

ICAR-NBAIR joins hands with international experts in managing parthenium menace in India

ICAR-NBAIR organised a virtual project pre-proposal meeting on 12.5.2021 from 17.00- 18.15 hrs (IST) for parthenium management in India with international experts. The purpose of the meeting was to establish a strong international collaboration to work on a project mode among the countries like Australia, South Africa and the USA, who are doing exceptionally well in the eradication of parthenium in their countries. And also, to help Australia to overcome the *Zizyphus mauritiana* menace by the supply of host-specific insect agents from India.

The virtual meeting was attended by three International scientists viz. 1. Dr. R. Muniappan, IPM Innovation Lab, Virginia Tech, USA, 2. Dr. K. Dhileepan, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Brisbane, Australia and 3. Ms. Lorraine W. Strathie, Agricultural Research Council- Plant protection institute, Hilton, South Africa. Director with three scientists from ICAR-NBAIR and one scientist from ICAR-DWR, Jabalpur have attended the virtual meeting.

Dr. N. Bakthavatsalam, Director, ICAR-NBAIR in his opening remarks emphasised the importance of the international collaboration especially in line with the bureau mandate to work on the import of insect germplasm for management of obnoxious parthenium weed in India. He also stressed on having collaborative projects with the international countries will ease in import of insect germplasm and other information sharing from time to time.

Based on the agenda circulated to the scientists, the deliberations on the import of additional weed killers for Parthenium, research collaboration for the management of *Zizyphus mauritiana*, and establishment of forum for the exchange of information on weed killers were made.

Based on the outcome of the meeting, ICAR-NBAIR shall be proposing a concept note on biological control of parthenium in India with the international institutes and national institute (ICAR-DWR) as partners to seek the mandatory permission from ICAR for undertaking this flagship programme in the near future. The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Dr. A. N. Shylesha.

