

CMFRI guides Sippikulam Fisherwomen in successful Marine Pearl Culture

During 2009-'11 with the funding assistance from Centre for Marine Living Resource and Ecology, (CMLRE), Ministry of Earth Science, Govt. of India, a 'Technology demonstration and transfer' project on 'Marine pearl culture' was formulated and implemented at Sippikulam Village, Tuticorin by TRC of CMFRI for the beneficiaries i.e., Fisherwomen.

The fisherwomen at Sippikulam village was given 10 days training in 'Spherical pearl production technique' during August 2010 & January 2011 for 10 fisherwomen, and certificates are issued to the participants.

The trained fisherwomen successfully implanted 2,500 pearl oysters with 4mm dia shell bead nucleus on a regular basis

under the supervision of the Project team. The nucleated oysters were taken care by the fisherwomen themselves for regular observation on its growth and mortality, cleaning for foulers and boarers and raft structure management. After a period of 8 months culture duration, 'partial harvest' of the cultured oysters for pearl was made after a simple function held on 17.11.2011, The function was chaired by Dr. M. S. Madan, Principal Scientist and Scientist in charge. Smt. Prabhavathi, Assistant Director, TN Fisheries Department, Shri M.R. Natarajan, Manager (District Development) NABAARD, Village Priest Fr. Selvan and Dr. I. Jagadis, Senior Scientist and Principal Investigator of the project along with the staff of TRC of CMFRI participated in the function at Sippikulam Village.

The results of the partial harvest were very encouraging and few good quality spherical marine pearls were obtained. Thus, the trained fisherwomen of Sippikulam Village become the 'first group of villagers' who did the entire operation of maintenance of oysters in farm, spherical bead nucleation, farming of nucleated oysters and harvesting for cultured marine pearls.

The District Collector was impressed by the outcome of the programme and instructed the Assistant Directors of Fisheries to have link with TRC of CMFRI and further taking it to few more villages with funds from NABARD. This programme would be taken up shortly.

(Reported by I. Jagadis, Tuticorin RC of CMFRI)



Inauguration of Pearl Harvest



Asst. Director of Fisheries examining the oysters



Village priest with the cultured pearl