

REPORT OF THE STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP HELD ON 8TH FEBRUARY, 2016 TO EXPLORE THE MARKETING POSSIBILITIES OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

A Workshop of Major Stakeholders to Explore the Marketing Possibilities of Medicinal Plants was held under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH on 8th February 2016 at 11.00 AM in the Conference Room of Ministry of AYUSH.

The broad agenda of workshop was:

1. Arranging the Market Infrastructure and institutional agricultural support for Medicinal Plants (MPs)
2. Building support for the sustained cultivation of MPs, improve livelihoods and enhance farmer productivity through inter-cropping and other means
3. Help build the Value Chain from the farmer to the industry requirements to improve this high potential sector
4. To look into the scope of credit through Institutions for cultivation of MPs

At the outset, CEO, NMPB welcomed the chairman of the meeting and all the members participated in the workshop.

In his address note, Secretary Ministry of AYUSH mentioned the following key points:

- Availability and supply of Medicinal Plants is under great strain
- The Supply Chain of MPs is extremely fragmented
- The interface between cultivators / collectors and consumers was non-transparent.
- The immense value of Medicinal plants in cosmetics, treatment and wellness was emphasized

The discussion was also around the fact that collection from the wild currently forming 80-85% of the medicinal plant raw material availability, will not be sustainable. The choices that collectors have as a professions, may also reduce the ability to collect from wild sources.

It emerged that sustainable organized cultivation was a way forward. CEO NMPB pointed out that issues relating to collection also need to be addressed on a systemic basis.

Dy. CEO presented current scenario of medicinal plants sector of India.

Dr D.K.Ved of FRLHT presented the key findings of the previous and present study of Demand and Supply commissioned by NMPB. He mentioned that the study is in progress and shows that the proportion of wild botanicals in industrial consumption has declined.

Recommendations on the way forward comprised:

- a) Ensure Use of genuine plant drugs (including properly accepted substitutes)
- b) Establishment of facilities to authenticate the identity of botanicals.
- c) Proper analysis of supply and value chains and its improvement.
- d) Organized farming with adequate support to the farmers (Agro technology as well as storage and marketing)

BVA Academy presented the following points in his presentation:

- There was broad agreement on the Vision, Mission, Goals and the existing Policy Enablers from NMPB Central Sector Scheme as well as National AYUSH Mission. The Leadership

opportunity for the country as represented by using the massive potential for Medicinal Plants.

- The key idea was to set up a Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Market Infrastructure Corporation (MAPMIC) which address all aspects of infrastructure, market creation, value chain, national cultivation planning, credentialing and certification and use of technology.
- An all India Primary Producer Company (PPC) was also recommended to be formed to organize the eco-system of support for farmers referenced Bharat Medicinal and Aromatic Agri (BMAA). BMAA would provide the templates of support for the entire farming cycle while assuring quality standards required by the industry drawing on MAPMIC for the support structure.
- One of the key features was to provide 'cashless' facility for farmer by providing the planting and organic fertilizers, costs for testing, equipment, storage and transport by the BMAA. This will facilitate value being reached to farmers while reducing the credit risk.

Dr L.K.Vaswani presented on the interaction model between MAPMIC and BMAA. MAPMIC and BMAA would ensure organized, timely, reliable and quality supply based on a strong value chain.

Secretary AYUSH, raised an important point that some Traders in Medicinal Plants may get displaced as result. While BMAA could also incorporate Trader Members by view of the wide definition of 'Producer', it remained to be examined whether a better option was available. Concerns were expressed by FEDMAPS representatives in response. It was clarified that the objective was not to control the market but to organize the supply chain and value chain. Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH also invited FEDMAPS to come up with a better proposal or a modification failing which these proposals may be adopted. FEDMAPS agreed to present the roadmap proposal as soon as possible. FEDMAPS also highlighted the need to learn lessons from China's system as well as other attempts

NABARD appreciated the approach of NMPB to organise the workshop. Additionally, NABARD also assists in the promotion of PPCs in medicinal plants sector.

DMAPR also appreciated the NMPB approach to organise the workshop. CEO NMPB requested that DMAPR may specify which Medicinal Plants can be grown in which areas and this was agreed DMAPR can also help with agro technology additionally. It was also mentioned that MOU can be signed and an example of Global Indian Farmer Alliance was provided.

EXIM Bank welcomed the idea of NMPB and mentioned that currently the main interface was through traders for export purposes. Imported medicinal plant list was available and data is published by EXIM Bank on export of medicinal plants. It was also pointed out that the move needs to be in more highly value added products instead of just crude forms to fetch better prices and value. This will also result in higher employment opportunities. The success in ASU products in CIS Countries- Hungary and Russia was noted.

CIMAP welcomed the ideas and agreed to the possibilities presented. Additionally CIMAP had developed technologies for 'Just-in' cropping, diversification and ability to demonstrate success in Medicinal Plant cultivation. Instances were cited for anti-malarial

Medicinal plant based drugs and arrangements with IPCA. CIMPA also offered a Skill Development Training Program for farmers. CIMAP also mentioned that most Medicinal Plants required very little inputs to grow. Their ICH guidelines for pre-harvest and post-harvest technologies would be of relevance. They also had the ability to enhance active ingredients in specific species and gave an example of increase from 0.20% to 1.20% increase for active ingredients in Kalmegh. They recognized the possibility of inter-cropping.

Reliance Foundation (RF) supported the initiative and the possibility of enhancing farmer incomes through inter-cropping / mixed cropping with existing agriculture patterns. RF was willing to partner further and agreed with the collaboration possibilities. RF added that wastelands could also be converted as an additional opportunity.

Sahaja Samrudha (SS), an organic farmer PPC, expressed complete support to the NMPB. SS underscored that the demand should be made known and crystallized in advance and that expertise for farmers to rely should be available in order for the venture to succeed. The expertise also needs to cover which plants can be grown in which region and for what kind of demand level. SS also mentioned that where organic farming is already a discipline it offers a better scope for Medicinal Plants

Dabur mentioned that they had 20 years of experience in cultivating Medicinal Plants and believed that cultivation was one of the best ways of conservation. They had 250 species and 80 shortlisted for cultivation and 42 cultivated. They had a broad reach in the country as well as in Nepal and right down to Kanyakumari. They had the world's best green-house capable of providing 5 million saplings. They were able to provide package of practices for farmers and also had demo sites. They were capable of providing clear cut demand and needed more supplies.

UNDP mentioned that they had experience of working with Medicinal Plants over the last 15 years and have significant interests in livelihood possibilities as well as conservation. UNDP supports work in this area. UNDP also mentioned that Medicinal Plants was the subject of other Ministries as well such as Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Skill Development where expertise on Medicinal Plants are a big component and hence the invite to various stakeholders to partner. UNDP mentioned of their long standing co-operation with FRLHT on conservation and felt more work can be done in this area. CEO NMPB, briefed on the efforts already undertaken in this direction.

AFC updated on their work in supporting NMPB over the last 6 years. Their work was more in the technical area. AFC mentioned their reach to over 150,000 farmers and coverage of over 123,000 ha.

In the end of the meeting it was discussed that Public Private Partnership would perhaps be the best model. This will require further consideration.

CEO NMPB thanks all the participants and appreciated their efforts in helping to build infrastructure.