



**Enhancing Climate Resilience
of India's Coastal Communities**

ECRICC

Crab Farming in Odisha



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**





Executive Summery

The Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities (ECRICC) Project, launched in 2019, is a collaborative initiative aimed at strengthening climate adaptation and diversifying livelihoods across vulnerable coastal regions. Supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Government of India, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the project is being implemented across three coastal states: Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. In Odisha, the project is carried out under the supervision of the Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department and focuses on promoting climate-resilient livelihoods in the fisheries and agriculture sectors. It covers four coastal districts—Balasore, Puri, Kendrapada, and Ganjam—targeting 949 villages across 161 Gram Panchayats.

A key intervention introduced under the ECRICC project in 2024 is Mud Crab Farming (*Scylla serrata*). This initiative harnesses brackish water aquaculture to provide coastal communities with a sustainable and profitable livelihood. The demand for mud crabs is high in both domestic and export markets, making it a lucrative opportunity for small-scale farmers. The initial phase of the project supported 18 farmers across four districts, utilizing 6 hectares of water spread area. Technical assistance was provided by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA). These institutions ensured the availability of quality crablets by supplying 38,000 matchbox-sized seeds. Despite challenges such as the absence of certified hatcheries in Odisha, the interest among farmers in expanding crab culture remains high.

A State-Level Crab Farmers' & Exporters' Meet was conducted in December 2024 in Bhubaneswar to strengthen farmer-exporter linkages. The workshop brought together government officials, aquaculture experts, farmers, and exporters to discuss opportunities, challenges, and strategies for enhancing the crab farming sector.

To address the critical gap in seed availability, the ECRICC Project is establishing a Crab Hatchery in Odisha. The hatchery, located in Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur district, will help to create a self-sustaining crab farming value chain by producing one million crab seeds annually. This initiative aims to reduce reliance on wild seed collection, ensuring a consistent supply of quality crablets to farmers. It is expected to generate employment opportunities, strengthen Odisha's role in commercial crab farming, and contribute to the state's economic development.

The ECRICC Project's crab farming initiative is a major step toward climate-resilient livelihoods in Odisha. By integrating sustainable aquaculture practices, technical expertise, and market linkages, the project is creating new income opportunities for coastal communities while ensuring long-term environmental sustainability. The establishment of a crab hatchery will further enhance Odisha's potential as a leading hub for mud crab aquaculture, paving the way for a robust, self-sufficient, and globally competitive crab farming sector.



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GPS Map Camera

Bhitara-kharinasi, Odisha, India

Unnamed Road, Bhitara-kharinasi, Odisha 754224, India

Lat 20.367428°

Long 86.706237°

02/10/24 08:58 AM GMT +05:30



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1. Introduction

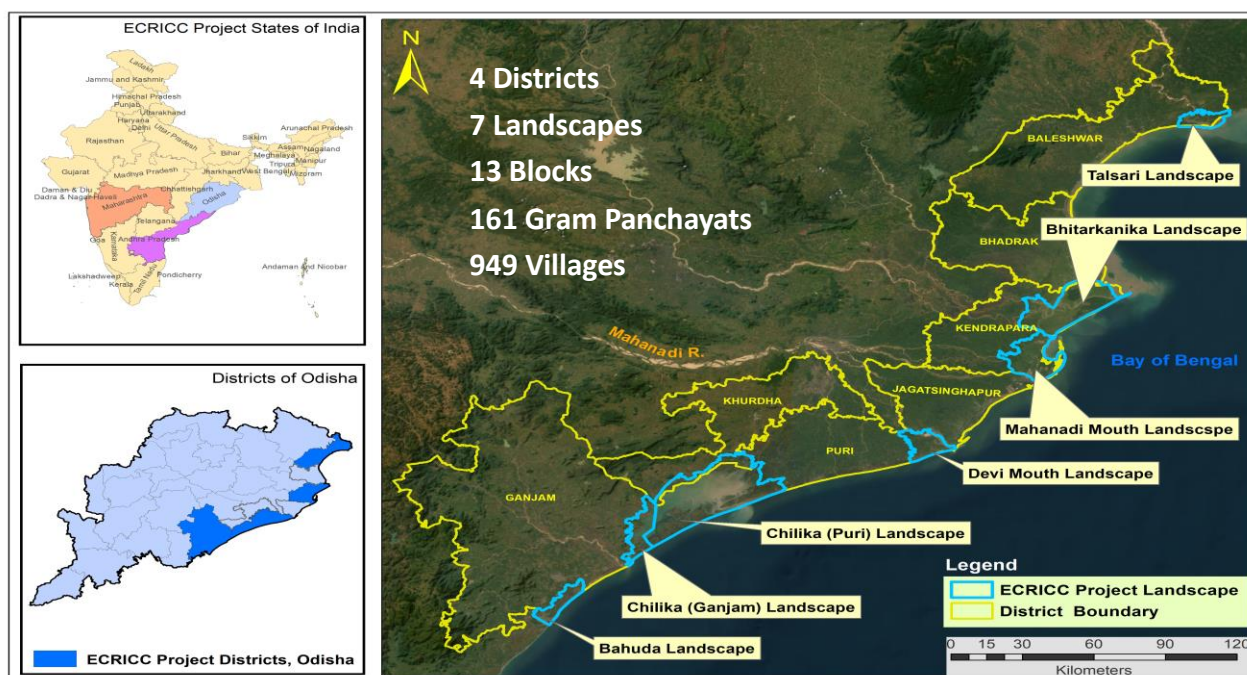
Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities" (ECRICC) project, initiated in 2019, aims to safeguard vulnerable coastal populations by enhancing ecosystem resilience and diversifying livelihoods. Implemented across 3 coastal states (Adhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha) of India, the project employs an ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach and is supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), state government, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project integrates vulnerability assessments, ecosystem restoration, and community-driven livelihood initiatives while strengthening governance mechanisms.

1.1 Project Outputs

Output-1	Output-2	Output-3
•Enhanced resilience of coastal and marine eco-system and their services.	•Climate adaptive livelihoods for enhanced resilience of the vulnerable coastal communities.	•Strengthened coastal governance and institutional framework.

1.2 ECRICC in Odisha

In Odisha, Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department, Government of Odisha under the overall supervision of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India is implementing this project in 7 landscapes of 4 coastal districts (Balasore, Puri, Kendrapada & Ganjam). Under this project, promotion of climate adaptive livelihoods in the fisheries and agriculture sector is an important component for enhancing climate resilience capacity of the coastal communities through income enhancement and diversification of livelihoods.



2. Mud Crab Culture: An Effort from Mud to Money...

Aquaculture has become essential in fulfilling the growing global demand for fish. With expanding population, increase in income and change in consumer preferences towards healthier and more nutritious food, there is significant demand on the industry to boost the production of quality fish. Aquaculture is the culture of fish, crustaceans, mollusks, and aquatic vegetation across diverse aquatic environments, representing one of the most rapidly expanding sectors in global food production. Brackish water aquaculture contributes to the economic development of our country by generating essential foreign exchange, creating a range of direct and indirect employment opportunities, providing livelihoods, and enhancing nutritional security. The brackish water fin fishes & shell fishes have high consumer preference and market demand. Among the brackish water shell fishes, mangrove crab (*Scylla serrata*) also known as mud crab is one of the important cultured hardy species.

Mud Crab is highly popular due to its high demand in the domestic as well as in external market. It has the potential of export also. The commercial scale mud crab farming is developing fast along the coastal states like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Odisha, West Bengal and Karnataka. Being a coastal district, Puri comprises ample scope in Mud crab culture, especially due to the culture friendly climate and ecosystem conditions as well as availability of crablets in natural sources. Mud crab culture is effectively initiated in the year 2024 under both Devi mouth and Chilika landscapes which are part of the ECRICC Project intervention. Though the number of farmers under mud crab culture is still not very high, but the scope and interest among farmers is very high. With availability of local knowledge and market, the condition is favourable for scale up. Non-availability of certified inputs like crablets is a challenge as there is no Government or Private hatchery in Odisha and supply chain for crablets from trusted



agencies is weak.

2.1 Initiatives of ECRICC Project on Crab Culture Interventions

As part of its fisheries sector interventions, the ECRICC Project introduced mud crab culture (*Scylla serrata*) in 2024 to enhance sustainable aquaculture practices and improve livelihoods. This initiative targeted 18 farmers across four districts—Puri, Kendrapada, Ganjam, and Balasore—utilizing a combined water spread area of approximately 6 hectares. The project received comprehensive technical support from the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. To support this intervention, the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA), a unit under MPEDA based in Tamil Nadu, supplied 38,000 matchbox-sized crablets to the farmers. This marked a significant step in ensuring the availability of quality seed stock for the culture operations. Throughout the crab culture cycle, District Project Management Unit (DPMU) teams and fisheries experts from the ECRICC Project worked closely with the farmers, providing technical guidance and hands-on support to optimize production and address challenges. A detailed report on 18 existing crab farmers is placed as Annexure-1.

A key outcome of the initiative was the enrolment of all participating farmers under MPEDA, thereby linking them to export markets. This strategic move ensured that the farmers' produce meets international quality standards, paving the way for higher income opportunities through global market access. Through these efforts, the ECRICC Project has significantly contributed to the development of mud crab aquaculture, promoting sustainable practices and economic empowerment for small-scale fish farmers in the region.

2.2 Process followed for Crab Culture

Culture and fattening of Crab are two different operations though it appears to be the same. Culture is a grow-out operation that involves raising of young seed to marketable sizes of 500g or above over an extended culture period whereas fattening refers to the holding of growers or water crabs (freshly moulted soft crabs) for short duration to acquire maximum biological attributes to realize better economic returns. The SoPs followed for Crab culture are narrated below at a glimpse.

2.3 Pre Implementation Stage

1.1	• Identified suitable location for crab culture, considering factors like water quality, salinity and accessibility in coordination with the FNGO Team and DPMU Team.
1.2	• Secured necessary permits and licenses from relevant authorities to establish a crab culture operation. Facilitated the farmers for getting the CAA license.
1.3	• Five days capsule training on Better Management Practices of Crab Culture was imparted by MPEDA, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar.
1.4	• Baseline surveys were conducted by FNGOs members, by employing structured questionnaires for data collection and Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) was conducted.
1.5	• A technical training and field demonstration was organized by SPMU, Bhubaneswar and MPEDA-RGCA team on better management practices & practical demonstration at pond site.
1.6	• Climate Champions were trained to facilitate all the processes and provide hand holding support to the farmers.

2.4 Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) followed for Crab Culture

Pond Preparation

The first step in crab culture is preparing the pond to create a suitable environment for crablets. The pond should be drained and sun-dried for about 10–15 days to eliminate harmful pathogens and unwanted aquatic species. If necessary, excess silt is removed to maintain the proper pond depth and prevent anaerobic conditions. The pond bottom is then leveled to ensure uniform water depth, which facilitates easy management and harvesting. To neutralize soil acidity, agricultural lime is applied at a rate of **500–1000 kg per hectare**. After these preparations, the pond is filled with **50–55 cm** of water, and fertilizers such as **Urea and Single Super Phosphate (SSP) in a 3:1 ratio** are applied to stimulate the growth of natural food sources. A healthy plankton bloom, indicated by a water transparency of **30–40 cm**, is developed to ensure the crabs have an adequate supply of natural feed.

Water Maintenance

Maintaining optimal water quality is critical for crab survival and growth. Regular water exchange is necessary to prevent the accumulation of metabolic waste, with **10% of the water being replaced every 15 days**. Key water parameters should be monitored and maintained within optimal ranges—**dissolved oxygen (DO) should be above 4 ppm, pH should be between 7.0 and 8.5, and salinity should be maintained between 20 and 32 ppt**. These conditions support healthy molting cycles and overall well-being of the crabs.

Organic Juice Application

To enhance the natural productivity of the pond, organic juice is periodically applied. This juice, prepared from fermented organic materials, helps in increasing the population of phytoplankton and zooplankton, which serve as natural food sources for the crabs. A well-balanced ecosystem with an adequate amount of natural food promotes better growth and survival rates.

Crablet Transport

The transportation of crablets from hatcheries to the pond should be carefully managed to minimize stress and mortality. Crablets are packed in **ventilated onion baskets** with **moist mangrove leaves** to retain humidity and prevent dehydration. During transit, **saline water is sprinkled** at regular intervals to maintain moisture levels. Transportation should be conducted under **cool conditions** to reduce heat stress, ensuring that the crablets reach the pond in healthy condition.

Stocking

Crablets should be stocked at a recommended density of **one crablet per 2 square meters (5000 per hectare)** to provide ample space for movement and molting. They are introduced into **deeper water zones** where temperature fluctuations are minimal, reducing the chances of stress. Before release, the crablets must be **gradually acclimatized** to the pond water conditions. This process involves slowly introducing pond water into their transport containers to allow them to adjust to the new environment, preventing shock and increasing survival rates.

Feeding

A well-structured feeding regime is essential for optimal growth. Crabs should be fed **twice daily**, in the morning and evening, using **chopped fish**. The feed size should be adjusted according to the size of the crabs to ensure easy consumption. Overfeeding must be avoided as uneaten feed can deteriorate water quality. **Check trays** are used to monitor feed consumption, helping to determine whether the quantity needs to be adjusted.

Check Tray and Catwalk Usage

To effectively manage feeding, **check trays** are placed in the pond to estimate feed consumption and prevent wastage. The catwalk, a prepared structure, is used to distribute feed in the **middle area** of the pond, ensuring uniform access and reducing competition among the crabs. This setup promotes even growth and minimizes aggressive behaviour among individuals.

Sampling

Regular sampling is conducted to monitor the growth and health of the crabs. The **Average Body Weight (ABW)** is calculated periodically to assess growth rates and survival percentages. Based on the sampling results, adjustments in feed quantity and size are made to optimize growth. By tracking the crabs' development, farmers can ensure that they are growing at a healthy rate and make necessary improvements in management practices.

Harvesting

The final stage of crab culture is harvesting, which must be done carefully to ensure high-quality crabs. The pond is **drained overnight**, allowing for an easier and more efficient collection of crabs. The next morning, crabs are captured using **nets**. Since crabs are highly susceptible to dehydration after being removed from water, they must be kept **moist** by

regularly **sprinkling them with saline water**. Proper post-harvest handling ensures that the crabs remain healthy and fresh for market sales.



2.5 Cost Norm for Mud Crab Culture under ECRICC Project

SI No.	Particulars	Amount (Rs.)	ECRICC Assistance	Farmer Contribution
A. Capital Cost				
1	Renovation of existing pond	40,000	0	40,000
2	Silpaulin Fencing (190Sq Mt @140 per m2.	26,600	26,600	0
3	Cat Walk-8 No.@Rs.2000 per pieces (4 to 8 Nos of Cat Walk depending upon size of the pond)	16,000	16,000	0
4	Hideouts like clay pots, Tiles, Broken pipe, etc. (1000-1500 pieces)	10,000	5,000	5,000
5	PumpSet (5 HP)	30,000	0	30,000
6	Sludge PumpSet (2HP)	35,000	35,000	0
7	Cost for construction of shed	15,000	0	15,000
Total Capital Cost		1,72,600	82,600	90,000
B. Operational Cost				
1	Pond preparation (Organic & Inorganic Fertiliser etc.)	20,000	0	20,000
2	Cost of crablet including transportation @ Rs 34/- for 5000 no. of crablet. (SPMU is responsible for making payment towards cost of matchbox size crablets to RGCA directly through DBT)	1,70,000	1,70,000	0

3	Transportation	10,000	10,000	0
4	Cost of trash fish (6000 kg @ Rs 40 /-	2,40,000	1,40,000	1,00,000
5	Cost of probiotic/Zeolite	12,000	9,000	3,000
6	Cost of Fuel for pump operation	30,000	0	30,000
7	Watch and ward @ Rs.9,000/- per month for 09 months	81,000	0	81,000
8	Labour and harvesting charges	15,000	0	15,000
9	Miscellaneous	10,000	0	10,000
Total operational cost		5,88,000	3,29,000	2,59,000
Grand Total (A+B)		7,60,600	4,11,600	3,49,000

NB: The component-wise capital and operational cost to be made depending upon area of the pond as per requirements and as per actual. Contribution of ECRICC project is limited to **Rs. 4,11,600/- only per Ha.** DPMU to release fund to the Crab Farmer directly in his/her bank account through DBT mode in different phases of crab culture cycle as per requirement and progress of the farmer. SMS-Fisheries to closely work with the farmers, provide timely technical and handholding support to farmer and facilitate procurement of standard inputs and materials by the farmer under the guidance of Nodal Officer/ DCO.

2.6 Crab Farmers' and Exporters' Meet

The State-Level Workshop on the theme **“Crab Farmer and Exporter Meet”** was successfully conducted on **12th December 2024** at the **SPRC, SIRD Campus, Bhubaneswar**. The workshop was organized by the **State Project Management Unit (SPMU)** under the **ECRICC Project, Odisha**. The primary objective of the workshop was to bring together key stakeholders, including government agencies, aquaculture experts, crab farmers, and exporters, to deliberate on the challenges, opportunities, and strategies to strengthen the crab farming sector in Odisha.

The event began with an inaugural session, where dignitaries highlighted the importance of crab farming as a sustainable livelihood option, particularly for coastal communities. Crab farming has emerged as a significant contributor to the local economy, offering immense potential for both domestic consumption and export markets. However, the sector faces challenges such as lack of technical knowledge, inadequate infrastructure, limited access to quality seeds, and weak linkages between farmers and exporters. During the technical sessions, aquaculture experts provided insights into improved farming techniques, seed availability, disease management, and climate-resilient practices. Exporters emphasized the growing global demand for crabs and shared strategies for meeting export standards and enhancing product quality. The workshop also facilitated open discussions where crab farmers voiced their concerns, including the need for financial support, market access, and capacity-building programs.

Key outcomes of the workshop included identifying measures to improve farmer-exporter linkages, recommendations for policy support, and the development of training modules to empower crab farmers with modern aquaculture practices. The workshop underscored the need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to ensure sustainable crab farming practices, strengthen the value chain, and boost the sector's contribution to both livelihoods and the economy. The workshop served as a critical platform for fostering partnerships, addressing challenges, and exploring pathways for enhancing the crab farming and export sector in Odisha.

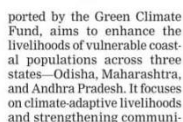


POST NEWS NETWORK

Inaugurating the event, Forest, Environment, and Climate Change department's Environment-cum-Special Secretary director and ECRICC state

Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) deputy director Archiman Lahiri underscored the rising global demand for high-quality mud crabs and Odisha's potential to become a leading exporter. Lahiri emphasised that the state could capitalise on international markets by adopting quality-oriented practices.

The ECRICC project, sup-



In Odisha, the project is being implemented in seven landscapes across four districts—Puri, Ganjam, Kendrapara, and Balasore—by the Forest Environment and

Discussions at the event included plans for scaling crab aquaculture practices, establishing a crab hatchery in Odisha by 2025, and identifying additional farmers for capacity-building programmes. Officials stressed improving access to international markets through quality checks and streamlined export documentation.

The meet marked a significant step in forging partnerships between government bodies, NGOs, and exporters, with a shared vision of driving transformative changes in Odisha's coastal communities. By addressing key challenges and leveraging opportunities, the initiative aims to create a sustainable and thriving aquaculture ecosystem in the state.

ODIYARA SANMANA

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PBD BUREAU

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Director, Environment-cum-Special Secretary and State Project Director ECRICC Project Prem Kumar Jha emphasized the pivotal role of mud crab aquaculture in strengthening Odisha's fisheries sector.

The ECRICC project, supported by the Green Climate Fund, aims to bolster the livelihoods of vulnerable coastal populations, particularly in Odisha and two other states, namely, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh.



The establishment of partnerships between government, NGOs, and exporters promises a positive transformative impact on Odisha's coastal communities.

3. Crab Hatchery in Odisha

The Crab Hatchery in Odisha is a significant initiative under the *Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities (ECRICC)* project. It is designed to establish a self-sufficient crab value chain in the state by producing high-quality crab seeds, thereby reducing dependency on wild seed collection. The hatchery aims to serve as a model for large-scale commercial crab farming in India while promoting climate-adaptive livelihoods for coastal communities. By integrating sustainable practices, it will help communities build resilience against environmental and economic challenges and contribute to sustainable seafood production.

The total available budget for the hatchery is ₹358.29 lakhs, funded by the *Green Climate Fund (GCF)*. For 2025, ₹214.98 lakhs, which is 60% of the total cost, has been allocated to ensure the smooth execution of the project. The primary objective of this initiative is to establish a sustainable crab hatchery for seed production, promote crab farming as an alternative livelihood for coastal communities, and strengthen market linkages for mud crab production. Additionally, the project will focus on developing business plans and providing training to farmers and stakeholders involved in crab farming.

Several crucial steps have already been taken to ensure the successful implementation of this initiative. A joint visit was conducted on 29th January 2025, involving officials from the *Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA)-MPEDA*, the *Directorate of Fisheries*, and the *ECRICC team* to assess the environmental and technical feasibility of the hatchery site. Following the assessment, *Paradeep* in *Jagatsinghpur district, Odisha*, was identified as the most suitable location due to its proximity to seawater, availability of brackish water, and existing fisheries infrastructure. Various factors, including water quality, temperature conditions, and tidal patterns, were analyzed to ensure optimal hatchery performance. The expected output of this hatchery is promising. As per RGCA estimates, the hatchery will be capable of producing *one million crab seeds annually*, catering to the needs of local and nearby state farmers.

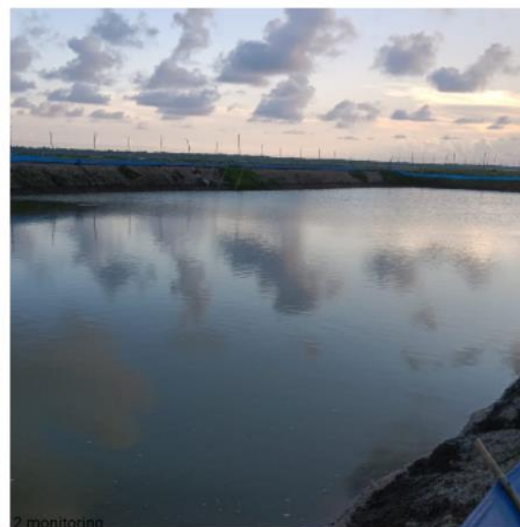


Annexure-1

Sl. No	Name of the CAA Holder	GPS Coordination		Water spread area(Ha)	Block	Crablets supplied by RGCA	Crablet stocked live (in Nos) after transportation from RGCA	Date of stocking	Mortality (in Nos) in the pond	Financial support by ECRICC till Dec'24(Amount in Rs.) in addition to cost of crablets
		LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE							
Puri										
1	Jambeswar Mohapatra	85.469112	19.689323	0.48	Krushnaprasad	2640	2160	08.06.2024	390	38760
2	Ullash Chandra Nayak	86.277494	19.944928	0.43	Astaranga	2420	1895	08.06.2024	385	32127
3	Ajaya Kumar Muduli	86.265152	19.986024	0.25	Astaranga	1430	1112	08.06.2024	188	18349
4	Sibaram Mohapatra	85.46988	19.690017	0.48	Krushnaprasad	2640	1848	20.06.2024	312	37282
5	Sambhu Mohapatra	85.466725	19.682262	0.48	Krushnaprasad	2035	1375	20.06.2024	143	37282
6	Nihar Ranjan Pati	86.297993	19.957325	0.28	Astaranga	1540	745	20.06.2024	105	20880
SUB TOTAL				2.4		12705	9135		1523	184680
KENDRAPADA										
7	Tapas Sardar	86.735939	20.349046	0.64	Mahakalpada	3300	2989	23.04.2024	129	74200
8	Narayan Chandra Haldar	86.710425	20.371853	1	Mahakalpada	5000	3880	30.04.2024	120	83000
9	Biren Mallik	86.706748	20.367005	0.6	Mahakalpada	3000	2421	30.04.2024	71	66400
	SUB-TOTAL			2.24		11300	9290		320	223600

Sl. No	Name of the CAA Holder	GPS Coordination		Water spread area(Ha)	Block	Crablets supplied by RGCA	Crablet stocked live (in Nos) after transportation from RGCA	Date of stocking	Mortality (in Nos) in the pond	Financial support by ECRICC till Dec'24(Amount in Rs.) in addition to cost of crablets	
		LONGITUDE	LATTITUDE								
GANJAM											
10	Bhagaban Behera	84.77757	19.1163	0.4	Chikiti	2200	1716	23.04.2024	534	96360	
11	Padmanabha Behera	84.778947	19.1167	0.33	Chikiti	2600	1942	23.04.2024	391	87847	
12	Bharat Behera	84.779031	19.1167	0.24	Chikiti	1800	1304	23.04.2024	248	75616	
13	Nirupama Behera	84.779031	19.115998	0.19	Chikiti	1100	920	30.04.2024	253	68821	
14	Jaga Behera	84.777615	19.115998	0.14	Chikiti	800	676	30.04.2024	152	62026	
	SUB-TOTAL			1.3		8500	6558		1578	390670	
	BALASORE										
15	Basant Kumar Mandal	87.359694	21.581203	0.428	Bhograi	2720	1944	30.04.2024	179	91252	
16	Bhubana Ch. Pramanik	87.395725	21.581616	0.268	Bhograi	1500	1347	30.04.2024	214	64662	
17	Yagneswar Sahoo	87.365581	21.57757	0.6	Bhograi	3200	2371	08.06.2024	542	117657	
18	Subrat Behera	87.359197	21.578207	0.26	Bhograi	1400	1230	08.06.2024	163	72887	
	Sub-total			1.556		8820	6892		1098	346458	





Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities

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