

## **Report on Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water**

The International Conference on “Advancement and Understanding Life Below the Surface through Aquatic Exploration” organized by Department of Biotechnology, College of Science and Humanities & College of Engineering and Technology, held at SRM Institute of Science and Technology on 1<sup>st</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> November, brought together a diverse and enthusiastic group of experts, scientists, researchers, policy makers, and advocates who share a common passion for the World's Water Resources. The conference was organized in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, and it aimed to promote the advancement of knowledge, awareness, and collaboration to address the challenges facing our oceans.

### **Scientific Presentations:**

With the participation of more than 250 Students, Researchers and Scientists from various departments and 63 candidates have presented their latest findings and discoveries on the SDG 14 concept in this Conference. These presentations shed light on innovative technologies, scientific breakthroughs, and conservation strategies that can help us better understand and protect life below the surface. Their abstracts covered diverse topics such as marine biodiversity, pollution monitoring, sustainable fisheries, and climate change impacts on ocean as well as freshwater ecosystems. The presentations demonstrated the youth's enthusiasm and commitment to addressing the challenges faced by our oceans.

### **Keynote Addresses:**

Dr. T.T. Ajith Kumar, Principal Scientist & Head, Centre for Peninsular Aquatic Genetic Resource, NBFGR, Kochi has shared his insights on innovative approaches to marine conservation, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration. Dr. Antony Johnson, Scientist F & Head, Department of Habitat Ecology, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun has enlightened the audience on habitat conservation strategies and the role of technology in monitoring freshwater habitats. Dr. Oliana Carnaveli, Department of Marine Sciences, Universita Politecnica, Italy has shared insights on development, monitoring, evaluation and management of fish qualities in captivated condition. They highlighted the critical importance

of preserving our oceans, stressed the urgency of action, and set the tone for the discussions to follow.

### **Panel Discussions:**

The heart of the conference was a series of insightful panel discussions and knowledge exchange among attendees, featuring Dr. T.T. Ajith Kumar, Dr. Antony Johnson, and Dr. Oliana Carnaveli. These discussions covered a wide range of topics, including ocean pollution, overfishing, habitat degradation, and the impacts of climate change. These interactions were instrumental in encouraging interdisciplinary approaches to ocean sustainability.

### **Policy and Advocacy:**

Based on the discussions and presentations, the conference generated valuable policy recommendations. These suggestions encompassed areas such as implementing stricter regulations on marine pollution, promoting sustainable fisheries management, and investing in research and technology to monitor and conserve marine and freshwater habitats. These recommendations will be compiled into a comprehensive report and shared with relevant stakeholders and policymakers.

The SDG-14 Conference served as a dynamic platform for knowledge dissemination, collaboration, and policy development in the realm of marine exploration and conservation. The event highlighted the significance of youth involvement, scientific innovation, and international cooperation in achieving the goals outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 14. The insights shared and connections made during the conference will undoubtedly contribute to advancing our collective efforts towards a more sustainable future for our oceans.