**ANN – 6.3**

**Baseline study for Fisheries Development in Telangana state**

Suggestions on the state draft policy

* **Policy planning**

Planning for sector growth calls for creation of enabling environment for various stake holders and this can be done by adopting proactive and short, medium and long term policies by the State . Any adhoc measures would only lead to an air of uncertainty among the participating individuals and agencies, more so, where community participation is anticipated and also required. It would also have far-reaching impact and consequences. Since Fisheries sector growth is intensely linked to the welfare and economic well being of fishermen communities, such a policy becomes necessary to achieve desired objectives.

The Directorate of Fisheries, Telangana, has formulated a “Draft Policy” document for the fisheries sector and is in the process of getting it approved by the Government of Telangana. Salient features of the proposed policy frame are:

The proposed policy envisages major goals:

* Achieving self sufficiency in fish seed production.
* Adoption of saturation approach in fish culture in water bodies (Minor, Medium & Major Reservoirs).
* Impetus to cage culture, pond culture & prawn culture etc.
* Improving economic status of every practicing fisherman and woman.
* Encouraging fisherwomen’s participation in entire value chain.
* Establishing infrastructure for seed production, harvesting, processing, value addition & marketing in association with cooperatives and private entrepreneurs.

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| **Fish Seed Production**   * Govt. strives to achieve self-sufficiency in fish seed production in next three years through department, cooperatives and private initiatives. * Functioning of department fish seed farms will be improved to achieve bench mark norms in addition to exploring leasing of department fish seed farms to private entrepreneurs for achieving optimum productivity and economic efficiency. * A subsidy of 50% shall be provided to the hatcheries and rearing ponds on capital cost with a ceiling of Rs. 50 Lakhs (units with 8 ha.) and also on inputs for the first crop with a ceiling of Rs. 5.00 lakhs while encouraging the beneficiaries to establish both hatcheries and rearing ponds together to make them viable units. * The Government shall extend 10% purchase preference to the Fish Seed Hatchery and Rearing Pond units assisted under this policy for buying fish seed by the Government. * A state level Brood Bank shall be established in a suitable Government Seed Farm to avoid inbreeding and produce quality fish seed and supply such fish seed to the approved farms for multiplication. * Private entrepreneurs / cooperatives shall be encouraged to establish captive rearing ponds near reservoirs and major tanks to meet their own requirement. * An Aquaculture Seed (Quality Control) Act will be enacted to ensure the production of quality fish seed from the hatcheries and rearing farms and to check against production of seed of banned fish species and disease affected brood stock. |

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| **Suggestions/comments**   * This policy is step in right direction of internalizing fish seed availability. * This policy is need of the hour and should be prioritized to hasten the process of local seed production. * Since Self-sufficiency in brood stock is a pre-condition for internalizing seed production, this policy will help quality seed production. * This policy would promote private participation in seed production by individuals and FCS . * There is need to implement the activity with well structured training programs, skill development and business plan approach to make it successful on a commercial scale. * Need to adopt producer-friendly policy with hand holding. Initial buy back by Govt. need to be enhanced to minimum 50-60% to provide initial confidence to rope into the activity. * Any stringent measures at the nascent stage might become a setback. * This will encourage private seed producers to compete with other seed suppliers from outside the state. * This policy will be conducive and would promote local enterprises to seed production. | |
| **Utilization of available resources**   * The clearance of thorny bushes in tanks under the control of the Irrigation Department and Grama Panchayats shall be taken up under MGNREGS prior to the onset of monsoon in consultation with the technical staff of Irrigation and Panchayat Raj & Rural Development Departments. * The Govt. shall encourage construction of new fish ponds and farm ponds under MGNREGS. The fish ponds already constructed under the MGNREGS shall be identified and utilized for fish culture. * The input subsidy shall be provided to the application of supplementary feed to the extent of 50% with a ceiling of Rs. 3,000/ha with an upper cap of Rs. 0.5 lakh in irrigation tanks as one time assistance in a phased manner for increasing fish productivity except in those tanks earmarked for drinking water/ are perennial in nature. * The farmers having suitable farm ponds promoted by Water shed Dept./horticulture department shall be encouraged with input subsidy of 50% with an upper ceiling of Rs 25,000/pond and Rs.50,000/ farmer for first crop only to take up culture of Pangasius /Tilapia to gain additional income by the farmer and to meet the consumption needs of the farmer’s family. * The encouragement shall be given to fish farmers to take up livestock (includes piggery) and poultry along with fish farming. * The installation of Cage culture units shall be encouraged with permitted species with 50% subsidy on capital expenditure and 50% input subsidy for first crop, in suitable water bodies with a minimum of 240 Sq. Meters area and above not exceeding 1% of the total water spread area of the water body with 1st preference to the irrigation project affected families, 2nd preference to fishermen and lastly to the private entrepreneurs. | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * This policy would certainly go a long way in augmenting available water bodies and land resources/ activities to optimum level and raise productivity. * This is good step in the direction of promotion of private enterprise in fisheries sector which is nearly absent at present. * This would enhance the feasibility of raising unit yield of fish through use of inputs/feed. * This policy would motivate agriculture/ horticulture farmers to take diversify to fisheries and improve their income; promote recycling of bio-waste generated within integration system for better synergy and complimentary benefits. * This policy would promote poultry and livestock production and raise income levels of small fishermen. | |
| **Fish Species to be promoted/banned**   * Focus shall be given to promote fish species preferred by the consumers like carps, Murrel and Prawns. * Input subsidy support need to be on water spread area basis. * One time financial support for weed/ stump clearance through collective actions of FCS members and also availing support of needed machineries. * Late maturing and fast growing species like Amur carp, Jayanthi Rohu, improved catla and other species developed from time to time shall also be encouraged in suitable tanks to scale up production and income. * The Government may reserve certain tanks for conservation/ breeding of Murrel by protecting the identified water bodies for a few years on stocking of fish seed of Major carps. Such Fishermen Cooperatives will be supported by waiver of lease for those years. * The grass carp shall be discouraged in tanks with less vegetation and common carp in reservoirs. * Stocking of mrigal and common carp are also discouraged in tanks earmarked for drinking water purpose. * The fish species banned by the Govt. of India and banned by the National / State Biodiversity Board shall be prohibited. | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * Since Self-sufficiency in brood stock is a pre-condition for internalizing seed production, this policy will help seed production. * This policy would promote private participation in seed production by individuals and FCS . * This policy would ensure quality of seed. However there is need to adopt producer-friendly policy. Any stringent measures at the nascent stage might become a setback. * The govt. should implement the action to prevent growing of banned species like African catfish as this species if uncontrolled and finds entry in to tanks and reservoirs it will not only predate up on other fishes thus causing ecological imbalance. * Some of these species may also multiply in natural water bodies and will have effect on the local species in the reservoirs and water connected with rivers. * The state also should have mechanism to regulate movement of such of these species in to state. | |
| **Stocking Policy:**   * Department shall develop a standard protocol for stocking of fish seed in consultation with the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute for all water bodies encompassing stocking density, species and their ratios and size so as to harness full potential. * Stocking of advanced fingerlings (80 to 100 mm) in reservoirs and perennial tanks and stunted fingerlings >10 cm in seasonal tanks shall be promoted under Govt. programmes and staggered stocking shall be explored. * All the Gram Panchayat tanks shall also be brought under the control of Fisheries department for fishing rights purpose. * In tanks vested with the Grama Panchayats, common carp shall be promoted in place of mrigal in view of faster growth and local demand. * The stocking of fish seed in department tanks without societies shall be taken up by the government provided the Grama Panchayat is ready to pay seed cost along with the lease amount. | |
| **Suggestions/comment**s   * This is good step in the direction of promotion of appropriate technology led resource development strategies. * The approach need well planned backward linkages of rearing space and technical expertise. * Assured and supportive buy back arrangement either by DOF or pvt. system. * Need for dedicated seed rearing farms both under pvt. and govt. * The new initiative will facilitate roping in of Private entrepreneurs in fisheries sector which is nearly absent at present. * This would enhance the feasibility of raising unit yield of fish through scientific stocking manipulations. | |
| * This need to be studied from national point of view. Views of the Panchayat Raj Dept. may be necessary. * Concurrence from Panchayats may be necessary since the GP’s may have difficulties in bearing the cost. | |
| **Craft & Gear:**   * The crafts and gear currently used in the State shall be studied in detail with the coordination of the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Kochi and promote suitable crafts and gears from the angle of safety of fishermen, fishing efficiency and protection of biodiversity by giving appropriate financial incentives. * The crafts like catamarans and putties (coracle) made with FRP and certified as safe by the CIFT, Kochi shall be promoted with 50 % subsidy for license holders and members of the Fishermen Cooperatives. * Awareness activities shall be taken up to educate fishers on the use of nets whose slivers (mesh) are less than 25 mm from knot to knot to avoid capturing of undersized fish. * Ban shall be imposed on manufacturing, possession, sale and use of cross nets (stake nets, bag nets etc), Alivi Nets (Shore seine) with mesh size of 45 mm and below & length of more than 100 m and above, and monofilament nets with thickness below 0.12 mm and motorized crafts. | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * The feasibility of imposing such ban needs to be studied. Blanket ban may not be a feasible proposition since this cannot be implemented due to lack of monitoring mechanism. * This may need further exploratory studies before implementation. * This is a good step and could be pursued with the Central Institute. * This policy is need of the hour to accelerate the pace of growth. The GOTS may replicate some programmes being implemented by Jharkhand/ Chhattisgarh states and modify the schemes within permissible limits. | |
| Aquaculture Promotion:  * Identification of potential zones for development of aquaculture shall be done through cluster approach for encouraging construction of fish ponds etc. by giving preference to low productive lands under frequent inundation and seepage, water logged areas from irrigated canal systems etc. on 50% subsidy with a ceiling of Rs. 7.00 lakh on capital expenditure and Rs. 1.5 lakh on inputs for the first crop only for a maximum of 2 ha. area. * Ornamental fisheries shall be encouraged with 50% subsidy on all costs for the first year only with a ceiling of Rs. 2.50 lakh and marketing tie up. * The land converted to aquaculture is exempted from payment of NALA (Non-Agriculture Land Assessment) Tax as per Act No. 16 of 2012 dated. 14-5-2012. * The establishment of freshwater prawn hatcheries shall be encouraged by the entrepreneurs with 50% subsidy on capital cost not exceeding Rs. 100.00 lakh. * The single window clearances shall be introduced for establishment of hatcheries, rearing farms, culture ponds, processing units, etc. by the entrepreneurs | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * This policy needs to be prioritized since good scope exists for aquaculture activities and some private individuals are already into this business * A sustained program of creating awareness across the state is necessary to popularize ornamental fish production . * It would have positive impact and enhanced initiative by private sector. * This policy would promote prawn culture on large and commercial scale * This would enhance the feasibility of raising unit yield of fish through use of inputs/feed * Response to market demand and market dynamics is necessary for the profitability and sustainability * This policy needs to be rigorously pursued through series of motivational and awareness programmes. | |
| Institutional development & Human Resource Management  * A special aquaculture promotion cell shall be created in the Commissionerate for expeditious processing and clearance of applications. * For all major and selected medium reservoirs, an integrated approach shall be adopted and a Fisheries Development Officer is made in charge of it along with supporting staff for deriving optimum benefit from them. * A State Institute of Fisheries Development (SIFD) shall be established to cater to the training needs of department personnel, fishermen and women and also to run a state of art Soil and Water Analysis Lab and Disease Diagnostic lab. * In service and refresher trainings and exposure visits shall be organized for the technical staff to learn the best practices within and outside the state. * The department shall empanel reputed individuals, NGOs and KVKs which are working in the areas of fisheries and livelihoods for Fishermen communities and utilize their services in development activities and extension work. * The Department shall utilize services of institutions like MANAGE, TSPARD, NIRD, EEI and ICM in imparting necessary training to staff as well as the other stakeholders | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * This should have priority and the cell should be made proactive and user friendly. * This is good policy and needs to be prioritized. * The establishment of this institute would produce required number of technically qualified and skilled young personnel. The Soil and Diagnostic Lab is need of the hour. * There is urgent need to translate this policy into program . * This policy also needs to be prioritized since the DOF would require their services/guidance in formulating and implementation of schemes and programmes. * This is stakeholder-friendly policy and needs to be continued. | |
| **Fishermen Cooperative Societies (FCSs):**   * The first preference over fishing rights in tanks vested with Fisheries Department and Grama Panchayats shall continue at nominal prices to Fishermen Cooperative Societies. * Efforts shall be made to include the eligible left over fishermen in the existing or new FCSs as per eligibility norms. * As far as possible, a fishermen cooperative society shall be restricted to one Grama Panchayat. In the existing societies with two or more Grama Panchayats in their area of operation, they shall be divided Grama Panchayat wise unless the water sources extend to two or more Grama Panchayats and it is inevitable to continue to do so in the interest of cooperation. * The viability norms and other eligibility conditions for admission of members into the existing or new Fishermen Coop. Society shall be reviewed for every five years. * The eligible castes, eligibility conditions and procedure for formation of new societies or enrolment of new members and viability norms shall be as decided by the Government from time to time. * In case of newly constructed irrigation projects, the local fishermen and project affected families willing to take up fishing/ fisheries activities shall be made as members of the Fishermen Cooperative Society irrespective of their caste. | |
| **Suggestions/comments**   * Since the FCS across the state have been admitting “non Members”in large number, this is good step and should be pursued. * This policy would ensure equal opportunities to the fishermen community youth and would discourage concentration of control of multiple water bodies by single FCS. * There is need to do so and should be done periodically to brace to the changing situation/conditions. * Since Fisheries is no more a subsistence oriented activity and has become a commercial occupation, the scope and eligibility of membership should be broadened to afford opportunities to the young aspirants. * Economic viability also needs consideration from the view point of financial sustainability and retaining members actively in the sector. * This is a good policy and seeks to provide justice to all affected families. | |
| Infrastructure:  * The retail markets shall be constructed in potential cities, towns and villages in a phased manner by extending 100% grant to local bodies. * The wholesale markets shall also be taken up in the potential towns on 100% grant to local bodies. * Landing centres at reservoirs and large tanks shall be established to avoid post harvest losses. * 50 % subsidy shall be extended to the Fishermen cooperative societies and private entrepreneurs towards retail markets, establishing Ice factories, crates, Kiosks, mobile fish vending units, insulated fish transport vehicles and plants for processing of fish with upper ceilings as prescribed from time to time. | |
| **Suggestions/ comments**  Marketing & related issues   * Almost all retail markets are functioning in most unhygienic conditions and this policy would ensure hygienic handling and marketing of fish and prevent hazards. * The present functioning of Federation needs to be thoroughly be changed and it should be enabled to carry the FCS and DFCs along. * The working of the present mobile vending should be studied and feasibility of increasing their number be ensured . Initially, they could be operating in large cities. * This is a felt need and would instill confidence in the FCS. This policy should also be prioritized. * The State Federation shall provide market platform by adopting innovative approaches for sale of fish and explore to use forward sale method. * Mobile vending units shall be planned in places where land is a constraint and also to cater to the needs of the consumers in interior areas or areas spatially dispersed. * The buyer- seller meetings shall be organized every year at district level to involve all stakeholders to get remunerative prices. * The State Federation shall provide market platform by adopting innovative approaches for sale of fish and explore to use forward sale method. * Responding to the market demand and market dynamics is necessary. This policy needs to be rigorously pursued through series of motivational and awareness programmes. | |
| **Regulatory initiatives and Leasing & Licensing**   * The long term lease period of at least 5 to 10 years for all water bodies disposed by the department and Gram panchayat shall be adopted for long-term planning. * The rentals and licensing fee shall be fixed reasonably on the basis of amount of fish production and it shall be enhanced every year by 5%. * If any society violates terms and condition of the lease, the Fishermen Coop. Society is liable for termination of lease. * To create a joint mechanism involving Irrigation, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation and Fisheries Departments to ensure that respective rights of Irrigation, drinking water and fishing equitably protected. * Where there are no fishermen cooperative societies, the tanks shall be leased to the local bodies followed by open auction and departmental fishing. * In case of tanks or projects or reservoirs having more than 1,000 ha. of water spread area and in case of tanks or projects or reservoirs with less than 1,000 ha. of water spread area but are abutted by two or more Grama Panchayats in their periphery, such sources shall be brought under licensing system. * In case of inter-state projects / reservoirs, arrangements shall be worked out for having a joint administrative mechanism by the Fisheries Departments of both the states to adopt uniform procedures on stocking of fish seed, license fee, fishing crafts and gear, enforcement of conservancy measures, etc. * The violations of conservation measures i.e., fishing in ban period, use of banned nets and mesh sizes, dynamites, electrocution, poisoning, etc shall be dealt severely by imposing deterrent punishments. * A comprehensive Inland Fisheries Act for the State of Telangana shall be enacted with provisions to make the fishing a sustainable activity. | |
| **Suggestions/comments** | Producer-friendly policy of determining the levy of license/ lease is necessary. Linking fees with productivity could be one alternative. Raising fees at 5% annually may be revisited.  This is good policy aimed at disciplining errant FCS and should be prioritized.  This would help resolve any issues between the agencies .  This is a good policy and willingness of Local bodies may become necessary.  This policy would minimize rivalry/ social tensions between the villages/ communities.  This policy is necessary.  Recent feedback indicates that in spite of ban, clandestine fishing activities do take place .Therefore, stringent measures are necessary.  There Is need for this Act.  This is in keeping with the Central Government policy.  Suitable implementation arrangement/ mechanism should be put in place since there are some ambiguities in interpretation of entitlement.  This policy is need of the hour to accelerate the pace of growth. The GOTS may replicate some programmes being implemented by Jharkhand/ Chhattisgarh states and modify the schemes within permissible limits |
| **Suggestions/comments** |
| **Welfare measures**   * In the event of accidental death of the active fisher (registered as a member or obtained fishing license), his family will be entitled for Rs. 6 lakh of compensation, of which Rs. 2 lakh is provided under Group Accident Insurance Scheme and Rs. 4 lakh as ex-gratia by the Government. * The schemes of Construction of Community Halls and provision of relief to reservoir fishermen during ban period shall be continued | |
| **Suggestions/comments**  Study of allocations indicates huge sums being earmarked for this purpose. Instead, interventions should be production/output oriented while some funds could also be provided for social welfare programmes.. | |
| **Review of Policy:**  A State Level Committee shall be constituted to oversee the implementation of the policy, to review its performance annually and to suggest recommendations from time to time to make it more effective to achieve the set out goals and targets. | |
| **Suggestions/comments**  This is a good policy. The Committee also should invite views of domain experts with wider background of sector and carry out necessary amendments . | |