

ASIAN PACIFIC AQUACULTURE 2011

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INDIAN AQUACULTURE BOOSTED FOR FUTURE

The Asian Pacific Aquaculture 2011 Conference and Exposition (APAC2011), opened by The Hon Minister for Fisheries & Registration, Government of Kerala, Mr. S. Sharma, on 17 January 2011 proved to be the success that everyone was working towards.

Due to the period of mourning following the tragic deaths of pilgrims just 2 days before the opening meant that many other dignitaries were not able to attend but those that were able to add value to the event included Dr K.R. Viswambharan, Ms Leena Nair IAS, Dr P Krishnaiah IAS, Mr. B Sreekumar, Mr. Anwar Hashim, Mr. U K Viswanadha Raju and Mr. Thad Simons (President, Novus International Inc – Gold Sponsor). The event was Co-chaired by Dr C Mohanakumaran Nair and Roy Palmer.

The latest statistics from FAO show that Aquaculture will exceed wild capture harvest within the next 18 months based on current growth and with the Asia- Pacific region dominating production with nearly 90% in terms of quantity and approximately 80% in terms of value. India is already the world's 2nd largest aquaculture supplier and the Conference, the first international event of its type held in India, will enable a new focus and boost to activities.

During the event the College of Fisheries was elevated to University status and is now named The Kerala University of Fisheries & Ocean Studies and is the first University of Fisheries in India. As both host and partner for this event this was a very worthy honor for their skills and dedication to the event.

Michael New, OBE, fulfilled his goals by organizing the very successful Giant Prawn 2011 which ran alongside APAC2011 as well as seeing the charity he founded, Aquaculture without Frontiers; secure a number of sponsorships at a special event which saw an extraordinary performance from Ms Sobhana's Classical Dance Show. Michael highlighted that when he held his first Giant Prawn specific event in 1980 the production of the species was around 3,000MT and is now in excess of 450,000MT, a massive achievement.

The event built on over 700 abstracts, 200 posters and 54 sessions and 60 booths at the trade show and attracted people from 47 countries. Conference delegates numbered over 1000 but in addition to this well over 500 farmers from all over India attended an intensive Farmers Day program (sponsored by NFDB) and approximately 700 students from 5 colleges were treated to an introduction to Aquaculture on the last day.

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In order to network and absorb all the activities that WAS-APC Conferences bring you also need liberal doses of great food and engaging entertainment and the Indian hospitality was superb and culminated in the Presidents Reception held at The Bolgaty Palace where delicious seafood was generously donated by The Ananda Group and The Seafood Exporters Association of India.

Taking aquaculture forward in India and elsewhere is essential for world food production so events of this type are an essential element of driving change be that political, scientific, industry related or in respect of the community. Aquaculture faces many challenges but with the Oceans being over 70% of the worlds surface we must learn to maximize our food production in an environmentally sustainable fashion utilizing those massive water resources rather than rely on land for our food as we have in the past.

The next WAS Asia Pacific Chapter event is being organized in Melbourne, Australia in 2012. More details on www.was.org later this year.

AUSTRALASIAN AQUACULTURE 2012 - Melbourne, Australia - May 1-5, 2012