

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 387
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2nd DECEMBER, 2025

Sustainable Fishing in Exclusive Economic Zone

†387. Shri Dileshwar Kamait:

Shri Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri:

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

- (a) the key features and objectives of the rural notified for sustainable fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to empower small-scale fishermen, cooperatives and Fishermen Producer Organizations for deep-sea fishing and export oriented activities;
- (c) the measures being taken by the Government to ensure transparency, security, and traceability through the Realcraft digital platform and the manner in which it has been integrated with other national systems; and
- (d) the contribution expected through these steps with regard to sustainable fishing, biodiversity conservation and the development of India's Blue Economy?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH ALIAS LALAN SINGH)

(a): The Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs has notified the *Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone Rules, 2025* which aims to empower traditional and small-scale fishermen, Fisheries Cooperative Societies, and Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs) to expand their operations to harness the untapped resources of deep-sea, access new income streams with processing and exports, thereby enhancing and strengthening their livelihoods.

(b): The Department of Fisheries, Government of India is implementing a flagship scheme *Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana* (PMMSY) which aims to enhance the overall growth of the fisheries sector and wellbeing of the fishers and fish farmers. One of the key objectives of PMMSY is to empower the traditional and small-scale fishers in deep-sea fishing. Accordingly, support is provided under the PMMSY to traditional fishers for acquisition of deep-sea fishing vessels as well as upgradation of existing fishing vessels for export competency. Under the schemes of Blue Revolution, PMMSY and Fisheries & Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), sanctions have been granted towards acquisition of 1243 deep-sea fishing vessels by traditional fishers and for conversion or upgradation of 1330 existing fishing vessels for export competency.

Adopting the “whole of government approach”, the Department of Fisheries, GoI in collaboration with the Ministry of Cooperation through a Joint Working Group (JWG) is promoting the participation of small-scale fishermen, cooperatives and fisher societies in deep-sea fishing, value-chain development, processing and exports. The Ministry of Cooperation supports this initiative by strengthening cooperative institutions and facilitating access to cooperative credit through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). In Maharashtra, 14 deep-sea fishing vessels have been supported 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. Recently, two societies of fishermen of Mumbai city have received 02 deep-sea fishing vessels under PMMSY on 27.10.2025.

(c): Registration and Licensing of Fishing Craft (ReALCRaft) is a web enabled online application portal established for issuing Vessel Registration Certificate (VRC) and fishing licence or access pass to fishing vessels under relevant laws or rules. ReALCRaft also promotes digital and data-driven citizen centric services and maintains transparency. VRC is issued by the coastal States/UTs under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. The ReALCRaft portal has been integrated with *Nabhmitra* Application and with coastal Security agencies for ensuring safety and security of fishermen out at sea.

(d): The *Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone Rules, 2025* are framed to promote sustainability of marine ecosystem with optimum utilization of untapped fishery resources. Emphasis is also given to promote ecosystem approach for sustainable harnessing of resources and implementation of the conservation and management measures, such as uniform ban on fishing during monsoon or fish breeding season, minimum legal size of fish for capture, bycatch reduction measures, best practices for reducing post-harvest losses on board the fishing vessel, conservation of fish stocks or rejuvenation measures including sea ranching, installation of artificial reefs, identification and protection of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), including spawning, breeding, and feeding grounds etc. The Rules also prohibit destructive fishing and juvenile fishing in the EEZ to protect the marine biodiversity of our seas.

These efforts are expected to significantly enhance the marine sector's contribution to India's seafood exports, while increasing the share of value-added seafood products in the global markets. Special emphasis is given on promoting exports of high-value seafood products through certification, traceability and sustainability. These initiative are likely to play a pivotal role in enhancing the seafood export from the country.
