

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Workshop on Scaling-up and Adoption of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Advancing Sustainable Blue Economy Hosted in Tamil Nadu**

CHENNAI, March 15, 2024 - The M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) jointly organized a workshop titled 'Scaling-up and Adoption of Nature-based Solutions in Advancing the Sustainable Blue Economy'. This workshop underscored the crucial role of coastal and marine ecosystems in global biodiversity conservation, climate regulation, and economic prosperity.

Featuring discussions on blue carbon and the economic importance of marine resources, the workshop focussed on advocating blue economy initiative that integrates Nature-based Solutions, ensuring fair benefits distribution while protecting oceanic ecosystems. The workshop signifies a significant stride towards nurturing resilient and inclusive blue economies globally.

Dr. G.N.Hariharan, Executive Director of MSSRF, provided an overview of the workshop.

Ms. Supriya Sahu, IAS Additional Chief Secretary for Environment Climate Change & Forests, Govt of Tamil Nadu, unveiled a comprehensive book on nature-based solutions for a sustainable blue economy, featuring case studies from MSSRF. She highlighted in her inaugural address the importance of assigning value to ecosystems while cautioning against their commodification. She stressed the need to focus on biodiversity credits alongside carbon credits and underscored the crucial role of local communities in ecosystem conservation.

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson of MSSRF, delivered a presidential address emphasizing the need to reconcile environmental conservation with development goals. She highlighted the importance of seeking solutions that harmonize human development with environmental sustainability, ensuring decent living and livelihoods for all, while also addressing gender disparities exacerbated by climate change and disasters.

Ms. Makiko Yashiro, Programme Officer at UNEP, provided special remarks during the session, stressing on the transformative changes in ocean and coastal resource management through integrated solutions spanning environmental, social, and economic dimensions. She also highlighted sustainable blue economy as a strategic focus area during India’s G20 presidency.

Dr. E Vivekanandan, Advisor/International Consultant at BoBP, delivered a keynote address focusing on the imperative of balancing economic growth with sustainability in the blue economy. He stressed the need to enhance job opportunities and livelihoods while improving the value of ecosystem services.

Dr. S Velvizhi, Head of MSSRF Fish for All Centre, conveyed the vote of thanks, acknowledging the contributions of all participants towards advancing the objectives of the workshop.

This workshop marks a significant step towards fostering sustainable blue economies, showcasing the collective commitment of stakeholders towards preserving our marine ecosystems for future generations.