



Seaweed (Sargassum) collected from the outlying islands in the Mandapam area of Tamil Nadu, South India, is brought in by the boatload to the coastal villages.

6. GRACILARIA FARMING TRIALS: A PICTORIAL RECORD

The seaweed is landed on the beach and kept for sale in lots.





The seaweed is dried by women in family or on the beach.

Drying racks (foreground) were built as part of the project and drying the seaweed on the beach was discouraged.





Since the offshore islands are being declared a marine sanctuary, BOBP undertook a programme of seaweed (Clracilaria) farming in two nearby villages in the Ramanathapuram District. The farms were fenced in just offshore. This one is at Vedalai.

This 'close-up' shows the 'farmers' at work in one of the 'farms'.





One method of propagation used was spore setting. A PVC frame and raffia lines were used for the seeding.

Vegetative propagation was also tried, the cuttings being inserted in a rope using a 'fid'.





Examining the seaweed growth after it had been outplanted.

The seaweed is ready for the harvest.





Harvesting begins in one of the farms.

While she holds the plastic tub, he snips the seaweed into it during harvesting operations.





The harvested seaweed is taken ashore

and to the weighing shed.





The seaweed is weighed and payments made.

Experiments were also conducted during the seaweed culture trials on making agar. In this picture, agar, made from locally harvested seaweed, is being dried.





The biggest problem faced during the culture trials was grazing by young rabbit fish. Here the Community Development Worker examines the grazed lines.

A village leader displays lines stripped of seaweed by the grazers.





Fykenets were first used to trap the grazing rabbit fish.

When fykenets failed to protect the crop, net fencing was resorted to. Fence nets needed periodical cleaning and maintenance.





Traps were used to capture the few fish that managed to get past the fence nets.

A village leader checks a fish trap.

