

## ICAR-CIFE organises the path breaking *Directors Conclave: Energising Pathways for Fisheries Development* during 4-5<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Mumbai

Calling it a *path breaking* meeting, **Shri Jatindra Nath Swain**, Secretary, Department of Fisheries, Government of India urged the Directors and their representatives of State Fisheries Departments



present at the two days Directors Conclave at CIFE to strengthen the extension system and reorient the development support to achieve the ambitious targets set under *Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana* (PMSSY) by 2025. ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai, jointly with National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), brought together Directors and representatives of as many as 25 State/UT DoF on a single platform to discuss developmental challenges and identify actionable strategies. The two-day consultative meeting '*Directors Conclave: Energising Pathways for Fisheries Development*' held at ICAR-CIFE during 4-5<sup>th</sup> November 2022 reignited the leaders and

senior executives of the state fisheries departments as well as the R&D community.

The agenda of taking *sustainable fisheries development* forward was in focus at the two-day *Directors Conclave* that witnessed intensive interactions and heated debates around three themes namely **(i) Professional Development of Human Resources in State Department of Fisheries (DoF); (ii) Strengthening Development Support & PMSSY Implementation in States; and (iii) Enabling policy and governance framework in States.**

Welcoming all, **Dr. Ravishankar C.N.**, Director / Vice-Chancellor, ICAR-CIFE highlighted the indispensable nature of



partnership among research-academia-developmental agencies to further sustainable fisheries agenda, and the long history of CIFE working closely with State Departments in building capacities,



policy advocacy, and customised R&D support. **Dr. J.K. Jena**, DDG (Fy.), ICAR, Chief Guest on the occasion, underscored the key role of R&D in bridging the development gap in fisheries sector, showcased the strength of ICAR fisheries institutions, and invited the state DoFs for regular dialogue for mutual benefit. He assured ICAR's complete support for state fisheries departments.



**Dr. N.P. Sahu**, Joint Director, ICAR-CIFE made a lead presentation on fisheries development status and challenges in the country / states, and set the stage for ensuing day long discussion around identified three themes of HRD, Extension/Development Support, & Policy Support. He also outlined CIFE's HRD and R&D offerings and the need for *Directors Conclave* to further this partnership for development. **Dr. L. Narasimh Murthy** briefed about NFDB's recent initiatives to promote biofloc, RAS and ornamental fish units, National Seed Action Plan and the establishment of GIFT tilapia and *Pangasius*

hatcheries, river ranching program, mapping of fisheries cooperatives, etc. while sharing success stories under PMMSY. Invited experts **Dr. Dilip Kumar**, Former Director, ICAR-CIFE, **Dr. Pravin Putra**, Former ADG, (FS), ICAR, and **Dr. M. M. Bazaz**, Former JD, DoF, J&K, in their initial remarks, underscored the uniqueness of this meeting wherein CIFE, along with NFDB, has brought together all the heads of state fisheries departments providing an informal platform to informally interact, network and enrich each other's development experience, while also identify challenges and options to revitalise the journey of fisheries development across India.



Many Directors / Joint Directors of State DoFs gave their initial remarks and expressed their expectations were from the meeting. **Mr. Ishwar Singh** (Haryana) and **Dr. Ramacharya** (Karnataka) emphasised the need for mandatory refresher courses for mid-level DoF officers, while **Mr. D.B. Kharwanlang** (Meghalaya) brought out the need to resolve anomalies with regard to eligibility and promotion criteria in the DoF technical cadre. **Mr. Balkrishna Singh** (Manipur) shared an interesting success story of how motivation and training helped overcome the hesitant dam displaced tribal youth gain livelihoods from cage culture; **Mr. I.A.Shah** (Jammu & Kashmir) highlighted the RAS



based trout culture as a success story with PMMSY support; **Mr. Bharat Singh** (Madhya Pradesh) flagged the need to counter misleading info in internet / social media on new technologies like RAS and

Biofloc with credible info from ICAR, while those from Nagaland (**Mr. Rongsennungba**). Uttar Pradesh (**Mr. N.S. Rahamani**), Punjab (**Mr. Gurupreet Singh**), Jharkhand (**Dr. H.N. Dwivedi**), and Bihar (**Mr. Nishat Ahmad**) argued the case for expanding the scope of support under PMMSY by including paddy-cum-fish culture in North Eastern states, community ponds and waterlogged areas/floodplains/low lying areas in Northern states, while Karnataka (**Dr. Ramacharya**) and Kerala (**Dr. Adeela Abdulla**,) wanted special provisions for conversion of kerosene based OBM into petrol



based ones, assistance to purse-seiners along the lines of long liners, support to solar lights in vessels, and support to small trawlers in coastal states. States (Kerala, Goa, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu) also demanded carrying out scientific stock assessments beyond territorial waters and in deep seas, and a study on the impact of LED lighting in marine fisheries.

**Dr. C.P. Juyal** (Rajasthan) raised concerns about the depleted staff strength with DoF in many states and flagged the need to treat wastewater being let out by shrimp farms in inland salt-affected areas.

**Dr. Shamila Monteiro** (Goa) urged the need to reconcile between conservation and livelihood issues



in coastal areas with regard to stringent CRZ notification and the CAA that is being amended for promoting shrimp farming in sustainable manner. Karnataka (Dr. Ramacharya) and Gujarat (**Mr. Nitin Sangwan**) rued over the poor state of data collection

mechanism in states and the need for conducting a comprehensive Fisheries/Fishers Census in light of evidence based planning, which was echoed by other states as well. The need to promote fish as

healthy food in domestic market along the lines of NEC (egg) and AMUL (milk) in order to ensure good price for fishers/farmers in the context of increasing fish supply was reiterated



by everyone including **Mr. Narayan Singh Nag** (Chattisgarh), **Mr. M. Raiza** (Ladakh) and **Mr. Janardhanan** (Tamil Nadu). While sharing how the switch to paperless web-based format for providing development support under PMMSY has simplified the process for everyone, Mr. Nitin



Sangwan (Gujarat) also emphasised the importance of follow-ups to ensure fruitful outcome of *Directors Conclave*. State representatives were made into three parallel focus groups (*HRD Group, Extension/PMMSY Group, and Policy Group*)

to deliberate upon the identified themes, facilitated by the experts and CIFE faculty. The Group identified state representative presented the highlights from each FGD in the joint session and further inputs were taken from other group.

On the second day, **Mr. J.N. Swain**, Secretary, DoF was the Chief Guest and **Dr. J.K. Jena**, DDG (Fy.),



ICAR was the Guest of Honour. **Dr. Ananthan P.S.**, ICAR-CIFE presented the summary of the first day deliberations under three identified themes in the form of issues and options within the context of present scenario of human resources in state DoF, less than optimal budgetary performance of PMMSY in states, weak extension system, and policy/governance related challenges. **Dr. Dilip Kumar** called for a rethink on the support/subsidy-driven development to one in which empowering farmers and fishers with information, training, credit mobilisation

and market facilitation gets the centre stage in order to make the sector self-sustaining. Responding to the key issues and challenges identified one by one, **Mr. J. N. Swain** in his address drew upon his rich swathe of experience in development departments to drive home a central message: the need to strengthen the extension system (*what he termed as the 'software' part*) in state fisheries departments for effective delivery of development support. Drawing parallels from Bangladesh model of cost-effective development, he stressed upon the advantages of having a generalist village level worker (VLW) for grassroots convergence of developmental efforts. He positively assured the States that many of the PMMSY implementation related challenges will be immediately addressed. Citing Andhra's experience, he urged the states to identify key aggregators and facilitate them in driving the development engine particularly in strengthening cold storage and market infra for fisheries. He desired that states organise exposure visits, with NFDB/DoF support, to sites of success stories for replication across the country, while urging the R&D system to work together with DoFs to identify innovative practices farmers and practices and validate them for larger adoption. He asked CIFE and NFDB to come out with detailed proceedings with action points to be acted upon by the DoF (GoI), respective State DoFs, and CIFE/ICAR. Pleased with the overwhelming participation from states and the quality of interaction, he termed this a '*path breaking*' event and expressed the desirability of conducting such meetings annually to share and enrich the development journey.



The meeting was attended by 28 State/UT DoF Directors / their official Representatives from Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, J&K, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh (Assam, Odisha and Himachal Pradesh could not make it at last moment). In addition, Senior Officers from NFDB, representatives from FSI, two industry representatives, three invited experts, and 42 Scientists from ICAR-CIFE and ICAR-CMFRI Mumbai Centre also attended the meeting. The technical program was coordinated by Dr. Ananthan P.S., Dr. Neha Qureshi, Dr. Shivaji Argade, Dr. N. Shamna, Dr. Saurav Kumar, Dr. Kapil Sukdhane and Mr. Abuthagir I.S. The meeting ended with a formal vote of thanks by the Joint Director, CIFE.