

## **A consultation meeting with Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Madhya Pradesh, on Natural farming at ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science**

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ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science organized a consultation meeting with Shri Kamal Patel, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Madhya Pradesh, to appraise potential of natural farming on productivity and soil health in Madhya Pradesh. Dr. Rajesh Saxena from MPCOST, Dr. Rajesh Chaturvedi, Deputy Director of Agriculture, and Dr. Yoganjan (Coordinator to the Minister) were also invited to participate in the meeting. Shri Darshan Singh Chaudhary (President Kisan Morcha, Madhya Pradesh), Shri Raj Thakur (District President, Kisan Morcha) and Shri Yashwant Patel Ji (progressive farmer, Hoshangabad) also attended the meeting. Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of JNKVV, Jabalpur and RVSKV, Gwalior along with university Scientists also joined the meeting in online mode.

In his address to the scientist Hon'ble minister emphasized the need of natural farming in the state of M.P. He emphasized to evaluate the status of soil health in tribal areas and strengthen the agriculture system of those areas with labeling and certification of produce grown organically. He briefed about key changes made in the field of purchase of the farm produce in local Mandis to improve the farmer's income.

Earlier, Director of the institute, Dr. Ashok K. Patra briefed about the activities and achievement of the institute and proposed for mapping of microbial diversity in Madhya Pradesh which is vital for monitoring soil health and supporting natural farming with scientific evidences. Dr. S. R. Mohanty, Principal Scientist and PC (AINP-SBB) presented a proposal on the strategy for mapping soil microbial diversity of Madhya Pradesh. It was agreed that the project will be headed by ICAR-IISS with MPCOST and state universities as partners. It was also suggested that the projects submitted by the universities earlier to be considered for execution under one umbrella. The participating institute will furnish their requirements before taking up activities in the next six months for field survey/collection of soil samples and evaluation of biological attributes of samples collected from various sites. Dr. S K Sharma from RVSKV Gwalior emphasized to develop package of practice of natural farming for small and marginal farmers. He expressed interest of the university in joining this project and develop model village for natural farming from Harda. He also insisted to map the temporal variation of microbial diversity along with spatial variation. Dr. H K Rai, from JNKVV Jabalpur requested to include their team in this project. Dr. S K. Rao, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor RVSKV, Gwalior, emphasized to standardize this technology and submit recommendation to Govt for small and marginal farmers. He also urged the IISS and both the Universities, with taking the experience of Gujarat, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, implement the technology at the earliest and further improvement.

Dr. A. B. Singh, Principal Scientist and HOD Soil Biology Division briefed to Hon'ble Minister about ongoing project on natural farming under AINP-OF at the institute. Technologies developed by IISS like vemicompost and waste decomposer capsules were also showcased in the meeting. Later, Hon'ble Minister visited the experimental site on natural farming in the Institute.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Dr. Ashok K Patra, Director, ICAR-IISS, Bhopal.



Welcome of Hon'ble Minister by Director ICAR-  
IIS, Bhopal



Highlighting institute activity to Hon'ble minister  
by Dr. Ashok K Patra



Discussion and presentation on natural farming  
and biodiversity mapping



Field visit of natural farming experimental farm  
at IIS



Hon'ble minister's interaction with scientist of the  
institute



Hon'ble minister's interaction with online  
participants