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# Seaweed Industry in India

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**Why is in news?** Lakshadweep islands hold huge potential for developing seaweed industry, said President Droupadi Murumu

President Droupadi Murumu has said that **Lakshadweep islands hold huge potential for developing the seaweed industry**, with the involvement of the local community, women Self Help Groups, island cooperative societies, and private entrepreneurs.

The President said that the **country's first water villas** will be built in the blue lagoons of Lakshadweep, which will boost tourism in a big way. Noting that special emphasis is being laid on conserving nature with development, she said such innovative initiatives can emerge as a model for eco-tourism for the whole world.

**High-end eco-tourism projects** are being developed at **Kadamat, Minicoy, and Suheli islands** as anchor projects under the aegis of Niti Ayog.

The President also inaugurated **desalination projects** for Amini and Kalpeni islands, each having the capacity to produce one and a half lakh liters of drinking water per day.

Seaweed:

Seaweeds are also known as **Macroalgae**. They constitute several species of marine plants and algae.

Seaweeds may also include **Red, Green and Brown** algae.

They are macrophytic which means they live in water or moist land surfaces. They **generally grow in the shallow waters in the tidal zone**.

Seaweeds can **grow in ocean, rivers, lakes and other water bodies**. There are many types of seaweeds such as nori and laver seaweed.

The practice of cultivating and harvesting seaweed is known as **Seaweed Farming**.

Seaweeds exhibit the highest photosynthesis efficiency due to moist conditions. They contribute to **about 50% of all photosynthesis in the world**.

Out of the global seaweed production, **China produces 57%**, Indonesia 28%, whereas, India is having a mere share of 0.01-0.02%.

It is estimated that if seaweed cultivation is done in 10 million hectares or 5% of the EEZ area of India, it can provide employment to 50 million people

In Budget 2021, the Finance Minister has **proposed to set up a multi-purpose seaweed park in Tamil Nadu**. It will be a part of the Seaweed Farming promotion in India.

**Uses of Seaweed Farming:**

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They are rich in vitamins and minerals and are consumed as food in various parts of the world

They are used for the production of phytochemicals namely agar, carrageenan, and alginate.

These phytochemicals are widely used as gelling, stabilizing, and thickening agents in several industries of food, confectionery, pharmaceutical, etc.

Furthermore, they are used for the production of polysaccharides, fertilizer.

They are also used in high-value products such as nutraceuticals and cosmeceuticals for use against various lifestyle diseases.