

SAARC countries show interest to import bio-remediation technology

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The SAARC member countries have shown interest to import Bio-remediation technology from Pakistan to utilize the sewerage water of their respective countries for irrigation purposes and cope with the future water scarcity challenges.

Delegates from SAARC member countries including Afghanistan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh attended a detailed briefing at the National Agriculture Research Center (NARC) on "Pakistan Bio-remediation Model, Prospects and Replication in SAARC Countries."

Pakistan has already developed bio-remediation model for wastewater treatment for irrigation at NARC, the agricultural research center which is now being targeted to establish housing society at its place as proposed by the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

The delegates included Di-

rector Information, MOLAR, Afghanistan, Gh. Rabbani Haqiqatpal, Member Director, Fisheries, BARC, Bangladesh, Dr. Md Kabir Ikramul Haque, Program Director, ICS, Ministry of Agriculture Bhutan, Deputy Minister Fisheries and Agriculture, Maldives, Mohamed Shareef, Chief Communication, Ministry of Agriculture Nepal, IP Rijal, Director, HORDI, Sri Lanka, Dr. Mema Fonseka, Director SAC, Dhaka, SM Bokthiar and Senior Program Specialist (NRM), SAC Dhaka, Dr. Tayan Raj-Gurung.

Prior to the briefing, the delegates visited the bio-remediation site in the center, where Director Bio-Remediation Institute, Dr. Yousuf Riaz gave them detailed presentation on this technology.

The NARC scientists have replicated the bio-remediation technology in other parts of the country including the Capital, Islamabad, where a project has been set up at Rose and

Jasmine Garden to purify the waste sewerage water.

Chairing the meeting of the delegates, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council, Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad said that the SAARC countries have great potential to cooperate with each other for the development of agriculture sector.

He said that Pakistan was ready to share research and technology with the member countries to help them develop their agriculture on modern lines and also expressed the hope that all the member countries would reciprocate with same spirit and help Pakistan develop the sector.

He said that the bio-remediation technology introduced by Pakistan can be utilized by several member countries where there is scarcity of water.

Director General NARC, Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan said that the SAARC countries can take advantage of the bio-remediation model of Pakistan

and help themselves cope with the water challenges.

Earlier, the SAARC delegates highlighted the importance of enhancing cooperation in the agriculture sector to overcome the poverty challenges of the region.

They were of the view that the bio-remediation technology would help several water-scarce SAARC countries, as cited by the representative of Maldives who informed the participants that bio-remediation could be useful for them as they have to be dependent on sea-water.

The delegates were of the view that huge amount of water was wasted annually due to non-availability of proper treatment facility, however, with the help of bio-remediation this wastage could be stopped.

The delegates, later highlighted the importance larger cooperation to work together for common prosperity of the region.