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Book Review: Status and Perspectives in Marine Fisheries Research in India - CMFRI Diamond Jubilee Publication

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Title of the book : Status and Perspectives in Marine Fisheries Research in India
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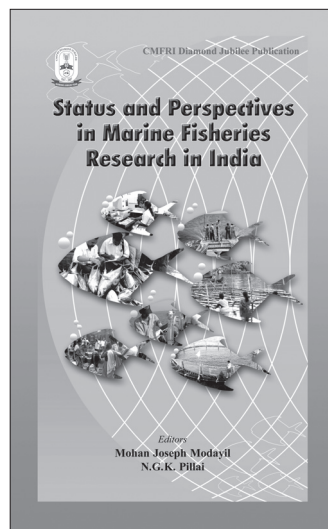
The year 2007 dawned heralding the Diamond Jubilee Year of CMFRI and along came the target of propagating the devoted and fruitful service rendered by the premier marine fisheries organization, presently, one of the best marine fisheries institutions

in the world. A series of celebrations followed accompanied by the release of quite a number of books to share our happiness and to prove our worth of what we have done in diversified fields of marine fisheries research. The book “**Status and Perspectives in Marine Fisheries Research in India**” as the name suggests

underlines the significance of the growth and present stature of Indian marine fisheries.

The book deals with 13 review papers written by 31 experienced and eminent scientists including three former Directors of CMFRI on an incredible array of diverse and topical issues highly relevant to India. The first paper takes us through the history of marine fisheries research in India to its present level encompassing its impact and the future research priorities of CMFRI. The second paper, a brilliant account of the fisheries sector as a whole and its achievements in particular, reviews the salient features in retrospect while attempting to postulate the prospects by highlighting the critical issues surrounding the sector. The author, backed up by his 40 years of experience in research, teaching and administration and aided by an overwhelming string of literature, suggests possible ways on how to circumvent the obstacles on the path of progress and reach the sectoral and national objectives. The third paper delineates the summary on the present trends and future possibilities of the Indian marine capture fisheries.

The next four papers portray extensively the resource and biological characteristics, mode of exploitation, production trends, management inputs and advisories of pelagic, demersal, crustacean and molluscan capture fisheries of India. The principal components of the respective fisheries are given along with the species-specific details and distribution, growth, development, migration, predictive modeling,



conservation, management, present status and future prospects. Each review paper in this series of four assumes the status of a reference text with regard to the contents and graphic details of the capture fishery which you wish to read and assimilate.

The eighth paper makes us conversant with an overview of the advancements made in marine fisheries research on fish stock assessment and the statistical support given to the region-wise and resource-wise estimates by developing sampling methodology for the marine fish landings in India. A chronological list on the progress made in the methodology right from 1950 highlights the development of need-based software available in CMFRI for various research purposes. The CMFRI's Computer Data Centre uses the most sophisticated machines and is supported by the Agricultural Research Information Service (ARIS) of ICAR.

The ninth paper is on the status of marine fishery environment research in India. It briefly touches upon the oceanography of the Indian seas in general and the impact of the environmental factors on certain fish stocks and the recent trends in oceanographic research including remote sensing, global oceanographic databases and the regime shifts. The paper is almost silent on the status of the primary and secondary producers and the micro-organisms in relation to the ecological parameters of the Indian seas. Voluminous data collected by CMFRI through cruises conducted in the Indian EEZ and by the other small vessels testify to the large number of papers published on the fauna and flora in relation to environmental factors.

The next paper reviews the present stature of marine biodiversity research in India in a very comprehensive manner. Topics on monitoring, inventorying and taxonomic treatises on marine bio-resources of almost all the marine phyla recorded from the Indian seas are presented in a nutshell. Concise accounts on fishes, turtles and mammals are included. It also encompasses bioprospecting and our priorities on conservation, management and sustainable use of marine resources in terms of the challenges facing the marine diversity research in India.

'Perspectives in marine biotechnology research and development in India' is on the research initiatives

taken in marine biotechnology sector and its consequent developments in Indian aquaculture. Valuable information is provided exhaustively on the work done in India on stock improvement through genetic tools and selective breeding, genetic characterization, diversity evaluation and conservation of fishery resources and concluded with cryopreservation, nutritional biotechnology, fish health management and bioprospecting.

A comprehensive account on the mariculture research, the present status, constraints and prospects in India is given in the next paper. CMFRI is the pioneering Institute in the country to initiate mariculture research and developed technologies suitable for the Indian conditions. Crustacean mariculture through shrimp farming and hatchery technology, lobster and crab farming/fattening; molluscan mariculture dealing with pearl, mussel, clam, gastropod and cephalopod culture; marine finfish culture inclusive of ornamental fish culture, seaweed culture, sea cucumber, rotifers and microalgae are discussed. Major constraints and their alternatives are proposed in the paper.

The last paper is on 'Fisheries economics and extension in India'. The paper is differentiated into three major issues: fisheries economics and policy research, extension research and technology transfer and finally, the challenges and the opportunities. It is an overview of extension research, commencing with the earlier days of CMFRI through the many innovations made at each stage and conclude with advocating new dimensions of amicable solutions to the emerging challenges.

This publication will be a useful information database for the students, researchers, fishery planners, policy makers and all those who get associated with fisheries. This is the book which you were awaiting to read, a compendium of valuable collection of review papers, the alpha and omega of marine fisheries research conducted in India with the purview of a global background and written and peer reviewed by experts in the field. As Walt Disney says "There is more treasure in books than in all the pirates' loot on Treasure Island and at the bottom of the Spanish Main....." The reader too will find that the book is a treasure trove of incomparable value from where he can pick and choose and enrich himself from page one to the last.