

The Wave Andaman

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ICAR-CIARI Signs MoU to Promote Marine Fish Cage Farming at North Bay



Sri Vijaya Puram, Sept. 2: The ICAR-Central Island Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR-CIARI), Sri Vijayapuram, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Island Fisheries and Marine Services Self-Help Group (SHG) for the demonstration, promotion and technical support of marine fish cage culture at North Bay, South Andaman.

The MoU was signed on August 31, 2026, with the objective of supporting field-level adoption of scientific mariculture practices and demonstrating the potential of cage-based fish farming as a viable and sustainable livelihood option for local fishers and SHG members.

Under the collaboration, the Fisheries Science Division of ICAR-CIARI will provide technical support and guidance covering major components of cage-based marine fish farming.

Dr. Jai Sundar, Director, ICAR-CIARI, discussed the areas of collaboration under the MoU and encouraged the Self-Help Group to consider progressing towards a cooperative society. Such an institutional structure, according to the discussions, could help enhance the scale of operations, access to services and benefits, and the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

Dr. M. Muruganandam, Head of the Fisheries Science Division at ICAR-CIARI, highlighted the importance of bringing together scientific and technical expertise with the experience and entrepreneurship of stakeholders working at the field level.

The technical component of the collaboration will include guidance on suitable locations and operational considerations for cage farming.

Dr. Kirubasankar, Senior Scientist, briefed the participants on potential zones suitable for cage farming, along with precautions and site-specific considerations required for safe and efficient cage culture.

Fish health and disease management will also form part of the technical support. Dr. Praveenraj, Senior Scientist, along with Chittaranjan Raul and Dr. Jess Maria Wilson, Scientists, highlighted ongoing initiatives at ICAR-CIARI related to fish health surveillance, disease monitoring and the development of marine fish farming through cage-based systems.

These technical services are to be extended to the SHG as part of the collaboration.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Jai Sundar on behalf of ICAR-CIARI, while Mahadev Mallick, Secretary, and Parsuram Mohanty, Member, signed on behalf of the Island Fisheries and Marine Services SHG.

The SHG currently has 10 active members and has already installed four GI cages for undertaking cage-based fish culture.

The existing cages provide the group with a base for developing cage farming as a livelihood activity. The collaboration with ICAR-CIARI is intended to supplement the group's field-level efforts with scientific and technical guidance.

Marine cage culture involves raising fish within cages placed in marine waters. The approach allows fish farming to be undertaken in the sea and requires appropriate site selection, cage management, fish health monitoring and other technical considerations.

The collaboration at North Bay is aimed at demonstrating the potential of this form of mariculture in the local context. Along with technical guidance, the initiative is expected to support the SHG in developing its operations and strengthening its capacity for sustainable fish farming.

The four existing GI cages and the participation of 10 active SHG members provide the foundation for the initiative. ICAR-CIARI's Fisheries Science Division will provide guidance across the major components of cage-based marine fish farming.

The initiative brings together an agricultural research institute and a local fisheries self-help group, combining institutional technical expertise with the group's field experience and entrepreneurial participation.

The MoU marks the beginning of a structured collaboration focused on marine fish cage culture at North Bay, with technical support, fish health surveillance, disease monitoring and site-specific guidance forming key components of the partnership.