

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1433
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9TH DECEMBER, 2025

Impact of Deep Sea Fishing Vessels on Traditional Fishermen

1433. Shri Hibi Eden:

Will the Minister of **Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the recent permission granted by the Ministry of External Affairs allowing vessels to fish in deep sea and coastal waters has caused serious concern among traditional fishermen in Kerala, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure that only genuine fishermen cooperatives and not large private companies or individuals, benefit from the permission granted for fishing activities in these waters and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the Government will review or withdraw the said permission in view of the widespread apprehension that it will lead to monopolisation of coastal fishing and adversely affect the livelihood of traditional fishermen, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING
(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH ALIAS LALAN SINGH)**

(a) to (c): The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, on 04th November, 2025, has notified the *Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Rules, 2025* under the *Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act, 1976*. These rules are applicable to the EEZ area beyond the territorial waters. This landmark initiative aims to empower traditional and small-scale fishermen, Fisheries Cooperative Societies, and Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs) to expand their fishing operations, harness untapped fishery resources in the deep-sea areas, and access new income streams through processing and exports, thereby enhancing livelihoods.

The Rules are framed after extensive stakeholder consultations. The Department of Fisheries, Government of India, has conducted a series of meetings from February to September 2025 with various stakeholders, including the relevant Central Government Ministries/Departments, coastal security agencies, coastal States/UTs, research institutes, fishermen associations, cooperatives, etc. Besides, draft Rules was also placed in the public domain for a period of one month, inviting suggestions and comments from the general public and stakeholders. The period of public consultation was even extended by another 15 days, as requested by some States/UTs and other stakeholders. The Draft Rules were subsequently updated based on the relevant inputs received through stakeholder consultations. Further, the Fishery Survey of India and the National Fisheries Development Board, along with the Department of Fisheries of the concerned coastal States/UTs, are sensitizing fishers about the provisions of the EEZ Rules to dispel any apprehensions or misinformation.

The Department of Fisheries (DoF, GoI), by adopting the “whole of Government approach”, is collaborating with the Ministry of Cooperation through a Joint Working Group (JWG), to promote small-scale fishermen, fishers’ cooperatives, and Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs) in the areas of deep-sea fishing, post-harvest handling, processing, and exports. The Ministry of Cooperation supports this initiative by strengthening cooperative institutions and facilitating access to cooperative credit through the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). As an example, in Maharashtra, 14 deep-sea fishing vessels (DSFVs) have been supported by the NCDC, with a total project cost of ₹20.30 crore, including NCDC loan assistance of ₹11.55 crore, PMMSY assistance of ₹6.72 crore, and society contribution of ₹2.03 crore. Adopting this model, two societies of fishermen of Mumbai city have recently received 02 DSFVs under PMMSY on 27.10.2025. This initiative exemplifies cooperative-led development in the fisheries sector, empowering our fishermen to venture into deeper waters and harness untapped resources in a sustainable, economically rewarding manner. The mechanism further strengthens Government efforts to provide credit support, modern technology, training, and insurance to enable small-scale fishermen and their cooperatives to acquire and operate modern DSFVs effectively.
