



National Engineering Research and Development Centre of Sri Lanka



VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 01

LIBRARY

& Jan- Feb | 2021

INFORMATION DIVISION

NERDC NEWS

NARA

Newsletter of National Engineering Research and Development Centre of Sri Lanka

NERDC Collaborates with NARA to uplift the standards of Sri Lankan Fisheries Industry: Interesting improvements in dried fish & Maldive fish processing

According to the statistics, fish and fish based products contribute 38% of total protein intake among the Sri Lankan population. Fresh fish, salted dried fish and maldive fish are considered as high value and tasty side dishes in the food tables of South Asian countries, including Sri Lanka. Although the geographical location of the country situated, fish & fish based products should be the most common and easily found source of proteins at affordable cost, due to the issues in supplying, processing & other aspects, these products are sold at high prices in the open market.

According to NARA (National Aquatic Resource Research and Development Agency), the major problems associated with Sri Lankan dried fish and Maldive fish industry are use of low quality raw fish and very short shelf life due to improper drying and excessive use of salt. Although fish is an extremely perishable commodity and quality deterioration can start from the time of death of the fish, the processing techniques they use are very primitive in terms of food safety. They use the long traditional process of making dried fish on ground or raised stages/racks open to direct sunlight. However, this is not possible in adverse weather conditions as well as not complies with food safety measures. Conventional Open sun drying method causes many issues such as pest attacks, dust and soil contamination, microbial contamination & possibility of mixing unwanted chemicals.



National Engineering Research and Development Centre (NERDC) supports NARA in the national task of improving the processes of drying of dry fish and Maldive fish with other stakeholder support as well. In this project, the task of NERDC is to design a biomass fuelled dryer for Maldive fish processing and a solar dryer for dried fish production. After developing the technologies, conducting field trials, demonstrations for the fisheries community and popularization of these new technologies in Sri Lanka will be done by NARA. The aim of this project is to improve the processing techniques of Maldive fish and dried fish so that better food quality is achieved.