

ICAR-CIFT hosts AquaBiz 2.0 to drive growth in aquaculture

Kochi, Mar 18 (UNI)The Zonal Technology Management - Agribusiness Incubation Centre (ZTM-ABI) of ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), conducted an entrepreneurship meet, "AquaBiz 2.0," here on Tuesday to accelerate transformative growth in the fisheries sector.

AquaBiz 2.0 aims to explore the latest technologies developed by fisheries research institutes under ICAR, thereby revolutionizing the fisheries and aquaculture industries.

The event provided a unique platform for entrepreneurs, researchers, and policymakers to connect with scientists, innovators, and government agencies dedicated to fisheries development.

The event was organised in support of AgrInnovate India and association with the IP&TM Unit of ICAR, and the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB).

Dr. George Ninan, Director of ICAR-CIFT, presided over the function. Dr. Bijay Kumar Behera, ARS, Chief Executive of NFDB, was the chief guest.

In his address, Behera emphasized NFDB's funding structures for entrepreneurship, highlighting the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and its various funding patterns.

He elaborated on how NFDB supports entrepreneurship through initiatives such as intensive aquaculture in ponds and tanks, culture-based capture fisheries in reservoirs, coastal aquaculture, mariculture, and seaweed cultivation.

He also mentioned the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah Yojana (PM-MKSSY), a sub-scheme of PMMSY aimed at empowering fish farmers, and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), which plays a crucial role in enhancing infrastructure in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Dr. Tarun Shridhar, former Union MoFAHD, Secretary underscored India's strength in fisheries research and development, emphasizing that value addition in fish products depends heavily on maintaining freshness.

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The program was further enriched by expert talks on topics such as "Issues and Problems of the Seafood Industry," "Government of India Schemes to Support Entrepreneurship in the Fisheries Sector," "Initiatives of Kerala Startup Mission," "Financial Support Schemes by NABARD," "Allied Agri Finance: Opportunities & Support from SBI," and "Activities of AgrInnovate India Ltd."

Additionally, the event featured a formal exchange of Memoranda of Agreement (MoAs) between ICAR-CIFT and esteemed industry partners, reinforcing collaborations aimed at fostering innovation and industry growth.

Several publications by ICAR-CIFT were also released during the event. A major highlight was the launch of an innovative product developed by ICAR-CIFT in collaboration with a women entrepreneur Rajani Rahana from Spicon Bio, showcasing the institute's commitment to promoting women-led entrepreneurship in the fisheries sector.

The event witnessed the participation of over 200 entrepreneurs, researchers, policymakers, and funding agencies, all sharing a collective vision to foster entrepreneurship and technological advancement in the fisheries industry.

Attendees also had the opportunity to explore cutting-edge technologies showcased by ICAR Fisheries Research Institutes.

With a focus on innovation, sustainability, and business development, AquaBiz 2.0 has paved the way for new opportunities and partnerships in the fisheries sector, reinforcing India's position as a leader in global aquaculture and fisheries technology.