

National Fisheries Policy, 2020

September 16, 2020

Aiming to accelerate the development of the fisheries sector, the Indian government has released the National Fisheries Policy 2020 that intends to integrate all components – **marine and inland, capture and culture, and post-harvest** – in a single document and create an environment to increase investments in the sector, double exports, and incomes of fishers and fish farmers.

Key Features:

- The NFP will encompass elements of the '**Blue Growth Initiative**', the **Agriculture Export Policy 2018** and also the targets set under the **Sustainable Development Goals** for which India is committed.
- The NFP serves as an overarching policy framework which will provide guidance to States and UTs in developing **state specific policies and legislations** having both **regulatory and developmental features** to be implemented through short, medium and long term plans.
- **Fisheries Management**
 - . Fisheries governance will be improved to facilitate coordination among States/ UTs, national Agencies and other stakeholders.
 - . The Central Government will **empower the coastal State Governments/ UTs through delegation of powers to grant marine fishing licences for the EEZ and high seas.**
 - . Center will encourage and empower traditional and small-scale fisher and fisher groups for undertaking resource specific deep-sea fishing.

▪ **Mariculture**

. Mariculture is the cultivation of economically important marine plants and animals in the sea having tidal influence and includes onshore facilities like brood banks, hatcheries, nursery rearing and grow-out systems using seawater.

. A leasing policy to facilitate mariculture will be put in place by coastal states and UTs in their jurisdictional waters based upon a model leasing policy prepared by Govt. of India.

. **Genetically Modified (GM) species shall not be allowed for mariculture activity.**

▪ **Inland Fisheries**

. Population of native species in the rivers will be enhanced through seed ranching of native stock by developing dedicated seed production units in the vicinity.

. The management of fisheries in all reservoirs should be brought under the administrative control of the State Fisheries Department(s)/ Agencies for scientific management and efficient governance framework.

. **Trout farming** is the mainstay of fish production in high altitude areas of the country. Trout seed and feed production will be promoted in suitable areas following a cluster approach and increased private sector participation.

▪ **Regulations**

. The present **National water policy, 2012** clearly recognizes the use of water for basic human requirements as part of right to life and livelihood. Its **scope needs to be enlarged** to emphatically recognize the **minimal right to water for fisheries and aquaculture.**

. States will develop comprehensive leasing and licensing policy for all public water bodies by balancing competing

objectives of resource development, livelihoods, welfare and revenue generation.

. The Department of Fisheries will draft the guidelines in consultation with the Ministry of Shipping, Coast Guard, Indian Navy, Ministry of Science and Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change for **undertaking mariculture activities in the EEZ.**

. States will pay adequate attention to collect and report field data about various fisheries resources and operations through census at regular intervals to ascertain complete picture of the sector. Government will implement a **'National Fisheries Data Acquisition Plan'**, involving Central and State Governments, research institutions and stakeholders.

. The **Marine Fisheries Regulation Acts (MFRAs)** have been enacted by coastal states/ UTs for regulation and management of the territorial waters with inter alia stipulate mandatory registration and licensing of fishing vessels.

. In order to provide overall guidance for the implementation of the Policy, review its objectives and progress, a **'National Fisheries Development Council'** headed by Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying will be established.