

---

# FISHERIES REGULATIONS IN INDIA – STATE LEVEL MANAGEMENT

---

Antony Mercy. F, LLM (Maritime Law), (2023-2025), Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law  
University, Chennai

*“A healthy and vibrant marine fisheries sector that meets the needs of the  
present and future generations”<sup>1</sup>*

## 1. ABSTRACT

Fish are a vital source of protein and micronutrients for billions of people globally. They contribute significantly to food security, especially in developing countries. Fishing regulations were created primarily to protect the fish population and prevent it from becoming extinct. While fishing is a fascinating hobby, following the rules is a duty that comes with. This paper analyses why fish plays pivotal role in ecosystem of the marine environment. This paper also examines the International agreements which are incorporated by India and how they get implemented through its various legislations. Finally, this paper discusses about the upcoming regulations to achieve sustainable development and the challenges which are going to face in future. Fisheries regulations are not just a duty of the government, but rather a responsibility that all share in ensuring the sustainable management of our world's precious aquatic resources.

**Keywords:** Fisheries, Regulations, International, Agreements, India, Legislations, State, Management.

---

<sup>1</sup>. National Fisheries Policy 2020, (Feb 9, 2024), [https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-12/Policy\\_0.pdf](https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-12/Policy_0.pdf)

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Fishing is an activity that involves trying to catch fish. It is a popular recreational activity enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds. It provides opportunities for relaxation, exercise, and connecting with nature. There are many different ways to fish, including using a rod and reel, a net, or a spear. Fishing can be done in freshwater or saltwater. The Indian fisheries industry comprises a wide range of resources, extending from the Himalayas to the coastal plains and the Indian Ocean. The sector employs millions of people and provides a source of income for them. Fisheries biodiversity comprises a wide range of physical and biological components. Fisheries are a vital source of food, livelihood, nutrition, and money for India. At the primary level, the sector employs almost 16 million fishers and farmers, with around twice as many working further up the value chain. Fisheries are now a commercial industry. India is the third largest fish and aquaculture producing country, contributing 8% to the global fish production.<sup>2</sup> The fish production in 2021-22 is 16.24 Million Tonnes comprising of marine fish production of 4.12 Million Tonnes and 12.12 Million Tonnes from Aquaculture.<sup>3</sup> Fish is also a low cost and high-quality source of animal protein, making it an excellent choice for reducing hunger and malnutrition. Fishery management common approach include regulating net mesh size, limiting fish size, limiting fishing modes and time, licensing and leasing rights, declaring sanctuaries, and prohibiting fixed engines.

## 3. FISH IN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM

Fish are a key component of marine biotic communities. There is around 43 million people worldwide make their living directly from fishing or fish breeding. It represents a vast and diverse group of animals, with over 30,000 known species inhabiting a wide range of aquatic environments.<sup>4</sup> They serve as prey for larger animals, control populations of smaller organisms, and contribute to nutrient cycling. The presence and health of specific fish populations can indicate the overall health of their environment. By monitoring fish populations, gain valuable insights into water quality, pollution levels, and ecosystem

---

<sup>2</sup>. Indian Trade Portal, (Feb 9, 2024), <https://www.indiantradeportal.in/vs.jsp?lang=0&id=0,31,24100,29402#:~:text=India%20is%20among%20the%20top,year%20was%20US%24%207.76%20billion>

<sup>3</sup>. Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Diaring, (Feb 9, 2024), <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1910415#:~:text=India%20is%20the%20third%20largest,12.12%20Million%20Tonnes%20from%20Aquaculture>

<sup>4</sup>. The Importance of Marine Fish – World Ocean Review (Feb 9, 2024), [https://worldoceanreview.com/wp-content/downloads/wor2/WOR2\\_en\\_chapter\\_1.pdf](https://worldoceanreview.com/wp-content/downloads/wor2/WOR2_en_chapter_1.pdf)

change. This biodiversity is essential for healthy ecosystems and the overall well-being of the planet. The fishing industry employs millions of people worldwide, both directly in fishing and aquaculture, and indirectly in processing, transportation, and related sectors. Recreational fishing and fish watching generate significant revenue and support local economies in many regions. Fish are used in various medical research fields, including studies on genetics, development, and disease models. It holds symbolic meaning in various cultures, representing fertility, abundance, wisdom, and spiritual connection to water. However, it's important to acknowledge that fish populations face various threats, including overfishing, habitat destruction, and climate change. Protecting fish and their ecosystems is crucial for maintaining their vital roles and ensuring their continued benefits for generations to come.

#### **4. WHY FISHING REGULATIONS STRUCTURE NEEDED?**

According to a global study, this will lead to the complete extinction of 7,800 marine species by 2048.<sup>5</sup> The main cause is overfishing for human consumption, but losses are also linked to increased pollution and climate change. The oceans are being overfished on a large scale. Only 15 percent of the world's fisheries are in relatively good condition. The remaining 85% are completely or severely exploited, exhausted, or vulnerable to recovery from exploitation. There are no signs that the situation will improve. Earth's fishing fleet is two to three times larger than the oceans can accommodate. In addition to overfishing, ocean pollution also causes the death of marine life. A large part of this is plastic pollution, with up to 100 million tonnes of plastic in circulation. This plastic accumulates and enters ecosystems, killing fish, whales, turtles, and birds. Plastic waste will remain in the ocean for thousands of years if not removed. By 2050, there could be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans. In 1950, fish stocks were in good condition. However, over the next 100 years from 1950 to 2050, the world's fish species will decline dramatically and marine life could become extinct. It is possible to reverse catastrophe. But it requires action now.<sup>6</sup>

Fishing regulations are particularly crucial in India for several reasons:

- 1) India's marine and inland fisheries resources are under immense pressure due to

---

<sup>5</sup>. No more fish in the sea Available at- <https://www.theworldcounts.com/challenges/planet-earth/state-of-the-planet/no-more-fish-in-the-sea>

<sup>6</sup>. Ibid.

overfishing. Several commercially important species, like sardines, mackerel, and hilsa, are overexploited or depleted. Regulations are needed to curb overfishing, allowing fish stocks to recover and ensuring sustainable yields for future generations.

- 2) Destructive fishing practices like bottom trawling damage fragile ecosystems like coral reefs and sea grass meadows, impacting biodiversity and coastal livelihoods. Regulations can help protect these sensitive areas and promote responsible fishing practices.
- 3) Millions of people in India depend on fisheries for their income and food security. Unsustainable fishing practices threatens these livelihoods. Regulations can ensure equitable access to resources and promote long term sustainability for fishing communities.
- 4) India has diverse marine and freshwater ecosystems with endemic and endangered species like Gangetic dolphins and olive ridley turtles. Regulations are crucial to protect these species from bycatch and habitat degradation caused by unregulated fishing.
- 5) Fish is a vital source of protein and micronutrients for millions of Indians. Declining fish stocks due to overfishing can impact national food security. Regulations can help ensure sustainable fish supplies for the future.

## 5. International Agreements

International agreements play a pivotal role in regulating fisheries and ensuring the sustainable management of fish stocks around the world. These agreements establish frameworks for cooperation between countries on issues such as **Conservation and management of shared fish stocks, combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and promoting responsible fishing practices**. Some of the international agreements on fisheries:

- 1) **The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982<sup>7</sup>** is the most comprehensive international agreement on ocean governance, and it includes

---

<sup>7</sup>. **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**  
[https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention\\_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos\\_e.pdf](https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf)

provisions on the conservation and management of fish stocks. India has been a party to UNCLOS since 1995.

- 2) **The Agreement on the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks 1995**<sup>8</sup> specifically addresses the management of fish stocks that migrate across national boundaries or spend part of their lives in the high seas. India has been a party to this agreement since 2003.
- 3) **The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries 1995**<sup>9</sup> is a voluntary code of conduct that provides guidance to countries on how to manage their fisheries responsibly. India has been a supporter of the CCRF since its adoption in 1995.
- 4) **The Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing 2009**<sup>10</sup> requires countries to take measures to prevent vessels engaged in IUU fishing from using their ports. India has been a party to this agreement since 2016.
- 5) **The World Trade Organisation Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies**<sup>11</sup> adopted at the **12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial conference on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022**. This agreement prohibits certain harmful fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing and IUU fishing.

These agreements are implemented through regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), which are responsible for managing fish stocks in specific regions of the world.<sup>12</sup> There are over 50 RFMOs in operation, and they play a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of fisheries. India is also a member of several regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs). Some of the RFMOs that India is a member of include the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), and the Commission for the Conservation of

---

<sup>8</sup>. The 1995 United Nations Fish Stock Agreement

[https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention\\_agreements/Background%20paper%20on%20UNFSA.pdf](https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/Background%20paper%20on%20UNFSA.pdf)

<sup>9</sup>. **FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries**, <https://www.fao.org/3/v9878e/v9878e00.htm>

<sup>10</sup>. Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/rulesneg\\_e/fish\\_e/2009\\_psma.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/2009_psma.pdf)

<sup>11</sup>. **Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies**, [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/rulesneg\\_e/fish\\_e/fish\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_e.htm)

<sup>12</sup>. Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, [https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/regional-fisheries-management-organisations-rfmos\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/international-agreements/regional-fisheries-management-organisations-rfmos_en)

Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT).<sup>13</sup>

India's participation in these international agreements and organizations reflects its commitment to the sustainable management of fisheries resources. These agreements and organizations provide a framework for cooperation between countries on fisheries issues, which is essential for the long-term health of fish stocks and the fishing industry.

## 6. Management Mechanism

India's federalism, is often described as quasi-federal as it incorporates elements of both a federation and a union. The Constitution divides legislative, administrative, and executive powers between the Union government and state governments. Both levels have their own legislatures, with the Parliament at the Union level and Legislative Assemblies in each state. Each state has its own High Court, with the Supreme Court at the apex. During emergencies, the central government can suspend certain fundamental rights and assume control of state functions. There are ongoing debates about the balance of power between the Union and the states, with some arguing for greater autonomy for states in fisheries department also. Finding ways for the Union and states to work together effectively in areas of shared responsibility is crucial.

In India, fishing in **Territorial Waters (0-12 nautical miles)**<sup>14</sup> falls under the **State List** of the constitution, making State Governments responsible for managing fisheries, communities, and resources within it. In the **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (12-200 nautical miles)**<sup>15</sup> the **Central Government** takes charge of fisheries management in this zone, including deep-sea fishing and resource conservation.<sup>16</sup> **In the Constitution, Article 246** defines the division of legislative powers between the Centre **Entry 57 of List I (Union List)** covers "Fisheries beyond territorial waters." the States. **Entry 21 of List II (State List)** mentions "Fisheries". **Article 297** vests ownership of resources in territorial waters with the Union, but recognizes certain fishing rights of traditional communities.

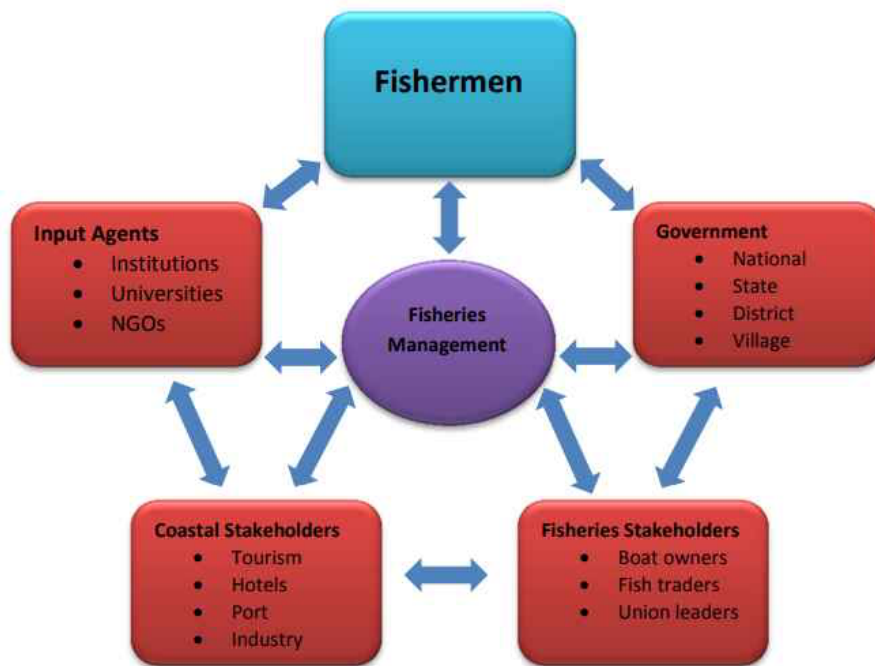
---

<sup>13</sup>. Regional Fishery Bodies in the Indian, Indo-Pacific Ocean, <https://www.fao.org/3/i1493e/i1493e02.pdf>

<sup>14</sup>. Territorial waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Act 1976.

<sup>15</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>. Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Indian Legal Framework, <https://legalthirst.com/fisheries-and-aquaculture-in-the-indian-legal-framework/>



Source: Partnership in Co-management<sup>17</sup>

The Department of Fisheries (DoF)<sup>18</sup> is a nodal agency of the Government of India, responsible for the development and management of the fisheries sector in the country. It functions under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFADH). It formulates and implementing policies and schemes for the development of inland, marine, and coastal fisheries. It provides financial assistance to states and other stakeholders for fisheries development projects and promotes research and development in fisheries science and technology. The DOF manages national fisheries institutes like the Fishery Survey of India (FSI), Central Institute of Fisheries Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET), and Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF) and collaborating with international organizations on fisheries-related issues. The DOF is headed by a Secretary (Honourable Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala), who is assisted by

<sup>17</sup>. Mohamed, K.S., P. Puthra, T.V. Sathianandan, M.V. Baiju, K.A. Sairabanu, K.M. Lethy, P. Sahadevan, Chandrasekharan Nair, M. Lailabeevi and P.S. Sivaprasad. 2014. Report of the committee to evaluate fish wealth and impact of trawl ban along Kerala coast. Department of Fisheries, Government of Kerala, at 122, [http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/11873/1/IMFC%20Code\\_Revised\\_2019.pdf](http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/11873/1/IMFC%20Code_Revised_2019.pdf)

<sup>18</sup>. Department of Fisheries, <https://dof.gov.in/>

Joint Secretaries and other officials. The Department has several divisions, each dealing with a specific aspect of fisheries management such as,

- Inland Fisheries Division
- Marine Fisheries Division
- Coastal Aquaculture Division
- Infrastructure and Marketing Division
- Statistics and Planning Division

Each State in India has its own Fisheries Department, responsible for implementing fisheries policies and schemes within the state's territorial waters. The Department of Fisheries from union works closely with the state Fisheries Departments to ensure coordinated development of the fisheries sector across the country. It is therefore essential that the Centre works in close collaboration with States to effectively manage and regulate fishery resources for sustainable and responsible use.

## **7. Legal Framework in Coastal and Inland Waters**

India has implemented several centre and state legislations to regulate and protect its fishing industry. Fisheries play a crucial role in the Indian economy and livelihood of millions. To manage these resources sustainably, both the central government and individual states have enacted various legislations.

### **7.1. CENTRAL LEGISLATIONS:**

The central government is responsible for all fishing operations that take place beyond this boundary, the deep sea or exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which extends up to 200 nautical miles.

#### **The Indian Fisheries Act 1897**

The Indian Fisheries Act 1897 is the primary act regulating fisheries in India. It empowers the central government to frame rules for the conservation and development of



fisheries in territorial waters and beyond. It regulates inland fisheries, encompassing rivers, lakes, ponds, and other bodies of water within India's territorial boundaries. Does not apply to marine fishing, which is governed by state-level Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRAs). It contains only seven sections. Under Section 5 and 6 the centre gave power to make rules for protection of fish by notifications.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act 1976<sup>20</sup>**

The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act 1976 defines the various maritime zones of India and establishes the country's sovereign rights and jurisdiction over them. It empowers the Central Government to regulate activities within these zones and make rules for their preservation and protection of fisheries. It defines four key maritime zones:

- **Territorial Water** (Section- 3) extend up to 12 nautical miles from the baseline (coastal or island). India exercises complete control over navigation, fishing, and other activities within this zone.
- **Contiguous Zone** (Section- 5) extends 24 nautical miles from the territorial waters' outer limit. India can enforce customs, immigration, and pollution control regulations in this zone.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** (Section- 6) extends 200 nautical miles from the baseline. India has sovereign rights over living and non-living resources within this zone, including fishing, exploration, and exploitation.
- **Continental Shelf** (Section- 7) is the seabed and subsoil beyond the territorial

---

<sup>19</sup>. The Indian Fisheries Act 1897, [https://fisheries.telangana.gov.in/open\\_record.php?ID=233](https://fisheries.telangana.gov.in/open_record.php?ID=233)

<sup>20</sup>. The Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act 1976 <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1484/2/A1976-80.pdf>

waters, extending to the natural prolongation of the land territory. India has exclusive rights to explore and exploit non-living resources in this zone.

### **The Maritime Zones of India (Regulation of Fishing by Foreign Vessels) Act 1981<sup>21</sup>**

The Maritime Zones of India (Regulation of Fishing by Foreign Vessels) Act 1981 regulate the activities of foreign vessels fishing within India's maritime zones, specifically the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and territorial waters. It protects and conserve fishery resources within these zones while allowing sustainable utilization. It Contains 26 sections. It issued license (Section- 4) for commercial fishing within the EEZ, subject to strict terms and conditions, including catch quotas and specific fishing zones. This act gives permit to be granted for scientific research, investigation, or experimental fishing with specific approvals (Section- 7). For violation of the Act attracts penalties including fines, confiscation of catch and gear, and even imprisonment (Section- 10 to Section- 17). Its main objective to prevent overfishing and destructive fishing practices by foreign vessels, contributing to the preservation of marine ecosystems.

### **The Marine Products Export Development Authority Act 1972<sup>22</sup>**

The Marine Products Export Development Authority Act 1972 establishes the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) to promote the export of marine products. It contains 34 sections. It establishes the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) under the control of the Central Government (Section- 4). It develops and promote the marine products export industry in a planned and integrated manner. It ensures quality control and hygiene standards in exported marine products (Section- 20). The main objective is to register and regulate exporters, processors, and vessels (Section- 11).

### **The Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act 2005<sup>23</sup>**

The Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act 2005 establishes the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) to regulate coastal aquaculture activities and ensure their sustainable development. It

---

<sup>21</sup>. The Maritime Zones of India (Regulation of Fishing by Foreign Vessels) Act 1981, <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1817/1/198142.pdf>

<sup>22</sup>. The Marine Products Export Development Authority Act 1972, <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1665/3/A1972-13.pdf>

<sup>23</sup>. The Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act 2005, <https://caa.gov.in/uploaded/doc/Act-English.pdf>

expands the definition of "coastal aquaculture" culturing, under controlled conditions in ponds, pens, enclosures or otherwise, in coastal areas, of shrimp, prawn, fish or any other aquatic life in saline or brackish water; but does not include fresh water aquaculture (Section-2) is to cover various practices like cage culture, seaweed farming, and ornamental fish culture. This act gave ultimate power to Coastal aquaculture authority (Section- 11) to prohibit aquaculture in ecologically sensitive areas, sets emission standards, and holds polluters accountable for environmental damage. The Authority under the act brings hatcheries and nucleus breeding centres under its purview. Overall, this act has the potential to positively impact fisheries in India by promoting sustainable aquaculture practices.

### **Coast Guard Act 1978<sup>24</sup>**

The Coast Guard works alongside the Department of Fisheries and other agencies to enforce fisheries regulations within India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and territorial waters. This includes preventing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which depletes fish stocks and harms the livelihoods of legitimate fishermen. The Act empowers the Coast Guard to apprehend vessels violating regulations, seize illegal catches, and perform necessary legal actions (Section-14). It mandates the Coast Guard to protect India's maritime resources, including fish stocks. This involves patrolling fishing zones, deterring poaching, and preventing destructive fishing practices that damage marine ecosystems. The Coast Guard actively conducts search and rescue operations for distressed fishing vessels, ensuring the safety of fishermen at sea. This quick response in emergencies reduces loss of life and property, contributing to the well-being of fishing communities. They gather valuable data on fishing activities and marine environment through its patrols and operations. This information is shared with fisheries authorities to inform and improve fisheries management practices, promoting sustainable use of resources. The Coast Guard Act does not directly regulate fishing activities itself. This primarily falls under the purview of the Department of Fisheries and other relevant legislation. The Coast Guard's role is to support and enforce fisheries regulations through its operations and activities.

### **The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972<sup>25</sup>**

---

<sup>24</sup>. Coast Guard Act 1978,  
<https://www.mod.gov.in/sites/default/files/Coast%20Guard%20Act%2C%201978.pdf>

<sup>25</sup>. The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972,

The Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 focus on protecting wildlife habitats indirectly benefits fish populations that rely on those ecosystems. Schedule I and II of the act certain fish species for protection, prohibiting hunting, trade, and possession without a license. This applies to fish in freshwater bodies like rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Examples include the Tor mahseer, Hilsa shad, and Ganges dolphin. Fishing regulations may be specified within wildlife sanctuaries and national parks established under the Act (Section- 26A). These regulations aim to protect fish populations and their habitats within these protected areas.

### **Environmental Protection Act 1986<sup>26</sup>**

Environmental Protection Act 1986 plays an indirect role in fisheries management by addressing water pollution, promoting protected areas, and encouraging public participation. Under Section- 3 of the act Central Government have power to take measures to protect and improve environment. Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification is issued under the Section- 25 of the act, it regulates activities in coastal areas, including restrictions on development that could harm ecosystems and fishing grounds. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on aquaculture projects or infrastructure development near fishing grounds, need EIA clearance under the Act, minimizing negative impacts on fisheries.

### **Biological Diversity Act 2002<sup>27</sup>**

Biological Diversity Act 2002 regulates access to fish species and genetic resources by requiring permits and approvals, especially for commercial purposes under chapter II (Regulation of access to biological resources). This helps prevent biopiracy and ensures fair sharing of benefits with local communities. Establishment of Biodiversity Management Committees under section- 8 mandates the formation of BMCs in areas rich in biodiversity, including coastal and marine ecosystems. These committees can develop and implement conservation plans for fish species and their habitats. The Biodiversity Heritage Sites under section- 37 allows for the designation of BHSs, including marine areas, to protect critical fish habitats and associated biodiversity.

---

<https://tribal.nic.in/downloads/FRA/Concerned%20Laws%20and%20Policies/Wildlife%20Protection%20Act,%201972.pdf>

<sup>26</sup>. Environmental Protection Act 1986

[https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/6196/1/the\\_environment\\_protection\\_act%2C1986.pdf](https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/6196/1/the_environment_protection_act%2C1986.pdf)

<sup>27</sup>. Biological Diversity Act 2002, [http://nbaindia.org/uploaded/act/BDACT\\_ENG.pdf](http://nbaindia.org/uploaded/act/BDACT_ENG.pdf)

## The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1960)<sup>28</sup>

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act holds to the welfare of fish indirectly through interpretations. Under Section- 2(a) of the act “animal” means any living creature other than a human being. It prevents the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals as mentioned under section-11 and section- 14. Here fish also included by interpreted.

### 7.2. STATE LEGISLATIONS

The central government also directed all coastal states to formulate similar acts to regulate mechanised fishing activities along their coastal waters. There are 10 maritime states/union territories in India, viz. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and Kerala along the west coast, bordering the Arabian Sea; and Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal along the east coast, bordering the Bay of Bengal. The two-island union territories Lakshadweep, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands are situated in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, respectively.<sup>29</sup>

Most maritime states have enacted Marine Fishing Regulation acts (MFRAs) to regulate fishing activities in territorial waters and also, they enact rules. These acts typically include provisions for

- Mesh size regulations to avoid catching juvenile fish.
- Demarcating fishing zones for different types of fishing vessels.
- Regulating the use of fishing gear and methods.
- Establishing closed seasons for specific species.
- Issuing fishing licenses and permits.
- Promoting sustainable fishing practices.
- Punitive action for the violation of Act/Rules

---

<sup>28</sup>. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1960), [https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/11237/1/the\\_prevention\\_of\\_cruelty\\_to\\_animals\\_act%2C\\_1960.pdf](https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/11237/1/the_prevention_of_cruelty_to_animals_act%2C_1960.pdf)

<sup>29</sup>. Fisheries Legislation in India, [http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/9871/1/Rajesh\\_8.pdf](http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/9871/1/Rajesh_8.pdf)

Important State legislations<sup>30</sup> are:

- Cochin Fisheries Act 1950 and Rules 1952
- Maharashtra Fisheries Act 1960 and Rules 1969
- The Indian Fisheries (Pondicherry Amendment) Act 18 of 1965
- Kerala Marine Fishing Regulation Act and Rules 1980
- Goa Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1980
- Goa Fishing Regulation (seventh amendment) Rules 2023
- Maharashtra Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1981 and Rules 1982
- Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1981 and Rules 1983
- Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1983 and Rules 2020
- Karnataka Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1986 and Rules 1987
- The Andhra Pradesh Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1994
- Lakshadweep Marine Fishing Regulation Act 2000
- Gujarat Fisheries Act, 2003 and Rules 2003
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 2003
- The Mysore Game and Fish Preservation Act 1901

Each coastal state in India has its own fisheries act, typically based on the model Inland Fisheries Act. These acts regulate fishing activities in inland waters within the state's jurisdiction. Inland Fisheries Acts of states in India which regulates fishing activities in inland waters such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs. These acts typically include provisions for

- Licensing of fishermen and fishing equipment.
- Regulation of fishing methods and gear.
- Conservation of fish species and their habitats.

---

<sup>30</sup>. Bare Acts, <http://www.bareactslive.com/>

- Stocking of water bodies with fingerlings.

Important legislations related to inland fisheries

- Karnataka Inland Fisheries (Conservation Development and Regulations) Act 1996
- West Bengal Inland Fisheries Regulations Act 1984 and Rules 1985
- Tamil Nadu Aquaculture Regulations Act 1995 and Rules 1995
- Andhra Pradesh State Aquaculture Development Authority Act 2020 and Rules 2020
- The United Provinces Fisheries Act 1948
- Mizoram Fisheries Act 2005
- Himachal Fisheries Act 1976
- Punjab Fisheries Act 1914
- Rajasthan Fisheries Act 1953
- Manipur Fisheries Act and Rules 1979
- Kerala Inland Fisheries and Aqua Culture Act 2010

In India, besides central and state legislations, several rules, regulations, and guidelines are also implemented to manage fisheries effectively. These regulations are constantly reviewed and updated based on scientific research and stakeholder feedback. Effective enforcement of these laws is crucial for ensuring sustainable fisheries management and protecting the livelihoods of fishers and coastal communities.

## **8. Institutions of Fisheries Department**

In India, this fishing sector provides livelihood, employment and entrepreneurship to fishers and fish farmers at the primary level and several lakhs along the value chain. The Central government institutions involved in fisheries in India:

- 1) Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying (MoFADH)** is the apex body responsible for formulating and implementing fisheries policies and development programs in India. Overseas various attached and subordinate offices, including research institutions, training centres and development agencies.

- 2) **Department of Fisheries (DoF)** is the nodal department within (MoFADH) for formulating and implementing fisheries policies and schemes. It is responsible for matters related to development of inland, marine, and coastal fisheries, as well as fishery institutes.
- 3) **The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)**<sup>31</sup> enhancing fish production and productivity in India through integrated fishery development.
- 4) **The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**<sup>32</sup> plays a vital role in the fisheries sector of India through its network of specialized research institutes and programs.
- 5) **Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI-ICAR)**<sup>33</sup> devoted its research attention towards the estimation of marine fisheries landings and effort, taxonomy of marine organisms and the bio-economic characteristics of the exploited stocks of finfish and shellfish.
- 6) **Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture (CIBA-ICAR)**<sup>34</sup> conduct research on all aspects of brackish water aquaculture, including breeding, nutrition, health management, and environmental protection and develop new technologies and practices for brackish water aquaculture.
- 7) **Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA-ICAR)**<sup>35</sup> makes research in Indian freshwater aquaculture globally competitive through eco-friendly and economically viable fish and shellfish production systems for livelihood and nutritional security.
- 8) **Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT-ICAR)**<sup>36</sup> conducts research on various aspects of fishing and fish processing, including resource assessment, fishing

---

<sup>31</sup>. The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), <https://nfdb.gov.in/>.

<sup>32</sup>. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), <https://icar.org.in/>

<sup>33</sup>. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), <https://www.cmfri.org.in/>

<sup>34</sup>. Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture (CIBA-ICAR) <https://ciba.icar.gov.in/>

<sup>35</sup>. Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA-ICAR), [https://iims.icar.gov.in/Institute\\_Details.aspx?Inst=XZcyp4Oqt8g=](https://iims.icar.gov.in/Institute_Details.aspx?Inst=XZcyp4Oqt8g=)

<sup>36</sup>. Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT-ICAR), <https://cift.res.in/>



gear and methods, fish processing, preservation, product development, marketing, and socio-economics.

- 9) **Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI-ICAR)**<sup>37</sup> research in inland fisheries resource assessment, conservation and management. It conducts workshop and training programme on fish proteomics.
- 10) **National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR-ICAR)**<sup>38</sup> is a research organization dedicated to the preservation and study of fish genetic resources in India. It works is on Collection, cataloguing and documentation of fish genetic resources using operational strategies of partnership and cutting-edge technologies.
- 11) **Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research (DCFR-ICAR)** 1987<sup>39</sup> is the only national institute in India solely dedicated to research on capture and culture of cold-water fish species, both exotic and indigenous.
- 12) **Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA)**<sup>40</sup> is a statutory body established by the Government of India under the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005. It is mandated to regulate coastal aquaculture activities in India and ensure their sustainable development.
- 13) **Central Institute of Fisheries Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET)** 1963<sup>41</sup>, was set up to aid research and development in the field of fisheries and maritime studies.
- 14) **Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)** 1972,<sup>42</sup> is a statutory body its primary function is to promote the export of marine products from India.
- 15) **Fishery Survey of India (FSI)** 1983<sup>43</sup>, undertakes research and development activities related to fishery resources of the EEZ of India and beyond, survey techniques and

---

<sup>37</sup>. Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI-ICAR), <http://www.cifri.res.in/>

<sup>38</sup>. National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR-ICAR), <https://www.nbfgres.in/>

<sup>39</sup>. Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research (DCFR-ICAR), <https://www.dcfres.in/>

<sup>40</sup>. Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA), <https://caa.gov.in/>

<sup>41</sup>. Central Institute of Fisheries Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET) 1963, <https://cifnet.gov.in/index.php/content/index/infrastructure-facilities-at-chennai>

<sup>42</sup>. Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) 1972, <https://mpeda.gov.in/>

<sup>43</sup>. Fishery Survey of India (FSI) 1983, <https://fsi.gov.in/LATEST-WB-SITE/fsi-main-pg-frm.htm>

provides scientific advice to the Government of India on matters related to the development and management of fisheries.

**16) Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF) 1968<sup>44</sup>**, assists in selecting suitable sites for fishery harbours, considering factors like coastal morphology, wave climate, tidal conditions, and proximity to fishing grounds. They conduct detailed surveys and investigations to assess the technical and economic feasibility of the project.

**17) National Institute of Fisheries Post Harvest Technology and Training (NIFPHTT) 1961<sup>45</sup>** is an autonomous body for developing and disseminating knowledge and technologies for the sustainable harvest, handling, processing, value addition, and marketing of fish and fishery products, thereby contributing to enhanced income and improved livelihood of fishers and fish farmers.

**18) National Federation of Fishers Cooperatives (FISHCOPFED) 1980<sup>46</sup>**, is a national level federation of fisheries cooperatives and the apex institution of the Indian Fisheries Cooperative Movement. Its primary function is to promote and develop the fishery cooperative movement in India, to educate, guide and assist fishers in their efforts to build up and expand the fishery cooperative sector and serve as an exponent of cooperative opinion in accordance with cooperative principles.

## 9. Policies and Schemes<sup>47</sup>

India has a vast coastline and abundant freshwater resources, making fisheries a vital sector for the country's economy and food security. The government of India has implemented various policies and schemes to promote the sustainable development of the fisheries sector and improve the livelihoods of fishers and fish farmers.

**1) New Deep-Sea Fishing Policy 1991<sup>48</sup>** In March 1991, the Indian government announced

---

<sup>44</sup>. Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF) 1968, <https://cicef.gov.in/>

<sup>45</sup>. National Institute of Fisheries Post Harvest Technology and Training (NIFPHTT) 1961, <https://www.nifphatt.gov.in/>

<sup>46</sup>. National Federation of Fishers Cooperatives (FISHCOPFED) 1980, . <http://www.fishcopfed.in/>

<sup>47</sup>. Government schemes to promote fish farming in India 2023, <https://tractorkarvan.com/blog/government-schemes-to-promote-fish-farming-in-india>

<sup>48</sup>. New Deep-Sea Fishing Policy 1991, [http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/9871/1/Rajesh\\_8.pdf](http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/9871/1/Rajesh_8.pdf)

New Deep-Sea Fishing Policy (NDSP) as part of the economic reforms programme. The policy involved three schemes (i) leasing out of foreign fishing vessels to operate in the Indian EEZ; (ii) engaging foreign fishing vessels for test fishing and (iii) forming joint ventures between foreign companies and Indian companies on 49:51 equity basis in deep sea fishing, processing and marketing.

2) **National Scheme of welfare of Fisher Man 1992**<sup>49</sup> is a centrally sponsored scheme that provides financial support to fishermen. They can use these for constructing houses and community halls for both recreation and work purposes. It aims to upgrade the standard of living of fisherman.

3) **Murari committee 1995**<sup>50</sup> is a review committee of the New deep-sea fishing policy. It gives 21 recommendations. Some of them are:

- No renewal, extension or new licenses be issued in future to joint venture / charter / lease / test fishing vessels.
- The present licenses be cancelled as per going through the legal procedures.
- Upgrade the skill of the fishing community to equip them with exploiting the deep sea resources.
- Stop pollutions
- Supply of fuel at subsidized rate.
- Fishing regulations in the entire EEZ.
- A separate ministry to deal with the entire fisheries.
- Monsoon trawl ban

---

<sup>49</sup>. National Scheme of welfare of Fisher Man 1992, <https://www.myscheme.gov.in/schemes/nswf>

<sup>50</sup>. Murari committee 1995,

<https://datais.info/loksabha/question/5dbaebfcaea50a13989a68766927bd69/MURARI+COMMITTEE++/>

- 4) **The Marine Fisheries Policy 2004**<sup>51</sup> replaced the New Deep-Sea Fishing Policy of 1991. It protects the interests and livelihoods of traditional and artisanal fishers through various measures like subsidies, exclusive fishing zones, and gear restrictions. It promotes sustainable fishing practices through measures like closed seasons, mesh size regulations, and marine protected areas.
- 5) **National Policy on Marine Fisheries 2017**<sup>52</sup> proposes establishing a Marine Fisheries Management Authority (MFMA) and Marine Fisheries Management Plans (MFMPs) to ensure sustainable utilization of resources. It is still under parliamentary consideration and hasn't been enacted yet.
- 6) **National Fisheries Policy 2020**<sup>53</sup> is the current policy governing fisheries in India and replacing the Marine Fisheries Policy 2004. It aims at furthering equity and equality, ensuring sustainability, mainstreaming gender and enhancing its role, fostering inclusive development, promoting self-reliance and entrepreneurship, building partnerships, maintaining intergenerational equity, following the principle of subsidiarity, and charting a road-map for the fisheries sector for the coming one decade.
- 7) **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) Scheme**<sup>54</sup> aims to bring about ecologically healthy, economically viable, and socially inclusive development of the fisheries sector in India. It is the scheme to bring about Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of fisheries sector in India at an estimated investment of Rs. 20050 crores for holistic development of fisheries sector including welfare of fishers. It is being implemented in all the States and Union Territories for a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25. PMMSY is designed to address critical gaps in the fisheries value chain from fish production, productivity and quality to technology, post-harvest infrastructure and marketing. It aims to modernize and strengthen the value chain, enhance traceability and establish a robust fisheries

---

<sup>51</sup>. The Marine Fisheries Policy 2004, <https://smallscalefishworkers.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/MARINE-FISHING-POLICY-2004.pdf>

<sup>52</sup>. National Policy on Marine Fisheries 2017, <https://dahd.nic.in/news/notification-national-policy-marine-fisheries-2017>

<sup>53</sup>. National Fisheries Policy 2020, [https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-12/Policy\\_0.pdf](https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-12/Policy_0.pdf)

<sup>54</sup>. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) Scheme, <https://pmmsy.dof.gov.in/>

management framework while simultaneously ensuring the socio-economic welfare of fishers and fish farmers.

**8) Centrally Sponsored Scheme on “Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture”<sup>55</sup>** For this scheme, the Ministry has approved the total assistance of Rs.135 Crores to cover all the inland fishery resources available in the country in the form of fresh water, brackish water, cold water, waterlogged areas, alkaline soils for aquaculture and other fishery resources such as reservoirs, ponds, tanks, rivers etc. The expenses of the developmental activities are shared between the Central and the State Government with the ratio of 75:25 and the scheme covers the following components:

- Development of Freshwater Aquaculture
- Development of Brackish water Aquaculture
- Development of Waterlogged Areas
- Coldwater Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Productive Utilisation of Inland Saline Soil Aquaculture
- Integrated Development of Inland Capture Resources (reservoirs/rivers, etc.)

**9) Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)<sup>56</sup>** envisages creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities both in marine and inland fisheries sectors and augments the fish production to achieve the target of 15 million tonnes by 2020 set under the Blue Revolution. Now this fund has been stopped by Indian Government.

**10) Blue Revolution Scheme<sup>57</sup>** focuses mainly on increasing fisheries production and productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources, both inland and marine. There are

---

<sup>55</sup>. Centrally Sponsored Scheme on “Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture”, <https://www.indiafilings.com/learn/scheme-on-development-of-inland-fisheries-and-aquaculture/>

<sup>56</sup>. Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), <https://www.fidf.in/>

<sup>57</sup>. Blue Revolution Scheme, <https://nfdi.gov.in/PDF/GUIDELINES/Guidelines%20in%20Brief%20Centrally%20Sponsored%20Scheme%20on%20Blue%20Revolution%20-%20February%202019.pdf>

actually two major initiatives referred to as the "Blue Revolution" in India's fisheries sector:

- **Neel Kranti Mission (2016)** scheme aimed to revolutionize the fisheries sector by focusing on increased production and productivity, ensuring sustainability, and improving the socio-economic conditions of fishers and farmers. It was restructured and merged with other existing schemes under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Blue Revolution - Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries in 2019.
- **Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Blue Revolution - Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries (2019)** is the current overarching scheme governing the "Blue Revolution" initiative. It incorporates most aspects of the earlier Neel Kranti Mission and aims to holistically develop and manage all fisheries activities through a multi-dimensional approach. This scheme is implemented through a central-state partnership and emphasizes participatory approaches.

**11) Kisan Credit Card Scheme<sup>58</sup>** has been extended to include fishermen and fish farmers. This is a positive development aimed at providing them with easier access to credit for their working capital needs and promoting growth and sustainability in the fisheries sector. Fishermen and fish farmers engaged in freshwater, brackish water, or marine aquaculture as well as capture fisheries can apply. To apply they must possess a valid identity document and proof of land ownership or lease (for pond culture) or fishing license (for capture fisheries). They get loans at concessional interest rates with subsidy from the government.  
and flexible repayment options.

**12) Palk Bay Scheme (2017)<sup>59</sup>** was a centrally sponsored Scheme under the umbrella of the Blue Revolution Scheme aiming to address the issue of overfishing and conflict in the Palk Bay area. It focused on encouraging traditional fishermen from the Indian side to transition from bottom trawling to deep-sea fishing. It is aimed at encouraging fishermen to take up deep-sea fishing and put an end to disputes arising between the India and Sri Lanka. This helps fishermen in the Palk Straits, who are not exposed to deep-sea fishing,

---

<sup>58</sup>. Kisan Credit Card Scheme, <https://www.rbi.org.in/commonman/English/Scripts/Notification.aspx?Id=2311>

<sup>59</sup>. Palk Bay Scheme (2017), <https://ilearncana.com/details/Palk-Bay-Scheme/2559>

to venture deep into the Indian Ocean, Arabian sea and other deep-sea areas to look for fish like tuna that are in high demand. The Centre feels that deep sea fishing is the “only solution” to promote ecologically sustainable fishing and reduce “fishing pressure” around the close proximity of the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and the incidents of cross-border fishing.

**13) Integrated Fisheries Development Scheme (IFDS)<sup>60</sup>** was planned at the national level but never officially launched. It aimed to provide financial assistance to states for various fisheries development activities. This scheme is implemented in the **state of Telangana** and was launched in 2018 and also in Kerala. It aimed to modernize and develop the state's fisheries sector through various initiatives,

The Government projects reflect India's commitment to promoting fish farming as an essential part of agriculture and economic growth. These initiatives not only aim to promote fish production but also emphasize sustainable practices, infrastructure development and capacity building. As move forward into 2024 and beyond, these policies and schemes will play a critical role in transforming the fisheries and aquaculture industries. They will ensure food security and livelihoods millions of people.

## 10. Upcoming Regulations

Predicting upcoming regulations in fisheries in India are subject to various factors like public discussions, scientific research, and political landscape.

### **Draft Guidelines for Regulation of Fishing by Indian Flagged Fishing Vessels in the High Seas 2022<sup>61</sup>**

Draft Guidelines for Regulation of Fishing by Indian Flagged Fishing Vessels in the High Seas 2022 regulates the activities of Indian fishing vessels operating in international waters beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). All Indian flagged fishing vessels, including mother ships and any other vessels directly engaged in fishing operations in the high seas, shall be permitted to fish with a ‘Permit’ granted under these Guidelines. It mandates

---

<sup>60</sup>. Integrated Fisheries Development Scheme (IFDS),  
[https://fisheries.kerala.gov.in/en/integrated\\_fisheries\\_development](https://fisheries.kerala.gov.in/en/integrated_fisheries_development)

<sup>61</sup>. Draft Guidelines for Regulation of Fishing by Indian Flagged Fishing Vessels in the High Seas 2022<sup>61</sup>  
[https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-08/Draft\\_GUIDELINES\\_on\\_High\\_Sea\\_Fishing\\_2022\\_0.pdf](https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-08/Draft_GUIDELINES_on_High_Sea_Fishing_2022_0.pdf)

permits required for all Indian vessels fishing in the high seas. Fees vary based on vessel size. Vessels must report catch details electronically to a designated Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC). The important Guidelines is mandatory Vessel monitoring system on all vessels for real-time tracking and monitoring to notified Fisheries monitoring system at least once every four hours (under Guideline Sec 17.0).

### **The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023<sup>62</sup>**

The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023 aims to strengthen the regulation of coastal aquaculture activities in India. The amendment of section 13 makes registration mandatory for all coastal aquaculture farms and issuing certificates of compliance for antibiotic-free practices (Section-10). Insertion of Section 9A implements aqua zoning and mapping for sustainable coastal aquaculture practice.

### **The Fishermen (Protection and Welfare) Bill 2022<sup>63</sup>**

The Fishermen (Protection and Welfare) Bill 2022 aims of providing protection and welfare measures for fishermen in India. The Establishment of a Fishermen Welfare Board under section- 3 would be responsible for formulating and implementing welfare schemes for fishermen. The Fishermen Tribunal under section- 6 would adjudicate disputes related to fishing rights and fisheries. The act under section- 5 give compensation for death or injury for fishermen who die or are seriously injured while fishing.

### **The Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021<sup>64</sup>**

The Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021 is a proposed legislation aimed at regulating fishing activities in India. It ensures sustainable development, management, and responsible utilization of marine fisheries resources within India's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and by Indian fishing vessels in the high seas. Under Section- 16 and Section-19 mandatory licensing for all fishing vessels operating in the EEZ and high seas. It implements of a robust catch

---

<sup>62</sup>. The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023, [https://caa.gov.in/uploaded/doc/THE%20COASTAL%20AQUACULTURE%20AUTHORITY\\_\\_\(AMENDMENT\)%20ACT,%202023.pdf](https://caa.gov.in/uploaded/doc/THE%20COASTAL%20AQUACULTURE%20AUTHORITY__(AMENDMENT)%20ACT,%202023.pdf)

<sup>63</sup>. The Fishermen (Protection and Welfare) Bill 2022, <https://sansad.in/getFile/BillsTexts/LSBillTexts/Asintroduced/168%20OF%202022%20AS.pdf?source=legislation>

<sup>64</sup>. The Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021, [https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-10/Draft\\_Indian\\_Marine\\_Fisheries\\_Bill\\_2021.pdf](https://dof.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-10/Draft_Indian_Marine_Fisheries_Bill_2021.pdf)



reporting system and vessel monitoring system (VMS) for tracking fishing activities under Section- 8 of the act. It established mechanisms for fishermen welfare, including social security schemes and insurance coverage under Section- 3. The act establishes the National Fisheries Management Council and state-level Fisheries Management Committees for collaborative decision-making under section – 21.

### **Indian Marine Fisheries Code<sup>65</sup>**

The Indian Marine Fisheries Code (IMFC) is a draft legislation that aims to promote the sustainable development of marine fisheries in India. There are 12 Articles and 3 Annexures. The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) was established under the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005 which has main objective of the Authority is to regulate aquaculture activities in coastal areas in order to ensure sustainable development without causing damage to the coastal environment under Annexure- 3. Annex 1 – National Marine Fisheries Management Council (NMFMC) and Annex 2 – National Aquatic Products Council (NAPC) being proposed here will operate through regional bodies, state bodies and district bodies which will have representatives from the state and district and national bodies.

Upcoming regulations in fisheries in India hold great potential to address the challenges faced by the fishing industry, conserve fish stocks, and protect the marine environment. Implementation, enforcement, and ongoing monitoring are critical for the success of these regulations. As India moves towards sustainable fisheries management, it is essential to strike a balance between socio-economic considerations and environmental conservation, while ensuring inclusivity in decision-making processes. By adopting a holistic approach and with the support of the fishing community, policymakers, researchers, and enforcement agencies, India can pave the way for a prosperous and sustainable fishing future.

### **11. Conclusion**

Fisheries Regulations is important for protecting and conserving fishery resources, ensuring sustainable livelihoods for fishing communities, and promoting responsible fishing practices. **India is a party to a number of fisheries agreements, both bilateral and multilateral. These agreements cover a wide range of issues, such as the conservation and**

---

<sup>65</sup>. Indian Marine Fisheries Code,  
[http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/11873/1/IMFC%20Code\\_Revised\\_2019.pdf](http://eprints.cmfri.org.in/11873/1/IMFC%20Code_Revised_2019.pdf)

**management of shared fish stocks, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and trade in fish and fish products.** The implementation of laws faces significant challenges. Centre and the State having its separate legislation according to the Constitution which is under Article 246. Department of Fisheries in India plays a major role in sharing the data and information between centre and the state. Limited enforcement capacity for state, lack of awareness among fishing communities, and illegal fishing activities pose obstacles to effective regulation. Additionally, there is a need for better integration of traditional fishing practices and scientific knowledge for sustainable fisheries management. There is continuous evaluation and revision of fisheries legislation in India to address emerging challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and the impacts of industrial fishing. Strengthening enforcement measures, enhancing surveillance and monitoring systems, and promoting community-based management approaches will be instrumental in achieving sustainable fisheries practices.

## **12. References**

- 1) YOSHIFUMI TANAKA, THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF THE SEA (1<sup>st</sup> Edn, 2012)
- 2) LAWYERS INITIATIVE FOR FORESTS AND ENVIRONMENT, LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CONSERVATION OF COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF INDIA (Nov, 2013)
- 3) 'THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW OF THE SEA', Edited by Douglas M. Jhonston (1981)
- 4) S. SHANTHAKUMAR, 'INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW' (2<sup>nd</sup> Edn, 2005)
- 5) James Harrison, Actors and institutions for the protection of the marine environment, ELGAR ONLINE