

## **Proposal: Mariculture Cooperative for Coastal PURA in South India**

July, 27, 2012 Dear beloved Saleem,

Hope with the grace of the Merciful God, your grand father and the rest of the family are all well. Kindly convey my best regards to all in the family.

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Here are some of my observations and suggestions for your kind consideration. Await your kind reply.

Kindly consider these as suggestions from a caring friend who is keen on empowering poor people in any part of the world. The 'We Serve' Foundation is very keen on empowering the billions of poor and eradicating poverty once and for all. Both Ponraj and H. E. Dr. Kalam felt this was worth considering and with proper planning and design, implementable. If this idea is workable, perhaps Ponraj can prepare and submit a proposal to the honorable CMs of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry to get their support as well.

1) The President of the Tamil Nadu - Pondicherry Fisheries Association was indicating that close to 5 lakhs (500,000) people depended on the fishing industry for their main source of livelihood in the coastal areas of TN and Pondicherry. The fisherman risked their lives for days together and there was no certainty they would catch enough to ensure comfortable and stable income. Well over 40 % was wasted from inadequate storage while on the seas and poor processing even after reaching the land, etc.

2) Enclosing two important articles from Wikipedia. You may have already looked at these.

- (i) Aquaculture in New Zealand (Fish Farming)
- (ii) Mariculture

As with anything else in life, there are always pros and cons to consider in any activity. But, with advancing technology and with an open mind of creativity and innovation, a lot of the problems can be resolved / mitigated. Most often, problems bring up opportunities to come up with innovative solutions and further progress in any human endeavor.

3) After listening to several people we met on July 19 th, I hoped there should be a way to ensure sustained revenue with significant reduction of risk to the fishermen and their families. If you find this idea suitable, you may meet with local leaders and see if they also find this a worthwhile one to pursue. If there is consensus among the leaders in the Fishermen's community / Association, a proposal can be prepared and submitted to the concerned ministry of fisheries and wild-life, etc. for any approval, etc.

4) Objective: SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT GENERATION, while lowering the risk:

The coastal Cooperative shall be similar to a coastal PURA - but primarily focusing on the fishing community from Chennai to Rameshwaram. The entire mariculture and the processing shall provide year-round employment as well as steady revenue for the entire cooperative. There would be direct employment for several hundreds in each location, running the floating fish farms, the floating processing plants and alternative energy generation, etc. The rest of the folks within the fishing community can be employed in setting up water sports, tourist areas along the coast and find stable employment in the hospitality industry along the coast.

5) Develop a Cooperative for the entire fishing communities along the TN - Pandy coast - from Chennai all the way down to Rameswaram. The members of the cooperative shall be those who have been in the sea fishing for one or more generations. The Members shall receive proportionate income from the net profit. The cooperative shall provide benefits such as education, scholarships, healthcare, life insurance, pension plan, etc. as decided by the cooperative membership, based on annual profits and losses. To avoid any dominance by one or few individuals, the maximum 'ownership' in the cooperative shall be limited to not more than 20 shares (each member receives five shares on joining the cooperative). Only those who are directly in the fishing industry shall qualify to join as Co-op members. If there are no off-springs or if the children decide not to go into fishing, the membership in the cooperative will terminate.

6) The Cooperative shall set up, own and run the floating fish farms as Mariculture - within 2 to 3 kilometers from shore, in relatively shallow ocean - along the south east coastal areas. The cooperative shall reach out to regional / national / international bodies for seed grant to get this project started and become viable.

7) These expandable farms shall use the natural sea to grow various types of fish native to that part of the world. The design shall ensure the potential harmful effects (if any) are minimized from the very beginning. This sea based floating farms will be a lot cheaper than setting up huge aquaculture farms on land. Along with natural feeds in the sea water, added nutrients shall be used to ensure healthy and commercially viable yield on a sustained basis.

8) The fishes grown shall be harvested, processed and properly packed in the adjacent floating processing plant - thereby eliminating any wastage or spoilage. Also will be cost effective as its cuts down on transportation from the sea and then on land to the processing plant, etc. The plant shall use alternative energy such as wave current and wind as well as solar energy generation to run the plant.

9) To avoid any genetic abnormalities from creeping in, periodically the natural fish caught in the open seas shall be added to the farms to keep the healthy genetic lineage. The eggs can be cared for till they hatch in a holding area as part of the floating fish farm or a small land based tank can be built to ensure continuous supply of the fish population in the farms.

10) The International 'We Serve' Foundation will be glad to help in certain aspects of this mission to empower the fishermen communities. The Foundation and its founding partners may be able to help in a number of ways, to ensure the success of this 'Enriching Lives' Mission. Perhaps, the rest of the vast coastal belt of India can follow on this example and set up similar ones in those areas as well.

I do not know your current obligations and my sincere apologies fro troubling you with this if you are busy with other plans. If you are bus with other commitments, kindly send me the contact info for any one you feel will be interested.

Best regards. Yours truly,

Dr. M. S. Viji, M.D. msviji2020@yahoo.com

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July, 30, 2012 Dear Sir,

Thank you for your mail, I am deeply sorry for delayed reply.

Sir I am ready to setup a "RAMESWARAM PURA" in Rameswaram ...and also willing to work with "We serve foundation" kindly ask our team to help. Sir recently Tamilnadu government announced new policy for fishermen community. The Tamil Nadu Government is to set up an institute of fisheries technology that will offer diploma courses in various disciplines connected with fishing that will be set up in neighboring Tiruvallur district. The institute will offer diploma courses in various disciplines such as prawn rearing, fish breeding and fishery equipment management among others. Kindly find attached file department of fisheries citizen charter 2012-2013

Greetings and Best Wishes

Saleem  
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