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### **Sadhguru briefs Karnataka media on Cauvery Calling**

**8 August 2020, Bengaluru:** Highlighting the global and local appeal of Cauvery Calling, Sadhguru who launched the movement to revitalize river Cauvery last year, briefed Karnataka media on the progress of the project over the year.

Cauvery Calling is an economic solution for an ecological challenge. It promotes tree-based agriculture on private farmlands in the Cauvery basin and aims to enable over 50 lakh farmers to plant 242 crore high-value trees on their farms for economic gain. This will not only put one-third of the river basin under shade and significantly improve soil health and groundwater tables, it will also substantially increase farmer income to anywhere between 3 to 8 times in 5 to 7 years. It is also expected to sequester up to 12 trillion liters of water in the Cauvery river basin and recharge all water bodies in the region including augmenting source flow of river Cauvery.

Sadhguru said that “exemplary support” from the state forest department, farmers, Cauvery Calling volunteers and the media had helped in ensuring the project stayed on track despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that within November this year, 1.1 crore saplings would be planted across the Cauvery basin in private farmlands in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu; 61 lakh saplings have been lifted by farmers in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the past 2 months.

Sadhguru spoke about Cauvery Calling’s global appeal because of its model rooted in farmer economic welfare with an ecological benefit. Stating that United Nations bodies such as United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had accredited Isha because of their conviction about the success of Cauvery Calling, Sadhguru said the project was an

opportunity to establish a global blueprint for river revitalization efforts in tropical regions. This could have a positive impact on nearly 4.7 billion people living in these regions.

Responding to a question on whether the Cauvery Calling team was monitoring the wellbeing of saplings, Sadhguru said that it is in the farmers' best interest to nurture them as the high-value saplings would not only enhance their income but could also earn an attractive survival incentive from the government. The Karnataka government under its Krushi Aranya Protsaha Yojane (KAPY) scheme pays Rs. 125 per surviving sapling over a 3-year period. The incentive is provided for saplings picked up from the Forest Department nurseries.

In response to a query on ease of harvesting and transporting timber, Sadhguru said that the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change had recently made an announcement of creating a portal as a part of the PMO's vision of Digital India that would allow the farmer seamless movement of timber, bamboo and other forest produce across borders. He also lauded the Karnataka state government for increasing the incentive for surviving saplings from Rs. 100 to Rs. 125.

Talking about the Cauvery Calling team's experience from the ground in this first year of plantation, Sadhguru said that there was greater demand for saplings in some districts and taluks compared to others. He also said that the team was racing against time to transport 10-12 lakh saplings from some districts to others within the next 2 weeks to ensure that the demand was supplied in a timely fashion. He requested the media make an appeal for sponsors for this effort.

Speaking about the impact of the pandemic on the project, Sadhguru said though the physical farmer outreach had been impacted to an extent, thanks to communication technology, lakhs of saplings could still be transplanted from nurseries to farms. He said in addition to What's App, a messenger service popular with farmers, the farmer helpline set up by the Cauvery Calling team had received thousands of calls on its helpline number 8000980009 in the past 2 months from farmers interested in taking up tree-based agriculture.

He thanked the media for their consistent support to the movement and said it was the responsibility of this generation to ensure that river Cauvery is restored to her original

glory in the next 12 years. He sought continued support and participation from the media towards the success of Cauvery Calling.

**If you would like to know more about this, please write to [mediarelations@ishafoundation.org](mailto:mediarelations@ishafoundation.org).**