भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
मत्स्यपालन विभाग
Department of Fisheries

Fisheries-StartUp and Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet

Connect. Collaborate. Catalyse

January 9, 2026

College of Fisheries, Mangalore

MANAGE Fisheries Innovation and Startup Hub (MANAGE - FISHub)
(A National Fisheries Incubation Centre Supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India)
National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)
(An Autonomous Organization of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India)
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad – 500 030, Telangana, India
https://www.manage.gov.in/managefishub/

MANAGE

The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management **(MANAGE),** an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India is an apex body for Agricultural Extension Management in India. MANAGE offers services like Capacity building, Management Education, Piloting and Implementing Flagship National Schemes, Consultancy, Research, Knowledge Management and Policy Advocacy in Agricultural Extension Management (https://www.manage.gov.in).

MANAGE-FISHub

MANAGE-Fisheries Innovation and Startup Hub **(MANAGE-FISHub)** is a national- level incubation and innovation platform established at the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, in 2025 with the support of the Department of Fisheries (DoF), Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAHD), Government of India. MANAGE-FISHub aims to transform India's fisheries and aquaculture sector through innovation, entrepreneurship, and ecosystem development by mentoring and promoting fisheries startups, creating employment and entrepreneurial opportunities aligned with national priorities, and enabling the rapid commercialization of technologies emerging from research, academia, and individual innovators. (https://www.manage.gov.in/managefishub/)

Our Programs

- MANAGE-FISHub Pre-Incubation Program
- MANAGE-FISHub Incubation Program
- MANAGE Aqua Eureka Program
- MANAGE-FISHub Fortnightly Friday (F3) Webinars
- MANAGE-FISHub Internship Program
- MANAGE-FISHub AquaReach
- Fisheries-Startup & Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet

College of Fisheries, Mangalore

The **College of Fisheries, Mangalore**, a premier Fisheries Education and Research Institute was established in 1969 by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore as the first fisheries college in India under the agricultural university system of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi. The College has now become part of the newly established Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University, Bidar. The mission of the College is to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the biological, technical and economic importance of fisheries and related areas. The mandate of the College is to plan, undertake, aid, promote and co-ordinate education, research and extension in Fisheries Science. Being a premier fisheries institute, the college continues to play a key role in fisheries education and research in the country.

Objectives

01. To provide quality education and skill-based training in fisheries and aquaculture.

02. To promote competency-based learning through hands-on training, field exposure, and experiential learning.

03. To generate high quality professionals of Fisheries Sciences

04. To foster national and international collaborations for academic excellence and knowledge exchange.

05. To transfer scientific knowledge and technologies to fishers, farmers, and coastal communities.

06. To conduct capacity-building programs for improving livelihood opportunities and rural entrepreneurship.

About the Program

The Fisheries-StartUp and Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet aims to bring together all key stakeholders of India's fisheries and aquaculture ecosystem on a single collaborative platform and bridge the information gap, by facilitating a seamless exchange of knowledge, resources, and partnership opportunities among them.

The program aims to strengthen the fisheries entrepreneurship landscape by fostering innovation, collaboration, and value-chain integration. It provides startups with opportunities to showcase innovations, connect with partners, and learn from successful ventures. By facilitating dialogue and partnerships, the program seeks to build an inclusive ecosystem that accelerates sustainable growth, technological adoption, and blue economy development.

Who Can Attend?

- Fisheries Startups & Aquapreneurs
- Aspiring Aquapreneurs
- Fisheries Incubators, Accelerators & Innovation Hubs
- Fishers & Fish Farmers
- Fisheries Students & Researchers
- Financial & Funding Organisations
- Academic & Research Institutes
- Fisheries & Allied Industries
- FFPOs, Cooperatives & SHG's
- Policy Makers
- NGO's & Extension Functionaries
- Other Stakeholders in the Fisheries Startup Ecosystem

Objectives

- **Connect in Single Platform:** Bring all fisheries startup stakeholders together to enable seamless interaction, access, and engagement on one unified platform
- **Build Networks:** Facilitate connections between aquapreneurs, researchers, and industry stakeholders to strengthen the fisheries innovation ecosystem.
- **Promote Collaboration :** Encourage partnerships between academia and industry to address real-world challenges and explore new opportunities in fisheries.
- **Share Knowledge :** Provide a platform for exchanging insights, strategies, and technological advancements relevant to fisheries start-ups and innovations.
- **Bridge Information Gap:** Ensure timely and easy access to relevant information, policies, funding, and market trends to support informed decision-making

Key Takeaways

Build Networks

Meet individuals who can potentially become business partners, clients, mentors, or collaborators.

Gain Visibility

Showcase your products and technologies to the relevant audience, increasing your visibility within the local business community.

Learning & Exposure

Gain insights from Fisheries-Startup Stakeholders through Networking, Talks and Discussions

Forge New Partnerships

Facilitate collaborations and discover opportunities for joint ventures, partnerships, or projects that align with your objectives.

Discover New Opportunities

Engage with innovators, experts, and institutions to explore emerging trends and startup opportunities in the fisheries sector.

Program Background

MANAGE proposed a collaboration with College of Fisheries, Mangalore to conduct the first edition of the Fisheries Startup & Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet in Karnataka. Following acceptance from the university authorities, the program was scheduled and successfully conducted on 9th January 2026 at the College of Fisheries, Mangalore

The organising team for the program comprised members from both institutions. From MANAGE, the team included Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE, and Dr. Shivani D. Gowda, Innovation Research Fellow. From College of Fisheries, Mangalore, the organising team included Dr. K. C. Veeranna, Vice Chancellor, KVAFSU, Bidar, Karnataka, Dr. Anjaeyappa H. N., Dean College of Fisheries, Mangalore and Dr. Manja Naik B., Professor and Head, Department of Fish Processing Technology, College of Fisheries, Mangalore, Karnataka

A list of proposed stakeholders from the fisheries startup ecosystem of Karnataka was prepared, and invitation mails were sent to fisheries startups, aquapreneurs, fishers, fish farmers, producer organizations, research institutions, industry players, service providers, and fisheries colleges and allied institutes. The registration link for the program was circulated through MANAGE-FISHub and institutional social media platforms.

The program schedule was designed to include an inaugural session, followed by technical sessions comprising startup experience sharing, technology demonstrations, startup pitching, exhibition and networking, and concluding with a valedictory session.

A total of 281 participants registered for the program, including startups, students, faculty members, and other professionals. Confirmation mails were sent to all registered participants, and they were requested to join a WhatsApp group created for further communication and coordination.

Among the startups that expressed interest in pitching and exhibition, a screening process was undertaken, following which 9 startups/ students were shortlisted for the pitching session and 6 startups were shortlisted for the exhibition.

The program, conducted at the College of Fisheries, Mangalore, was attended by 222 participants, including 8 dignitaries who graced the dais, 10 representatives from fisheries startups and aquapreneurial ventures across Karnataka, 182 students from various fisheries colleges in and around Karnataka, and 22 professionals, including faculty members, officials from state fisheries and allied departments, consultants, managers, engineers, and technicians.

Inaugural Session

Dr. Manja Naik B., Professor & Head and Programme Coordinator, College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, welcomed the participants to the One-Day Fisheries–Startup and Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet, jointly organized with MANAGE, Hyderabad. He stated that the programme aimed to create a common platform for students, innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, and stakeholders to promote fisheries entrepreneurship through innovation, collaboration, and value-chain integration.

Dr. Manja Naik B.

Professor and Head
Dept. of FPT
College of Fisheries
Mangalore

He acknowledged the key support of MANAGE, Hyderabad, particularly Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), and extended a warm welcome to all dignitaries, resource persons, startup aspirants, faculty, students, and media representatives. He emphasized that such initiatives help bridge research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, enabling ideas to be transformed into viable fisheries enterprises.

In the presidential remarks, it was highlighted that the College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, has a strong innovation ecosystem, including a government-funded Innovation Network with ten active units, a Skill Development Centre under the Smart City Mission, and recognition under the PMFME scheme with over 3,000 beneficiaries trained, reaffirming the institute's commitment to supporting fisheries startups and entrepreneurship.

"This programme is a step towards converting fisheries knowledge into innovation, startups, and sustainable enterprises".

-Dr. Manja Naik B.

Inaugural Session

Dr. Saravanan Raj, delivered a comprehensive session on **"About the Programme and Activities of MANAGE-FISHub",** outlining the objectives, structure, and expected outcomes of the programme. He emphasized that the initiative was designed to strengthen linkages among research, extension, entrepreneurship, and policy, with particular relevance to agriculture and allied sectors, especially fisheries and aquaculture.

He also highlighted the programme aims to build capacity among innovators and early-stage entrepreneurs through structured access to mentorship, incubation support, funding opportunities, and market linkages, which are essential for developing sustainable and scalable enterprises. He also introduced MANAGE-FISHub, a national-level fisheries innovation and startup hub launched in 2025 under the Department of Fisheries, Government of India and hosted at MANAGE, envisioned as a catalyst for fisheries entrepreneurship and ecosystem development.

He concluded by reiterating that the programme's success would be measured by its ability to generate sustainable enterprises, foster scalable innovations, and build long-term institutional collaborations, thereby contributing to the growth and resilience of the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Dr. Saravanan Raj
Director (Agricultural Extension)
MANAGE

"Bringing all stakeholders onto one platform to enable innovators, startups, and students to access support that strengthens fisheries innovation and benefits the farming community".

-Dr. Saravanan Raj

Inaugural Session

Sri. CA S. S. Nayak
MSME & Startup Mentor
Mangalore

Sri. CA S. S. Nayak, delivered the inaugural address on **"Startup, MSME and Support Ecosystem in the Fisheries Sector."** He highlighted the importance of adaptability, innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking in addressing challenges and converting them into opportunities. Drawing from his extensive experience in MSME mentoring and startup promotion, he emphasized the strength of India's startup ecosystem and the role of institutional support in nurturing entrepreneurs.

He appreciated the proactive role of the College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, and MANAGE in promoting fisheries entrepreneurship and noted that while India is a leading fish producer, value addition and GDP contribution from fisheries remain low. He stressed the need to focus on processing, waste utilization, and technology-driven innovations.

The address underscored the vast untapped potential of the fisheries and blue economy sectors and encouraged participants to plan strategically, leverage available schemes, and transform challenges into sustainable enterprises contributing to national growth.

"Fisheries has immense untapped potential—when innovation meets value addition, even waste can be transformed into wealth and aids in national growth".

-Sri. CA S. S. Nayak

Inaugural Session

Dr. A. P. Achar, delivered a focused address on the theme **"Evolving Ecosystem for Startups in Fisheries."** The speaker highlighted the significance of India's evolving startup ecosystem, emphasizing policy support that enables students and innovators to launch enterprises alongside academic pursuits. He outlined the role of incubation centres, innovation funds, and stage-wise funding mechanisms in supporting idea development, product validation, and market entry.

He stressed that startup success depends not only on finance but also on strong mentoring and domain expertise, noting that most startup failures occur due to gaps in management, marketing, and operational skills. He highlighted the availability of structured mentoring networks to address these challenges.

The address underscored fisheries as a high-potential sector for innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in value addition and enterprise development. He appreciated the innovation initiatives at the College of Fisheries and encouraged students and entrepreneurs to transform viable ideas into scalable ventures.

Dr. A. P. Achar
Chief Executive Officer
Atal Incubation Center
Nitte, Mangalore

"Innovation today comes from everywhere, and fisheries offers immense scope for young entrepreneurs to convert ideas into impactful enterprises.".

–Dr. A. P. Achar

Inaugural Session

Dr. Sujitha Thomas
Principal Scientist and Head
CMFRI- Regional center
Mangalore

Dr. Sujitha Thomas, delivered the inaugural session on the theme **"Marine Fisheries: Current Status, Emerging Trends, and Future Prospects."** She highlighted that fisheries is undergoing rapid transformation due to climate change, technological advancements, and market shifts, creating both challenges and new opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. She noted that with capture fisheries reaching natural limits, future growth must focus on sustainable practices, loss reduction, value addition, and diversified livelihoods.

She emphasized the transition towards science-based and ecosystem-based fisheries management, digital tools for safety and traceability, and increasing demand for processed and value-added fish products. She also outlined key challenges such as climate risks, disease outbreaks, infrastructure damage, and market uncertainties, stressing the need for integrated support through science, policy, finance, and innovation.

The address underscored the vast potential of fisheries-based startups in areas such as processing, by-product utilization, mariculture, digital services, and eco-tourism. She called for strong collaboration among fishers, researchers, startups, financial institutions, and government agencies to ensure sustainable growth and resilient livelihoods.

"The future of fisheries lies not in catching more fish, but in fishing responsibly, adding value, embracing innovation, and building sustainable enterprises".

-Dr. Sujitha Thomas

Inaugural Session

Dr. Anirban Chakraborty shared his insights on the theme **"Innovations in Aquaculture and Marine Fisheries."** He highlighted the College of Fisheries as a pioneering institution—first in the state and among the earliest in the continent—established with a clear vision of the sector's long-term potential. He emphasized that the primary role of an educational institution is to deliver quality education, which this college has consistently upheld.

He stressed that education today must go beyond academics to include innovation, placements, and entrepreneurship. Students should be encouraged to explore self-employment and startup pathways in addition to traditional government roles. He noted that fisheries sector offers wide entrepreneurial scope across aquaculture, hatcheries, feeds, processing, marine sectors, and allied technologies, provided innovations are need-based and field-driven rather than "me-too" ideas.

The address concluded by emphasizing that successful startups emerge from real problems, strong mentorship, and scalable solutions. Fisheries and aquaculture, though challenging, present immense opportunities in value addition, waste utilization, biomaterials, pharmaceuticals, and marine resources. He urged students to view fisheries as a multidisciplinary, innovation-driven sector capable of delivering sustainable enterprises and societal impact.

Dr. Anirban Chakraborty
Professor & Director
NUCSER, Nitte
Mangalore

"Fisheries education must move beyond degrees to innovation, entrepreneurship, and solutions driven by real-world needs.".

-Dr. Anirban Chakraborty

Inaugural Session

Sri. D. Siddaiah, Additional Director of Fisheries, Government of Karnataka, represented **Sri. Dinesh Kumar Kaller, Director of Fisheries, Government of Karnataka,** shared his insights on the theme **"Fisheries Governance, Policies and Schemes."** He emphasized that fisheries entrepreneurship spans a wide spectrum, including food and feed production, seed sector enterprises, processing technologies, marketing, ornamental and sports fisheries, and even recreational and aquarium-based ventures. He highlighted that the sector supports end-to-end business models—from hatchery and seed production to value addition, branding, and market linkage—making fisheries a robust and diversified entrepreneurial domain with recurring annual demand.

He appreciated MANAGE, Hyderabad, particularly Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agriculture Extension), for selecting the College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, to host such a focused entrepreneurship programme.

He further highlighted that the college is equipped with a government-supported Innovation Network, under which multiple entrepreneurial units have already been initiated. Each unit receives seed funding to translate research into viable enterprises, supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure. He concluded by affirming that the institute is well positioned to nurture fisheries startups through technology, funding, and institutional backing.

Sri. D. Siddaiah
Additional Director of Fisheries
Government of Karnataka

*"Fisheries offers complete **end-to-end entrepreneurship opportunities**, from seed and technology development to value addition and market linkage".*

-Sri D. Siddaiah

Technical Session

Mr. Gnanesh Rao shared his entrepreneurial journey with **Biogavya Innovations Pvt. Ltd.**, describing how the venture evolved from an idea to a market-oriented enterprise focused on sustainable and innovative agri-biotech solutions. He highlighted the importance of identifying real, field-level problems and developing farmer-centric, eco-friendly products backed by both traditional knowledge and scientific validation.

He also spoke about his strong association with MANAGE, Hyderabad, where he participated in the '**Pre-Incubation Program'** and '**Aqua Eureka'**, which played a crucial role in refining his business model, strengthening technical and managerial capacities, and providing mentorship and networking opportunities.

He further discussed the challenges faced by startups, including product validation, regulatory processes, scaling, and market acceptance, and emphasized the value of incubation support and institutional linkages. Overall, his experience sharing highlighted that innovation, perseverance, and ecosystem support are critical for building successful and sustainable enterprises in the agri and fisheries sectors.

Mr. Gnanesh Rao
Founder and Director
Biogavya Innovations Pvt. Ltd.
Bangalore

"Solve real problems, blend tradition with science, and seek mentorship to build sustainable ventures."

-Mr. Gnanesh Rao

Technical Session

Mr. Ravi Haldipur

Founder & Director
Malpe Meen, Udupi
Karnataka

Mr. Ravi Haldipur, Founder and Director, Malpe Meen, stated that "**Malpe Meen**" was founded with the objective of correcting the imbalance in India's seafood supply chain, where fisherfolk take on the highest risk but receive the least value. Drawing from the ground realities of Malpe fishing harbour, he highlighted persistent challenges such as fragmented markets, price volatility, lack of reliable data, and high operational costs that continue to affect boat owners and fishing communities.

He explained that Malpe Meen operates as a producer-led collective, bringing fisherfolk together to aggregate supply, leverage shared infrastructure, and use data-driven insights for better market access and price realization. By integrating technology, streamlined processes, and collaborations with institutions like ISRO and INCOIS, the initiative aims to enhance efficiency, safety, sustainability, and overall profitability for the community.

He emphasized that Malpe Meen is envisioned as a scalable and replicable model under India's Blue Economy framework, capable of strengthening resilient seafood supply chains while ensuring equitable value creation and long-term empowerment of coastal communities.

"Empowering fisherfolk and building resilient, equitable seafood supply chains".

-Mr. Ravi Haldipur

MALPE MEEN

Technical Session

Dr. Chaythanya R. Das shared his startup journey through **Geophage Biotech Pvt. Ltd.**, offering practical insights into building a science-driven enterprise. He emphasized that every successful startup begins with a real, pressing problem, citing food safety challenges such as *Salmonella* contamination and rising antibiotic resistance as the driving force behind Geophage Biotech Startup Journey Student Edition.

He explained how the company leveraged its core strength in phage research to develop '**SalmoRid'**, a validated **phage-based biocontrol solution** for food processing, highlighting the importance of moving from ideas to tangible products and pursuing regulatory approvals such as FSSAI to establish credibility Startup Journey.

Dr. Das also spoke about the large global market opportunity for biocontrol solutions in seafood and meat processing and stressed the startup pathway of Build-Prove-Scale, underlining the role of data, early wins, and investor confidence in achieving growth.

He motivated students and aspiring entrepreneurs to start with a problem they care about, build proof through data, leverage their unique strengths, and take consistent small steps, noting that every successful startup begins with a single idea and sustained perseverance.

Dr. Chaythanya R. Das

CEO
Geophage Biotech Pvt. Ltd.,
Bangalore & Mangalore
Karnataka

"Leverage your strengths, start small, and build solutions that truly matter".

–Dr. Chaythanya R. Das

Startups Exhibition and Networking

Followed by the Technical Session, a Startup Exhibition was held at the venue, where selected fisheries and allied-sector startups showcased their innovative products, technologies and business models. The exhibition was actively visited by dignitaries, speakers, officials, experts and participants present at the program.

The startups presented a wide range of innovations, including IoT in Fisheries, Post-harvest Value-added Solutions, Products developed using Seaweed, Fish Leather, Sustainable Packaging Solutions, and Technology driven Supply Chain that support fisheries operations and sustainability.

During the exhibition, dignitaries and stakeholders engaged directly with startup founders, appreciated their innovations and, offered valuable feedback and suggestions for further refinement and scaling.

The exhibition functioned as an effective platform for startups to demonstrate their solutions, gain visibility, and explore collaboration and partnership opportunities, while promoting knowledge exchange and networking among fisheries ecosystem stakeholders.

Startup Pitching Session

Mr. Naveen Perumunda
NiXel Systems Pvt. Ltd

Problem: Many businesses, especially small and medium enterprises, lack a strong digital presence, resulting in low visibility, reduced customer trust, missed business opportunities and difficulty competing in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Solution: NiXel Systems addresses these gaps by helping businesses establish a comprehensive digital presence through websites, Google Business Profiles, social media integration, online reviews, WhatsApp Business, and digital branding, enabling businesses to operate and engage customers 24/7.

Innovation: The company emphasizes end-to-end digital enablement, going beyond basic websites to include mobile applications, cloud solutions, analytics, UX/UI design, and integrated platforms such as NixConnect, making digital transformation accessible and practical for businesses.

Business Model: NiXel Systems operates as a technology services and solutions provider, offering customized software development, web and e-commerce applications, mobile apps, digital marketing, branding, and IT solutions to clients across India and Australia.

Challenges: Key challenges include low digital awareness among traditional businesses, adoption resistance, intense competition in the digital services space, and the need for continuous upskilling to keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies.

"In today's world, your digital presence is your business identity–if you're not visible online, you don't exist in the market".

–Mr. Naveen Perumunda

Startup Pitching Session

Problem:

Aquaculture faces severe economic and production losses due to disease outbreaks, water quality deterioration, climatic fluctuations, and delayed disease detection. Conventional monitoring methods are manual, and insufficient to prevent large-scale losses.

Solution:

The startup deploys an AI-integrated linear aerial mobility system to monitor ponds in real time. Advanced sensors, sonar, and thermal scanners track water quality and fish behaviour. Early warnings enable timely interventions before problems escalate.

Innovation:

The system provides continuous, non-intrusive, and precise pond monitoring. It integrates behavioural mapping, AI analytics, and renewable energy support. All critical parameters are delivered through a single intelligent platform.

Mr. Keerthan Surathkal
AI-ILAMS

Business Model:

The solution operates via an AI-enabled mobile application providing alerts and analytics. Revenue is generated through device deployment and subscription-based monitoring services. The model suits large farms, clusters, and government-supported aquaculture programs.

Challenges:

High initial capital investment due to advanced and military-grade components, ensuring affordability for small-scale farmers, and scaling deployment across diverse aquaculture systems remain key challenges. Long-term success depends on cost optimization, institutional support, and farmer adoption of AI-driven technologies.

"Timely intelligence powered by AI can prevent loss before they occur in aquaculture".

–Mr. Keerthan Surathkal

Startup Pitching Session

Mr. Karthik Gowda V S
Founder & CEO
Fressea Foods Pvt. Ltd.

Problem: The seafood sector continues to face significant challenges such as inefficient supply chains, inadequate cold-chain infrastructure, post-harvest losses, quality deterioration, and low value realization for fisherfolk. He also pointed out that consumers often lack access to fresh, hygienic, and traceable seafood products, leading to reduced trust and inconsistent demand.

Solution: He presented Fressea Foods as a solution-driven enterprise that addresses these gaps by streamlining the seafood supply chain through direct sourcing, improved handling and storage practices, and cold-chain–enabled logistics. By minimizing intermediaries and ensuring quality control at every stage, the company aims to deliver fresh and value-added seafood products while enhancing returns to producers.

Innovation: The innovation of Fressea Foods lies in its strong focus on freshness, hygiene, traceability, and value addition, supported by modern processing, packaging, and quality assurance practices. These interventions not only reduce wastage but also extend shelf life and align seafood offerings with evolving consumer preferences.

Business Model: The business model is built on direct procurement and organized distribution, catering to retail consumers as well as institutional buyers such as hotels, restaurants, and catering services. Revenue is generated through the sale of fresh and processed seafood products, with scalability driven by branding, cold-chain expansion, and market diversification.

Challenges: Key challenges include high initial investment requirements for cold-chain and processing infrastructure, ensuring consistent quality and supply across seasons, building consumer awareness and trust in branded seafood, and meeting regulatory and food safety compliance standards.

"Our seed-to-plate approach ensures traceable, hygienic, and high-quality seafood while creating fair value across the entire supply chain.".

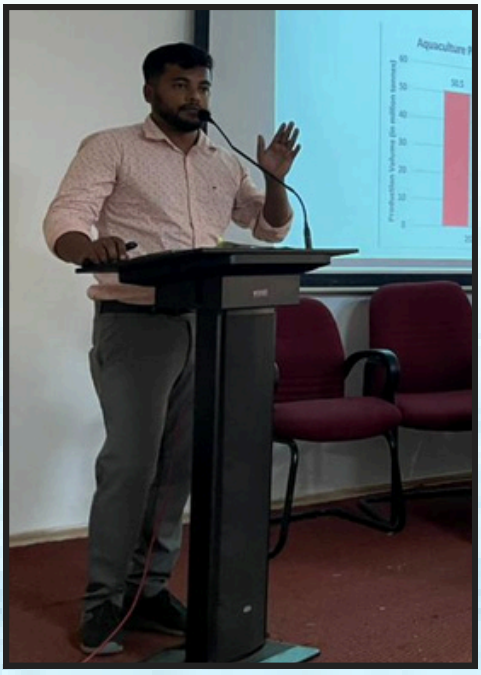
-Mr. Karthik Gowda V S

Startup Pitching Session

Problem: The presentation highlighted key challenges in conventional aquaculture, including rising input costs, environmental degradation, disease outbreaks, poor water quality management, and inconsistent productivity. Farmers often face dependence on chemicals and antibiotics, leading to sustainability concerns, regulatory issues, and reduced consumer confidence.

Solution: The startup focuses on promoting eco-friendly and sustainable aquaculture practices that improve pond health, water quality, and animal performance. Emphasis is placed on natural inputs, scientific farm management, and farmer capacity building to reduce dependency on harmful chemicals and improve long-term farm viability.

Innovation: The innovation lies in integrating green aquaculture principles with science-based inputs and management practices that enhance biosecurity, improve feed efficiency, and support disease prevention. The approach promotes environmentally responsible production while maintaining productivity and economic viability.



Mr. Ajay Gopi
Founder & CEO
HasiruAqua

Business Model: It is centered on providing sustainable aquaculture solutions and advisory support to farmers, including eco-friendly inputs, technical guidance, and best management practices. Revenue is generated through product sales, services, and partnerships, with scalability driven by farmer adoption and regional expansion.

Challenges: It includes changing farmer mindsets from conventional to sustainable practices, demonstrating consistent field-level results, scaling adoption across diverse farming systems, and balancing affordability with quality while navigating regulatory and market acceptance barriers.

"Sustainable aquaculture is not a choice anymore–it is the only way forward for healthy ponds and profitable farmers".

–Mr. Ajay Gopi

Startup Pitching Session

Mr. Mohammad Ajmal
Farmer

Problem: Small and marginal fish farmers often face difficulties in fish egg incubation due to the high cost of commercial incubation systems, limited access to advanced infrastructure, and high egg mortality caused by poor water circulation, fungal infections, and improper handling.

Solution: The proposed low-budget fish egg incubation setup addresses these issues by using easily available and inexpensive materials such as a two-litre water bottle, submersible pump, plastic pipe, crate, and iron clamp, all within a ₹500 budget. The system ensures continuous clean water flow, adequate oxygen supply, proper egg suspension, and easy removal of dead eggs, leading to improved hatching rates and reduced mortality.

Innovation: The innovation is a low-cost DIY incubation jar made from readily available materials that delivers effective water circulation and quality comparable to commercial hatcheries, enabling affordable fish egg incubation for small-scale farmers.

Business Model: The model focuses on low-cost local spawn production and simple value addition using affordable roe species, reducing dependence on external suppliers while increasing shelf life, market value, and farmer income with minimal investment.

Challenges: Scaling production while maintaining affordability remains a key challenge, along with market adoption of biodegradable alternatives. Ensuring consistent raw material supply and managing certification and compliance costs are additional concerns.

"Turning simple materials into a smart solution, this low-cost incubation system empowers small farmers to hatch quality fish seed sustainably and profitably".

-Mr. Mohammad Ajmal

Startup Pitching Session

Problem: The aquaculture sector is confronting interconnected challenges, including the declining availability of marine resources due to heavy reliance on fishmeal, rising costs of commercial feeds that strain small-scale farmers, and environmental issues arising from poor organic waste management. Coupled with limited alternative income opportunities for rural stakeholders, these issues highlight the urgent need for a sustainable and cost-effective protein source for aquaculture.

Solution: The use of Black Soldier Fly (*Hermetia illucens*) larvae as an alternative protein source for aquafeeds. BSF larvae act as efficient bio-converters, transforming organic waste into nutrient-rich biomass. By integrating BSF farming with aquaculture, the model addresses both feed sustainability and waste management, while reducing dependency on conventional fishmeal

Mr. Dhyan Chand H N
PG Student

Innovation: The innovation utilizes Black Soldier Fly larvae for their rapid growth, high feed efficiency, and rich nutritional profile comparable to fishmeal. Their chitin content enhances fish immunity, while waste-to-feed conversion supports a sustainable circular economy.

Business Model: The business model focuses on decentralized BSF units that convert local organic waste into low-cost aquafeed, with residues used as organic manure. This approach reduces feed costs while generating income and employment for small-scale farmers and youth, ensuring economic and environmental viability.

Challenges: The key challenges include standardizing BSF rearing practices, ensuring consistent feed quality, gaining regulatory approval, and building awareness among farmers. Initial infrastructure needs and technical skill development also pose barriers to large-scale adoption.

"Black Soldier Fly larvae transform waste into protein, cutting feed costs while protecting marine resources and supporting sustainable aquaculture".

–Mr. Dhyan Chand H N

Startup Pitching Session

Mr. Darren Jeeth Fernandes
PG Student

Problem: A large quantity of fish skin generated by the seafood processing industry are discarded as waste, leading to environmental burden and loss of valuable bio-resources. Despite being rich in collagen, this byproduct remains underutilized and offers limited economic return to fishing and processing communities.

Solution: The proposed solution focuses on converting fish skin into high-quality, chrome-free fish leather through standardized green processing methods. By valorizing waste into durable and aesthetically appealing leather, environmental impact is reduced while new value chains are created.

Innovation: The innovation lies in the use of eco-friendly, chrome-free tanning techniques combined with scientific validation through advanced quality and material analyses. The development of premium fish leather from species such as Malabar Grouper and Cobia demonstrates strong performance, sustainability, and luxury potential.

Business Model: The model envisioned supports a circular economy by sourcing low-cost raw material from fish processing waste and converting it into premium eco-leather for fashion, accessories, and lifestyle products. This creates additional income streams while aligning sustainability with high-value markets.

Challenges: Key challenges identified include scaling the process commercially, achieving consistent quality across species, market acceptance of fish leather as a luxury material, and optimizing costs while maintaining eco-friendly standards.

"What was once considered waste is being reimagined as sustainable luxury—proving that innovation and responsibility can co-exist".

–Mr. Darren Jeeth Fernandes

Startup Pitching Session

Problem:

Discarded fishing gear is recognized as one of the most persistent and harmful forms of ocean plastic. Abandoned nets and ropes continue to cause ghost fishing, leading to marine life loss, habitat damage, and reduced fish stocks, while high-value plastic materials remain unutilized and economically wasted.

Solution:

A circular waste-to-wealth approach is adopted in which abandoned fishing gear is collected, cleaned, and recycled into high-quality materials and premium products. Through collaboration with fishing communities, ports, recyclers, and brands, marine pollution is reduced while new economic value is created.

Mr. Rajendra J
PG Student

Innovation:

Innovation is achieved through advanced processing and quality testing that enables recycled fishing gear to match the performance of virgin plastics. Traceability, marine-grade durability, and story-driven design are integrated to position the materials as premium and reliable for end-use brands.

Business Model:

A waste-to-wealth business model is implemented, where low-cost raw materials are secured through partnerships with fishing communities and converted into high-value recycled materials sold to premium outdoor, athletic, and marine brands. The model supports circular economy and net-zero commitments.

Challenges:

Key challenges include negative perceptions around recycled products, the need for sustained engagement with fishing communities, regulatory complexities across regions, and increasing market competition. These challenges are addressed through branding, transparency, compliance, and strategic partnerships.

"We are not just cleaning the oceans, we are redesigning the value of waste and turning global environmental problem into premium economic opportunity"

–J. Rajendra

Startup Pitching Session

Problem: Shrimp farming faces major losses due to inefficient feeding practices, high feed conversion ratios, disease outbreaks such as WSSV and EHP, poor water quality management, bird predation, and poaching. These issues together result in significant production losses and economic setbacks for farmers.

Solution: To address these challenges, AquaLogic Intelligent Feeder was introduced as an AI-based demand feeding and farm management system. The solution automates feeding based on shrimp feeding behavior while simultaneously monitoring water quality, disease risk, bird intrusion, and farm security through an integrated IoT platform.

Mr. Tandel Mayurkumar
PG Student

Innovation: The innovation lies in using hydrophone-based sound detection and AI models to identify real-time feeding activity. Machine learning algorithms analyze feeding signals, trigger precise feed delivery, and integrate water quality sensors, bird repellent systems, and AI-enabled surveillance, making shrimp farming smarter and data-driven.

Business Model: It is centered on supplying an integrated AI feeder unit to shrimp farmers at an affordable cost per unit, with value addition through reduced feed wastage, improved FCR, lower disease risk, and enhanced farm security. This results in higher productivity and faster return on investment for farmers.

Challenges: It includes the high initial investment cost, adoption of advanced technology by traditional farmers, system maintenance in farm conditions, and the need for technical training and awareness to ensure effective utilization.

"Let's change the way of shrimp culture by replacing guesswork with AI-driven intelligent feeding".

Mr. Tandel Mayurkumar

Valedictory Session

Dr. Manja Naik B, Professor and Head, Department of Food Processing Technology and Dean in-charge for the day, carried out the Welcome Address and Summing-Up for the valedictory session. He began by providing a concise summary of the morning sessions, highlighting key insights and discussions shared by the speakers, and setting the context for the valedictory proceedings.

Dr. Manja Naik B

Professor and Head
Dept. of FPT
College of Fisheries
Mangalore

Dr. Naik extended a sincere thanks to Mr. Mahesh Kumar U, Managing Director of Karnataka Fisheries Development Corporation (KFDC), and Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), for organising the programme. He commended Dr. Saravanan Raj for his tireless efforts in bringing together diverse stakeholders and successfully organizing such fisheries-focused programs across the country, emphasizing the importance of collaborative platforms in fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge exchange in the sector.

Highlighting the joint efforts that contributed to the success of the event, Dr. Naik acknowledged the effective collaboration between the College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, and MANAGE, Hyderabad. He expressed optimism for future partnerships, suggesting that the college can work closely with MANAGE to organize similar programs and initiatives, thereby strengthening institutional support for startups, entrepreneurship, and capacity building in fisheries and aquaculture.

"Joint efforts between institutions and organizations make programs like this successful and pave the way for future" collaborations

-Dr. Manja Naik B

Valedictory Session

In concluding address, **Mr. Mahesh Kumar**, Managing Director (i/c), Karnataka Fisheries Development Corporation (KFDC), Mangaluru, spoke on the theme "KFDC as a Catalyst for Fisheries Marketing and Value Chains." .

Mr. Mahesh Kumar U.
Managing Director (i/c)
KFDC, Mangaluru

He highlighted the growing importance of entrepreneurship in the fisheries sector, particularly the shift from export dependency to domestic markets. Emphasizing the "seed to plate" concept, he noted that consumers today are willing to pay more for assured quality, branding, and food safety. Drawing parallels with trusted brands like Nandini, he stressed the need for strong branding in fisheries products to build consumer confidence, especially in non-coastal cities.

The speaker also underlined emerging opportunities in value addition, waste utilization, fish skin products, ghost net recycling, and eco-friendly alternatives to plastic. He spoke about KFDC's efforts in supporting fisherwomen, young entrepreneurs, and startups through training, government aid, CSR funding, and branding support. He concluded by stating that such initiatives would strengthen sustainability, innovation, and livelihoods across the fisheries sector.

"The future of fisheries lies in quality assurance, strong branding, value addition, and sustainable entrepreneurship rather than only export dependency".

-Mr. Mahesh Kumar U

Valedictory Session

Dr. Saravanan Raj, delivered the Valedictory Address, expressing gratitude to the Dean, College of Fisheries, Mangalore, dignitaries, speakers, participants and organizers for making the programme meaningful and impactful.

He stated that such short, focused programmes help bring together multiple stakeholders and effectively disseminate key messages on innovation and entrepreneurship across the fisheries and agriculture sectors.

He noted that while bank loans are difficult, startups today have wide access to grants, incubation support, government schemes, and private funding, making innovation and experimentation easier for UG and PG students.

He urged students to solve real field-level problems by engaging with stakeholders and highlighted MANAGE's continuous support through incubation centres, mentoring, digital resources, and regular webinars to strengthen the fisheries startup ecosystem

Dr. Saravanan Raj
Director (Agricultural Extension)
MANAGE

"It's a small beginning, but it helps connect and mentor ideas into real startups".

-Dr. Saravanan Raj

Valedictory Session

Dr. Shivani D. Gowda
Innovation Research Fellow

Dr. Shivani D. Gowda, proposed the Vote of Thanks at the Valedictory Session of the Fisheries–Startup & Aquapreneurship Stakeholders Meet, expressing sincere gratitude to the leadership and dignitaries for their guidance and valuable contributions.

She acknowledged the Dean, College of Fisheries, Mangalore, for his vision and support, the Programme Coordinator for effective planning and academic leadership, and the valedictory and concluding speakers for their insightful policy- and extension-oriented perspectives.

She conveyed that the insights shared by policymakers, extension professionals, scientists, and industry experts highlighted the importance of extension-led innovation, institutional support, and stakeholder convergence in building a robust ecosystem for fisheries startups and aquapreneurs. She also noted that the active participation of fisherfolk, startups, and entrepreneurs reinforced the relevance of the discussions to real-world challenges.

"This meet reflects the power of collective efforts and collaboration in strengthening fisheries startups and aquapreneurship".

-Dr. Shivani D. Gowda

List of Startups Participated in the Program

S.No	Startup	Founder Name	Descrpition
1.	Geophage Biotech Pvt. Ltd.	Dr. Chaythanya Das	Geophage Biotech Pvt. Ltd. is a biotechnology startup focused on developing phage-based solutions to address critical food safety challenges, particularly Salmonella contamination. Leveraging deep expertise in bacteriophage research, the company has developed SalmoRid, a validated biocontrol product positioned as a safer alternative to antibiotics for use in seafood and meat processing.
2.	Hasiru Aqua	Mr. Ajay Gopi	HasiruAqua Technologies India Pvt. Ltd. is a Bengaluru-based aquaculture startup founded in 2019, focused on improving farmer livelihoods through sustainable fish farming. The company partners with pond owners to produce safe, traceable fish and uses technology-driven monitoring solutions to enhance productivity and reduce farming risks.

S.No	Startup	Founder Name	Descrpition
3.	**Hashreya Crabs**	**Mr. Harideep Shriyan & Mrs. Shreya**	Hashreya Crabs is a small-scale mud crab farming startup based in Surathkal, Mangalore, focused on sourcing, rearing, and supplying premium live green and mud crabs. Using controlled holding systems with strong emphasis on crab health and water quality, the venture follows sustainable, practical aquaculture practices backed by hands-on field experience.
4.	**Fressea Foods Pvt. Ltd.**	**Mr. Karthik Gowda V S**	Fressea is a tech-enabled seafood brand building an end-to-end seed-to-plate ecosystem. We work directly with fishermen and farmers to deliver fresh, traceable seafood every day. Fressea combines modern cold-chain, digital traceability, and omni-channel retail for better quality and fair pricing. It runs with a simple goal to make fish a healthier, reliable, and affordable protein choice for everyone.

S.No	Startup	Founder Name	Descrpition
5.	**Malpe Meen Pvt. Ltd.**	**Mr. Ravi Haldipur**	Malpe Meen is a Udupi-based seafood startup building producer-led, tech-enabled supply chains. It connects fisherfolk directly to markets, improving price realization, reducing waste, and ensuring quality and traceability. The model empowers fishing communities while creating a more efficient and sustainable seafood ecosystem.
6.	**Biogavya Innovations Pvt. Ltd.**	**Mr. Gnanesh Rao**	Biogavya Innovations Pvt. Ltd. is an agri-innovation startup focused on developing sustainable, natural solutions for agriculture and allied sectors. The company works on eco-friendly products and practices aimed at improving soil health, crop productivity, and farmer profitability while reducing dependence on chemical inputs. Through research-driven innovation, Biogavya Innovations promotes environmentally responsible and resilient farming systems.

S.No	Startup	Founder Name	Descrpition
7.	**Pesce Puro Agritech**	**Varshith S. Mendon & Amith John**	Pesce Puro Agritech is an early-stage aquaculture startup founded in October 2025, focused on research-driven optimization of fish farming systems. It conducts data-backed studies on stocking density and water quality to enable industrial-scale operations, while also developing automation and monitoring solutions to ensure reliable, failure-free farm management.
8.	**Nixel Systems Pty. Ltd.**	**Mr. Naveenu Perumunda**	NiXel Systems is a technology startup specializing in custom software and AI-driven digital solutions. The company offers web and mobile app development, cloud services, and business management tools to help enterprises build scalable and efficient digital products.

Organising Team

Dr. K. C. Veeranna
Vice Chancellor
Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries
Sciences University
Bidar, Karnataka
vckvafsub@gmail.com

Dr. Saravanan Raj
Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE &
CEO, MANAGE-FISHub
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad
ceomfishub@gmail.com

Dr. Anjanayappa H. N.
Dean
College of Fish
Mangalore, Karn
deanfisheries@gmail.com

Dr. Shivani D. Gowda
Innovation Research fellow
MANAGE-FISHub
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad
mfishubstakeholdersmeet@gmail.com
+91 8722578757

Dr. Manja Naik B.
Professor and Head
Department of Fish Processing
Technology College of Fisheries
Mangalore, Karnataka
manjanaikbkvafsu@gmail.com

Prepared by
Dr. Shivani D. Gowda
Innovation Research Fellow

MANAGE Fisheries Innovation and Startup Hub (MANAGE - FISHub)
(A National Fisheries Incubation Centre Supported by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India)
National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)
(An Autonomous Organization of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India)
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad – 500 030, Telangana, India
https://www.manage.gov.in/managefishub/

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