



## **SmartFish gives support to improve the livelihood for 2,300 Mauritian fisheries**



New measures to improve the livelihood for some 2,300 Mauritian fishers thanks to an agreement signed this month by The Fishermen Investment Trust (FIT) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) implementing part of the IOC project SmartFish for a total 40,000 USD (about 1.2 million rupees). Currently fishers are being negatively impacted by shrinking lagoon fisheries in the country.

The agreement will facilitate capacity building in fishing communities on construction, installation and management of small scale cage culture units in the lagoon of Mauritius

**"We are confident that the present project will pave the way forward for small scale aquaculture development in Mauritius" says Clotilde Bodiguel, Programme Coordinator for the FAO component of the SmartFish programme.**

FIT and Albion Fisheries Research Centre (AFRC) have requested the support of the FAO operating under the IOC SmartFish programme, funded by the European Union. Aquaculture is a suitable and viable way to address this current resource depletion while also increasing the low income earned in the fishing community through diversification opportunities.

In addition, the chairman of FIT G Shu predicts the rise of fish production from the small scale sector as well as income for fishers.

A FAO consultant/ cage culture expert, Fabrizio Piccolotti, will be coming to Mauritius shortly to initiate the construction of cage culture units using locally available materials. He will also train cooperative leaders on the day to day running and overall management of a small scale cage culture business.

Aquaculture is probably the fastest growing food-producing sector, supplying nearly 50 percent of the world's food fish. In 30 years (1980–2010), world food fish production of aquaculture has expanded by almost 12 times. World

aquaculture production in 2010 was 79 million tonnes (including farmed aquatic plants and non-food products), worth USD 125 billion.