

Speech text of Dr. H. Salehi, the vice minister and head of Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO)

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Respected ladies, gentleman, experts, and investors,
The world faces three main challenges reduction of freshwater, food deficiency, and environmental degradation. Iran is located in an area with limited freshwater sources. Iran faces a water crisis and drought.

Based on:

- Suitable climate conditions of the Caspian Sea, Persian Gulf, and Oman sea,
- The necessity of using marine waters in order to increase aquatic products,
- Having more than 5000 kilometers coastal band,
- The existence of native species with high commercial value,
- The necessity of sea catches pressure reduction on the marine fish stock by sustainable aquaculture,
- The existence of potential based on researches (higher than 2 million tons)
- Development of cage culture in 65 countries with a total production of more than 3.5 million tons,
- Using the experiences of pioneer countries such as Norway, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Japan, Italy, and Turkey,
- The potential for employment, export, and self-sufficiency in this industry,

Cage culture development is highly considered by IFO in the Caspian region and southern waters. During the last year, the cage culture production was 14050 tons. At the present year, 67 cage culture farms with the capacity of 24176 tons have been established. By the end of the 6th development plan until 2021, the cage culture products will be reached to 200 thousand tons. We can point to 145 basic permissions for 230 thousand tons, 66 establishment certificate for 57550 tons, and 10 operation certificates.

Development of cage culture is considered as a new industry. Providing of infrastructure with the cooperation of the related organizations and researchers, determination of suitable areas for the fish cage, supporting port for cage farms are in the plan. There are some problems because of lack of infrastructures, lack of financial support.

One of the major need is the insurance of the cage, the product, and the engaged personnel. Fortunately, not only the Agriculture Insurance Fund but also three insurance companies are engaged with the projects.

The additional study for the sites is performed during the last several years and the environmental monitoring is following too. Risk assessment study consisting respect with endemic species is under preparation by the supervision of the DOE approval. The other related organizations, such as Iran Veterinary Org., Ports and Maritime Org., Department of Environment, are agreed with the IFO plan for cage culture development.

The other important agreement is the memorandum with DOE and agreement for the cage culture zones. Study on new ports, use the existing ports as the supporting facilities for the sea farms are under the study.

Holding meetings with hatchery units, fish feed manufactures in order to produce fingerling fish and requirement feed for cage culture. Specialized training for Iranian technicians, farmers, and holding workshops by foreign experts. Holding meetings with Agriculture Bank in order to provide bank finance for cage culture businesses, including overdrafts, bridging finance and mortgages for buying vessels, cages, and other auxiliary equipment. Holding meetings with Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) and Iran Veterinary Organization in order to remove obstacles and problems.

The suggested solutions for removing the development problems are: providing low-interest bank facilities for investors and solving the problem of bank deposit. Providing developmental credits for support services, studies and transfer of technical knowledge, support for the establishment of reproductive and hatcheries centers, genetic modification of marine fish by the establishment of private companies and the national fund for the protection of Investors and cage farmers.

To put it in a nutshell, we must suggest that in order to achieve the fish cage culture plans as one of the projects of the resilient economy, Iran Fisheries Organization is ready to present expert opinions based on legal limitations, rules, and standards behalf of all stakeholder.

At the end, thanks for your consideration. IFO provides are requirements for domestic and foreign investor and companies. Fish culture industry in the sea has a great potential for economic, technical and specialized collaborations between different companies.