditional methods of catamarans and country boats. The fish production was a meagre 900 t per annum. Fisheries Department in this Union Territory was established during the year 1955. Beginning with the II Five year Plan more attention was given for the development of marine fishing.

In order to increase marine fish production the scheme "Introduction of Mechanised fishing boats" was launched. Under the scheme mechanised fishing boats of 30' and 32' size with synthetic fish net twine was supplied to fishermen

on loan-cum-subsidy basis. Initially a subsidy of 33 1/3% was allowed on the cost of boat & net and the loan was recoverable in 54 instalments spread over a period of 6 years. This scheme is still being continued with a reduced subsidy of 12 1/2%. So far 385 numbers of 30' & 32' fishing boats were distributed to the fishermen of this Union Territory.

Along with the above scheme introduction of FRP boats was also implemented with loan-cum-subsidy benefits, and so far 146 FRP boats have been distributed to the fishermen.

Another scheme introduced recently for the development of marine fishing is the "Introduction of Beach Landing boats" designed by Food and Agricultural Organisation, under Bay of Bengal Programme.

In order to assist a fairly large number of traditional fishermen in possessing their own fishing units comprising of catamarans/country boats and nets the scheme "Assistance to small scale fishermen" was introduced from the year 1984-85 onwards. Under this scheme assistance by

way of 40% loan, 40% subsidy and 20% being the beneficiaries contribution is given for procurement of fishing units.

Assistance by way of subsidy of 25% is given to those who desire to motorise their country crafts with out-board motors procured through institutional finance.

Essential fishing requisites and salt are made available to fishermen at 20% subsidy rates through the Fishermen Co-operative Federation and Fishermen Co-operative Marketing union.

Besides the above scheme introduced to augment fish production programmes to support the post harvest technology are also implemented. Under this programme Ice-cum-Cold storage units are to be established in all important fishing landing centres. So far 4 such units are in this Union Territory.

For transporting the catches from landing centres to marketing places fish transport vans are provided to fishermen through the Fishermen Co-operative Societies at nominal hire charges.

Essential infrastructural facilities in selected coastal fishing villages such as fish landing platform, auction hall, fish drying platform, net mending shed, community building etc., are provided wherever necessary.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme one fishing harbour at an estimated cost of Rs. 208.56 lakhs is under construction at Pondicherry.

The entire fishermen population have been brought under Co-operative fold by establishing Fishermen Co-operative Societies in all the fishing villages.

All the welfare schemes such as Housing and Colonisation for fishermen under which an outright subsidy of Rs. 2500/- is granted for construction of houses, savings-cum-relief fund, Group Insurance scheme etc., are implemented through the Fisherman Co-operative Societies.

In the field of Research and Investigation one Inshore Fishery survey station of Pondicherry & Karaikal, using different types of craft and tackles is functioning to locate the potential fishing grounds and to determine the effectiveness of different kinds of gear in different zones and season. These Informations are disseminated among fishermen for their benefit.

Fisher youths are deputed to different training centres for training in improved methods of fishing, handling of mechanised boats, fabrication and mending of nets in batches at Govt. cost. Technical personnel of the department are also deputed to several Central Institutes for training in different courses.

All the above programmes started in 1956 and expanded through the years with particular emphasis in marine fishing with the result that the marine fish production has reached 20,119 t in the year 1986-87. The Socio economic conditions of fishermen also have considerably improved.