

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

RAJYA SABHA

STARRED QUESTION No.*08
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND FEBRUARY, 2024

Measures for implementing sustainable fishing practices

***08. SHRI JOSE K. MANI:**

Will the Minister of **FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING** be pleased to state:

- (a) the measures implemented by Government to ensure sustainable fishing practices in the marine waters off the coast of the country, with a focus on the conservation of marine resources; and
- (b) the measures taken by Government to address the environmental impact on the marine ecosystem along the country's coasts and protect the livelihoods of fishermen given the concerns about marine pollution?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

(SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA)

(a) and (b): A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to the Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 08 regarding “Measures for implementing sustainable fishing practices” put in by Shri Jose K. Mani, Hon’ble Member of Parliament, for answer on 2nd February, 2024

Fisheries is a State subject and each Coastal State/Union Territory (UT) has its own Marine Fishing Regulation Act (MFRA) for regulation of fishing activities within the territorial waters upto 12 nautical miles from the sea shore line, whereas the area of Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) beyond 12 nautical miles falls under the jurisdiction of the Union Government. Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) supplements the efforts of States/UTs through various schemes and programme for development of fisheries and aquaculture. DoF, GoI is implementing a flagship scheme namely “Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)” with a vision of ecologically healthy, economically viable and socially inclusive fisheries sector that contributes towards economic prosperity and well-being of fishers in a sustainable and responsible manner. Under PMMSY, the activities such as sea ranching and installation of artificial reefs are supported for the first time by the Government at entire coastline of India for enhancing the fish stocks and supporting livelihood of fishers. The activities such as mariculture including seaweed cultivation are also promoted under PMMSY to reduce the fishing pressure in nearshore waters and enhancing marine production. Advisories are issued to coastal States/UTs from time to time for preventing juvenile fishing and promoting sustainable fishing practices. Besides, following measures are *inter alia* implemented to ensure sustainable fisheries in the marine waters:

- (i) Implementation of 61 days uniform ban on fishing in the Indian EEZ annually,
- (ii) Ban on destructive fishing practices in the Indian EEZ viz. paired bottom trawling or bull trawling and use of artificial and LED lights in fishing,
- (iii) Declaration of marine protected areas (MPAs) and protection of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species,
- (iv) Installation of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in trawl nets, fishing gear and mesh-size regulations, minimum legal size (MLS) of fishes, spatial-temporal restrictions, zonation of fishing areas by the coastal States/UTs,

The ‘National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017’ (NPMF, 2017) has been notified to guide the coordination and management of marine fisheries in the country during 2018-2027. The Goal of the NPMF, 2017 is to ensure the health and ecological integrity of the marine living resources of India’s EEZ through sustainable harvests for the benefit of present and future generations of the nation. NPMF, 2017 *inter alia* emphasis on sustainable utilization of the fisheries wealth, maximising fleet-size, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in production processes, species-specific and area-specific management plans, spatial and temporal measures, use of Information Technology (IT) and space technology for improving the capacities of the fishing community, strengthening the monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) system and training of fishermen.

The Governmental assistance of Rs.3000/beneficiary/year has been provided annually to an average of 5,97,708 socio-economically marginalized fish farmers and fishers families to meet their nutritional needs during the fishing ban/lean period implemented for sustainable fisheries.

As per latest scientific report published by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in 2022, about 91.1% of India’s Marine Fish Stocks are in healthy condition.

The fisheries and oceanic research institutes such as Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Fishery Survey of India (FSI), National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), etc. have been regularly conducting research for identification and mapping of pollution hotspots and sensitive coastal marine ecosystems along the Indian coast and their constant monitoring are undertaken to assess the environmental impact and to protect the fisher's livelihood. The findings and advisories are also shared with the respective State Governments for needful action, as the coastal waters are under their jurisdiction.

In addition to the '*Swachh Bharat Abhiyan*' (Clean India Mission), a seventy-five-day-long Inter-ministerial campaign "*Swachh Sagar Surakshit Sagar/Clean Coast Safe Sea*" culminated on 17 September 2022 (International Coastal Cleanup Day), which was coordinated by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) wherein coastal clean-up drive was carried out at more than 75 beaches across the country with more than 75 volunteers for every kilometre of the coastline. Seventeen Ministries/Departments including Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying have participated in this massive coastal cleanup drive.

The activities approved (with project cost) under PMMSY (during 2020-23) towards promoting sustainable fisheries, protecting the livelihoods of fishermen and minimizing the post-harvest losses *inter alia* include 463 deep-sea fishing vessels (Rs.55560 Lakhs); 1172 up-gradation of existing fishing vessels (Rs. 16874.63 Lakhs); 2255 Bio-toilets in mechanized fishing vessels (Rs.7590 Lakhs); 4640 units of boats (replacement) and nets for traditional fishermen (Rs.21833 Lakhs); 1518 nos. of sea-cage for fish culture (Rs.7590 Lakhs); 1108 Bivalve cultivation units (Rs.221.20 Lakhs); 344 nos. of ice plant/cold storages (Rs.30592.00 Lakhs); 9500 units of fish transportation facilities (Rs.34404.00 Lakhs); 112425 rafts and monoline/tube-net for seaweed culture (Rs.6039.33 Lakhs); 2494 nos. of Sagar Mitras, 732 Artificial Reef units (Rs.22780.00 Lakhs), etc.

The DoF, GoI through its institutes conducts awareness programmes for the local fishers and residents to enhance the awareness regarding impact of marine pollution to livelihood and human health. The fishers are also being sensitized through State Fisheries Departments and *Sagar Mitras* to adopt sustainable fishing practices and to reduce micro-plastic litter generated from fishing equipment. Beyond the domestic initiatives, Government of India through DoF, GoI is collaborating in a global initiative with IMO (International Maritime Organization)- FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) to prevent and reduce marine litter in the region.
