

ASA and ICAR-CIARI organizes 'Workshop on Agro-Ecotourism'

Port Blair, May 22

A two days workshop on 'Sustainable Agro-Ecotourism for A&N Islands: Opportunities and Challenges' to commemorate International Biodiversity Day organized by Andaman Science Association (ASA), ICAR-Central Island Agricultural Research Institute in collaboration with Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Anthropological Survey of India (ASI), National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Fishery Survey of India (FSI), Department of Ocean Studies and



Marine Biology, Department of Tourism, A&N Administration with financial support by NABARD, Port Blair was inaugurated today at ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Jatinder Sohal, Director (IP&T), A&N Administration, who was the chief guest, welcomed the initiatives of the Institute in conducting such

important workshop for the stakeholders. He informed that A & N Islands has evolved as the best destination not only at National but also at International level. He exhorted that tourists should be made a responsible tourist and advocated for introducing the concept of countryside visit, which is gaining more popularity elsewhere
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due to its exposure to sustainable practices that is local culture, food and behaviour.

The guest of honours, Smti Archana Singh, General Manager, NABARD, Port Blair, informed that ANI has become the choicest place of visit and we have to capitalize on it. The sensitivity of the local inhabitants towards cleanliness is the USP of ANI. She advocated that NABARD can facilitate launching of 'My District My Project' to promote Agro eco-tourism in a team mode. She referred to the introduction of showcasing the local culture of ANI as that of Rajasthan local culture Chokhi Dahni. Dr. P. Abdul Salam, Asst. Professor, JNRM informed that stakeholders should have wider and comprehensive understanding, so that agro eco-tourism can be promoted both nationally and internationally, thus creating job opportunities and adding to National exchequer. Shri Ankit Kumar Tripathi, Member Secretary, Tourist Vehicle Owners Association, Port Blair also spoke on the occasion.

The President, ASA and Director of ICAR-CIARI, Dr. E.B. Chakurkar while expressing his happiness on promoting agro eco-tourism in these Island which is his dream project informed that conservation has to be the top priority along with local food, flora, fauna, climate change, population pressure etc. He defined that agro eco-tourism is a symbiotic association of farming sector, tourism industry and farm business for sustainable production with three key concepts i.e. something to see, something to do and something to buy and sell. Paid customized training program can be organized by CIARI in participatory mode for the benefit of the people. Later, he delivered a special talk to mark the International Biodiversity Day on the topic 'Role of Agro eco-tourism in conserving the Island ecosystem'. During the technical session, Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, IFS, Additional PCCF, A & N Administration delivered a talk on 'Role of Agro-forestry in Agro-ecotourism'. Dr. Naveen Namboothri, Programme & Academy Convenor, Dakshin Foundation, Island Based Ecotourism spoke on Fisheries and Aquaculture (Ornamental fish farming, recreation fishing). Dr. Grinson George, Pr. Scientist, ICAR-CMFRI, Cochin presented paper on 'Coastal ecosystem in agro-ecotourism and its conservation'.

Earlier, Dr. Jai Sunder, Vice President, ASA welcomed the gathering, a press release from CIARI said.