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Demonstrations on Asian catfish

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: Demonstrations have been done with Asian catfish (*Clarias batrachus*) in the house of Chow sujanta Mansai, Village Kheram in cemented tank (25ft X 20 ft) sponsored by ATMA, Lohit.

Culturable area:

In cemented tank or water area of 0.1 ha with a depth of 50-75 cm is ideal for air-breathing fish culture. As there is not much wastage of energy through respiration, good yield could be expected. Like carp ponds, air breathing fish culture ponds need not to be fertilized by chemical and organic fertilizers. The ponds should be predator free, pond bottom is to be raked for the liberation of unwanted gases, parasites etc. The inner sides of pond dykes should be either firm with heavy log or wood, or fenced with bamboo, cane or wire screens to a height of about 50 cm. This will

help in prevention through climbing and burrowing. Cage culture of air-breathing fish may also be undertaken in running water systems.

Stocking details:

The transportation of air-breathing fish is not at all a problem. It can be transported in open watering carriers (transportation time less than six hours) with a small amount of aquatic weeds.

For the monoculture of air-breathing fishes, a stocking density of 50,000/ha with an individual size of 10 cm may be maintained. Mixed culture with carp (only asian catfish) can also be done with proper management and care. When the carp had grown to a minimum of 300g each, so that the former may not prey on the latter, the catfish can be released in the pond.

Feeding:

It needs an abundant

food supply like tadpoles, trash fish, meat etc. for the growing air-breathing fishes. In order to enhance the growth, supplementary feeds- trash fish and house hold waste 1:1, rice bran, mustard oil cake and trash fish 2:1:1, rice bran and poultry feed 3:1, biogas slurry and rice bran 1:2, may also be given daily at the rate of 8-10 % of body weight.

Growth and Production:

The marketable size (400-500g) of asian catfish could be obtained in a period of eight months. An average air-breathing fish yield of 1.5-2.5/t/yr/ha can normally be obtained.

Harvesting:

Summer season is ideal for harvesting air-breathing fish. The culture pond is drained out and fish are harvested with help of hand nets or scoop nets. In cemented tank it can be harvested at any time.