



SDG 14. Life Below water

14.5. MAINTAINING LOCAL ECOSYSTEM

14.5.3. PROGRAMMES TOWARDS GOOD AQUATIC STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES

What we offer

We are experts in translating microbial ecology to develop technologies for protecting aquaculture ponds from waste accumulation, unwanted growth of macroalgae and disease outbreaks.

MSortia LLP

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M/s MSortia LLP, Incubated at RISE (RUSA Innovation and Start up Ecosystem), CUSATECH Foundation, CUSAT, Cochin- 682022

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MSORTIA LLP

A consortium of experts in translational ecology who can support to weave biotechnology with aquaculture for a successful crop

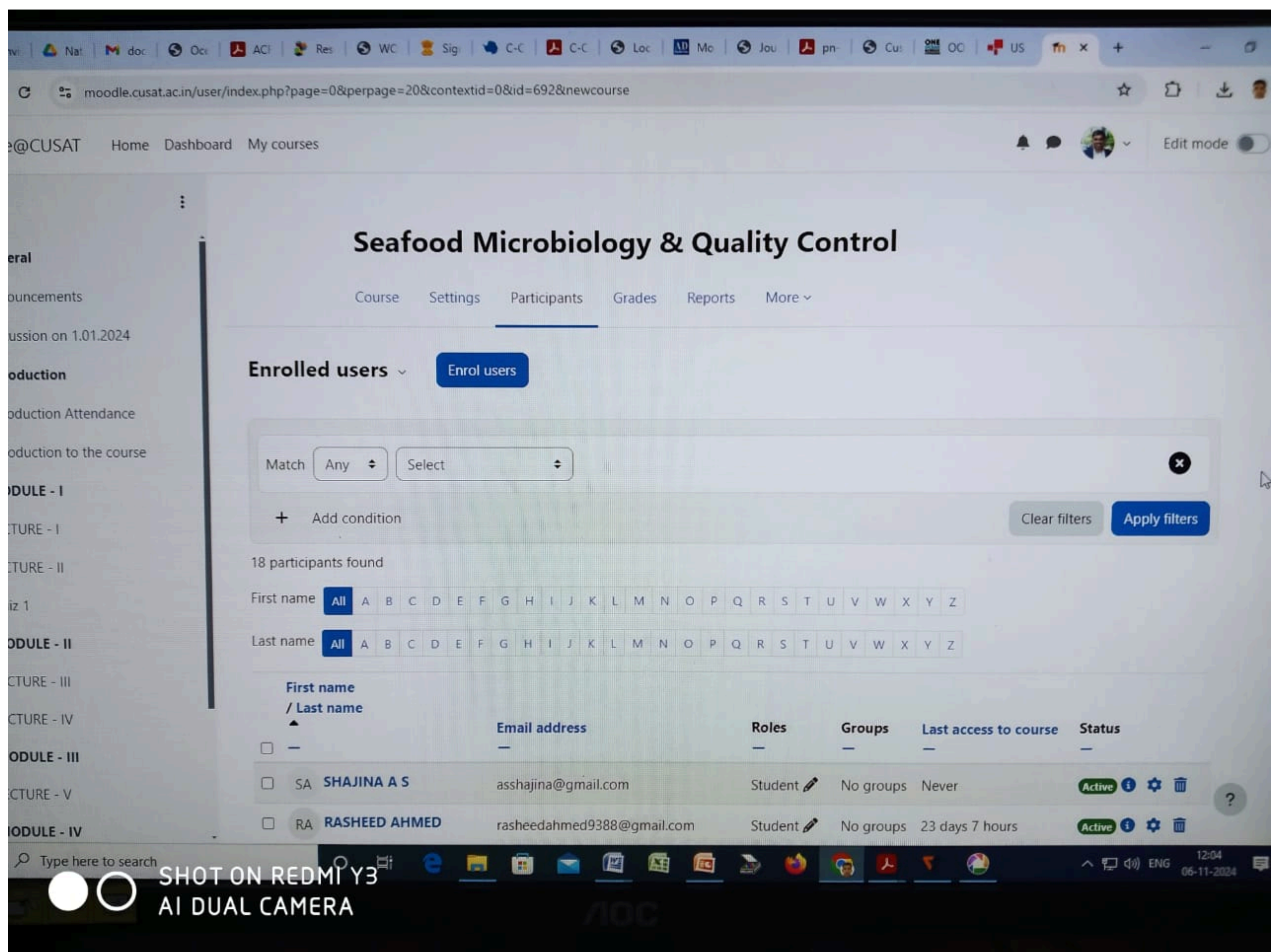
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14.5.3. PROGRAMMES TOWARDS GOOD AQUATIC STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES

1. MOOC ON SEAFOOD MICROBIOLOGY AND QUALITY CONTROL

MOOC course was developed by Senior Professor and Director, School of Marine Sciences, Dr. Mohamed Hatha A., CUSAT on the seafood industry as Head of Quality Assurance Division of the Leading Seafood Processor and Exporter in India. This is a tailor made course for those who wish to take up a career in the seafood industry or in the food industry in general. Various aspects related to seafood quality such as personal hygiene, process controls, contamination routes, hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) etc. are given in various modules. Role of regulatory bodies such as USFDA, BIS, EIA and MPEDA are also given in detail.



The screenshot displays the Moodle LMS interface for the 'Seafood Microbiology & Quality Control' course. The page title is 'Seafood Microbiology & Quality Control'. The navigation menu includes 'Course', 'Settings', 'Participants', 'Grades', 'Reports', and 'More'. The 'Participants' tab is active, showing 'Enrolled users' with an 'Enrol users' button. Below this, there are search filters for 'Match' (Any) and 'Select'. A table lists 18 participants found, with the following data:

First name / Last name	Email address	Roles	Groups	Last access to course	Status
SA SHAJINA A S	asshajina@gmail.com	Student	No groups	Never	Active
RA RASHEED AHMED	rasheedahmed9388@gmail.com	Student	No groups	23 days 7 hours	Active

Fig. 14.5.7. Window page of the MOOC developed by CUSAT on Seafood Microbiology and Quality Control

2. MAINTAIN ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR BIODIVERSITY

A study was conducted which describes the bioerosion traces of the bioeroding sponge *Cliona aff. celata* in the dead shell of the gastropod *Tibia curta*. Bioeroding sponges are the most well-known endolithic bioeroders in the marine ecosystem and they play a significant role in maintaining carbonate budget in ocean-benthic ecosystem. Bioeroding sponge abundance and their bioerosion capability have increased in relation to ocean acidification. In the Indian Ocean, bioerosion ecology has received relatively little attention and so this study contributes in understanding the bioerosion patterns from tropical Arabian Sea. The results and findings are published in the journal “Marine Biodiversity”.

3. MSORTIA LLP – A FACULTY STARTUP INITIATIVE AT CUSAT

Aquaculture is an emerging sector in India and is supported under the blue economy package. Although there are different initiatives to supply hatchery-reared animals, pelleted feed, and feed additives to the farmers, limited biotechnological interventions are available to control waste accumulation and disease incidence linked to that in commercial aquaculture farms. Accumulation of organic load leads to a series of problems in commercial aquaculture farms extending from hypoxia to high concentrations of toxic compounds like ammonium and H₂S and proliferation of opportunistic pathogens. Application of non-pathogenic bacteria which can consume the excess organic load, i.e. bioremediation, is a propitious strategy for the healthy maintenance of the crop. The basis of the innovative technology presented here is that the microbiome of any system has a considerable influence on its health. A microbial consortium, composed of non-pathogenic bacteria with high degradative potentials, has been designed for application in aquaculture ponds in India.

Technology Transfer to MSortia LLP

The technology was developed at CSIR- National Institute of Oceanography and the Technology (ToT) was transferred to MSortia LLP during One week, One theme (CSIR-OWOT 2024) curtain raiser event held on 24th June 2024 in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon’ble Minister (S&T) and Vice President, CSIR. The technology includes a microbial consortium advancing responsible aquaculture practices.

Product Launch and Commercialization

The product produced by MSortia LLP was launched by Dr. Kalai Selvi CSIR-Director General (DG) at National level during the 83rd CSIR- Foundation Day celebrated at NASC Complex, PUSA, New Delhi in the presence of CSIR Joint Secretary, CSIR-NIO Director and Senior Scientists from CSIR-NIO.

MSortia LLP, with its vision of advancing responsible aquaculture practices, will now commercialize and distribute this technology. The company is committed to continuous research and development of microbial solutions for environmental waste management, disease control, and growth enhancement in aquaculture and brackish water. MSortia LLP is dedicated to sustainable aquaculture supporting the blue economy and Sustainable Development Goal 14 for marine conservation.



Fig. 14.5.8. Brochure of MSortia LLP – A Faculty Startup Initiative at CUSAT



Fig. 14.5.9. Details of the product developed by MSortia LLP – A Faculty Startup Initiative at CUSAT

4.PROJECT DROP: TACKLING OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION

The DROP project addresses the pressing issue of plastic pollution along Kerala’s coastline. Plastic waste in the ocean poses a growing threat to marine life, human health, and local economies. With Dr. Hareesh’s (Associate Professor of Business Management at the School of Industrial Fisheries, Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) strategic input, Plan@earth develops community-based programs to recover plastic waste and create sustainable recycling solutions. His focus on data-driven research and community engagement supports a long-term circular economy for coastal waste management.



Fig. 14.5.10. Newspaper Report on Project DROP: Tackling Ocean Plastic Pollution

5. VEMBAND’S MACRO FIGHT: COMBATTING INVASIVE WATER WEEDS

The Vemband’s Macro Fight project uniquely targets the removal of invasive macrophytes, or water weeds, from the ecologically critical Vembanad Lake. These invasive species degrade water quality, harm local aquatic ecosystems, and disrupt livelihoods. Dr. Hareesh N. Ramanathan’s, (Associate Professor of Business Management at the School of Industrial Fisheries, Cochin University of Science and Technology), consultancy focuses on sustainable removal techniques and repurposing the extracted biomass for productive uses, such as compost or bioenergy. The community-centric approach also engages local stakeholders, including fishers and farmers, in protecting and restoring the lake.

6. ICSSR RESEARCH: EVALUATING SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN'S IMPACT ON PLASTIC POLLUTION AND WEED CONTROL

Dr. Hareesh N. Ramanathan's, (Associate Professor of Business Management at the School of Industrial Fisheries, Cochin University of Science and Technology), is involved in a research project funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), which assesses the effectiveness of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan schemes in curbing plastic pollution in Kerala's backwaters. This study examines how Swachh Bharat initiatives influence community behaviour and plastic waste reduction and considers the feasibility of adapting these schemes to address the invasion of water weeds in the same region. By investigating the broader applications of these schemes, the project aims to create a framework for integrated pollution and weed control efforts that support Kerala's environmental and public health goals.



Fig. 14.5.11. Newspaper Report on ICSSR projects awarded to the faculty members of CUSAT