

# Event

## ICT TECHNOLOGY

### On Promoting Initiatives in BW Aquaculture among Tribal and other Aquafarmers –

*Interaction Meet conducted by CIBA-NAU*

**Navsari Agricultural University, Navsari, Gujarat: 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2013**

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An Interactions Meet for tribal and other aqua farmers on “Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives in brackishwater aquaculture was jointly organised by Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA), Chennai and Navsari Agricultural University (NAU), at Navsari on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013. The objective of the interaction meet was to assess the information needs of tribal and aqua farmers



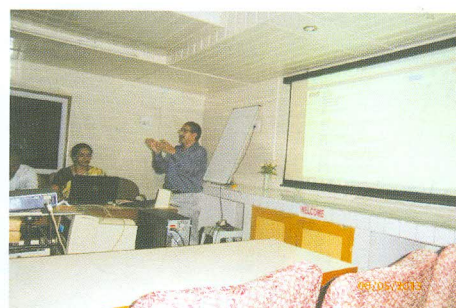
Inaugural address by Dr.G.R.Patel, Associate Director of Extension Education, NAU, Navsari



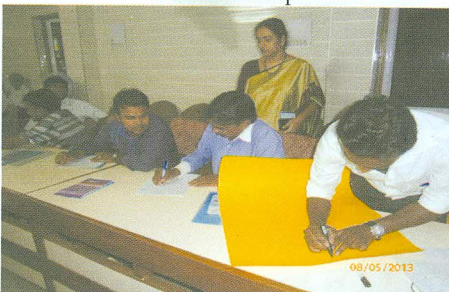
Releasing of extension leaflets in English and Gujarati



Dr. C.Gopal, Principal Scientist, CIBA demonstrating the e-Learning module on “Banana shrimp”



Dr. M. Muralidhar, Principal Scientist, CIBA, demonstrating Agropedia



Information needs assessment by fish culture group



Mr. H. G. Solanki, Assistant Research Scientist, NAU, presenting the information needs of tribal and other aqua farmers



in brackishwater aquaculture with special focus on the dissemination of information through ICT.

Mr. H. G. Solanki, Assistant Research Scientist, NAU, Navsari, welcomed the tribal and other aqua farmers from Dandi, Surat, Khursad, Mahuvas, Patri and Gandevi areas in Gujarat and other participants from CIBA, NAU, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Marine Product Export Development Authority and NGOs. Dr. C. Gopal, Principal Scientist & Principal Investigator of CIBA-NAU collaborative project, CIBA, Chennai briefly explained the objectives of the CIBA-NAU collaborative project. He appraised the participants of the purpose of conducting this Interaction Meet. The interaction meet was inaugurated by Dr.G.R.Patel, Associate Director of Extension Education, NAU, Navsari. He highlighted the importance of ICT tools such as internet, telephone, mobile phone, print and digital media for quick and timely dissemination of demand driven technology to stakeholders. He added that, it is right time for the Government organisations like CIBA, NAU etc. to take a lead to utilise various ICT tools and their applications in order to cope up with the present rapid technology/information dissemination mechanism. Later Dr. G.R.Patel and Dr.C.Gopal released the extension leaflets in Gujarati and English and distributed the same to farmers. The leaflets contained information on a) Information and Communication Technology based dissemination system in Aquaculture, b) Info on soil and water suitability and management for brackishwater aquaculture, c) Information on commercially important finfish culture and management in Gujarat through ICT and d) Info on application of probiotics in shrimp culture through ICT.

Dr. P.K.Patil, Senior Scientist, CIBA, Chennai proposed the vote of thanks which was followed by the technical session and the proceedings in Gujarati and Hindi.

Dr. B. L. Radadiya, of Directorate of Information Technology, NAU, Navsari, made a presentation on "ICT and Fisheries: at a glance", while also explaining the usage of various ICT tools in agriculture like Kisan Kerala, e-choupal, voice messages through NAU-KVK etc. He highlighted the significance of GIS, GPS and RS and their applications towards the agriculture and allied sectors and importance of e-governance initiatives/projects implemented in Gujarat.

Dr.P.Mahalakshmi, Scientist (SS), CIBA, Chennai made the presentation on "ICT based dissemination systems in aquaculture". He explained the importance of various ICT based dissemination systems such as website, web based FAQs, e-Learning module, interactive kiosk, knowledge center and advisory services. She highlighted the operation and functioning of village knowledge centers in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Arunachal Pradesh with examples such as MSSRF village knowledge centers, aquachoupal, Community Information Centers and e-Arik respectively. The importance of village knowledge centers in tribal areas and their role for enhancing the knowledge of tribal farmers in aquaculture and allied sectors and the implementation of consortium project by ICRISAT- IIT Kanpur in partnership with ICAR and DADF, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, named as "Fishpedia- a dedicated knowledge model portal for fishing sector" was emphasised.

In the Interaction Meet the e-Learning module developed on "Banana shrimp: a potential diversified species for culture in low temperature coastal areas", based on the needs assessment of tribal farmers was presented. The topics included: distribution and biology, quality seed production, pond preparation, stocking, feeding strategy, pond management and harvest, economics etc. Saying that during winter seasons (October to March) farming of

tiger shrimp is not undertaken in Gujarat, he observed that alternatively banana shrimp farming could be adopted in the existing tiger shrimp ponds without any additional expenditure. Dr. M. Muralidhar, Principal Scientist, CIBA, Chennai, demonstrated the ICT based extension services such as voice messages, text messages, voice package of practices etc. through Agropedia: (<http://agropedia.iitk.ac.in/>).

Group discussion was conducted for assessing the information needs of tribal and other aqua farmers, and officials in brackishwater aquaculture for disseminating the information through ICT, under four groups, shrimp farmers, fish farmers, women farmers and Government officials. At the end of the group discussion, Mr. H. G. Solanki presented the information needs assessed by each group, in shrimp farming, fish farming, cage farming, women development programmes, government schemes for women and tribal community, aquaculture/fisheries databases and extension materials/programmes in brackishwater aquaculture.

In the interaction session of farmers and State officials with the scientists of CIBA, farmers voiced their concern about the increasing cost of feed/seed and requested the Government for framing of guidelines for stabilising the market price. State officials wanted location-specific aquaculture related information in the form of database which will be useful for aquaculture planning and development. Tribal women were explained about the alternative livelihood activities of coastal women self-help groups already functioning in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. They requested the Government to arrange an exposure visit to other States to know about the involvement of women in aquaculture activities like crab fattening, value-added products from shrimp/fish etc. The programme ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr.R. V Borichangar, Associate Research Scientist, NAU, Navsari. ☺☺☺

## Karnataka Government to propagate FRP coracles for inland fishermen

The Honourable Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr. Siddaramaiah has declared in his 2013-14 Budget Speech that 2000 FRP coracles will be distributed to inland fishermen (Budget Speech article No. 115). This declaration is in continuation of CIFT's distribution of 20 FRP coracles and gill nets under the Tribal sub Plan to the tribal fishermen of Kabini Reservoir. This was for the first time that FRP coracles were introduced in the State. These coracles were distributed to the members of the Girijanara Meenugarara Sahakara Sangha,

Kabini colony, Kabini, Mysore District through the Karnataka State Co-operative Fisheries Federation, Mysore in March 2013. FRP coracles of 2.2m diameter suitable for gillnet fishing in the reservoirs of Karnataka were designed by CIFT and fabricated with reinforcement of FRP itself.

Generally coracles used by the tribals were made of natural fibrous materials covered with plastic sheet and reinforced using bamboo rods which are not sufficiently strong and durable. These

coracles had a maximum life of one year only. In contrast, FRP Coracles are strong, durable and they do not require maintenance. Since they are lighter they can be carried to different locations by the migratory fishermen who are engaged in coracle fishing in the reservoirs.

Considering the success of this venture and in order to propagate this new technology, coracles were fabricated and transported to the NEH region for gillnet operation in *beels*, reservoirs etc. ☺☺☺