

Assistance to Fishermen

What is the issue?

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The Centre plans to provide the fishermen community, mainly small-scale and artisanal fishers, and financial assistance and introduce norms to improve labour conditions in the sector.

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Why the centre announces such a measure?

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- Fisheries sector contributed Rs.96,824 crore to the GDP (at current prices) during 2013-14, which is 0.92% of the total GDP and 5.15% of GDP from agriculture, forestry and fishing at current prices.

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- It noted that fishermen are having difficulties in availing institutional credit to buy fishing implements and crafts, and that the risky nature of returns has led to many fishermen falling into the debt trap of private financiers and middlemen.

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- Therefore, the Centre, with the help of NABARD, will provide financial assistance to fishermen with liberal terms and conditions.

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- In addition, the Government will introduce new schemes to skill traditional fishermen.

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- However, the government will ensure that the Indian fishing fleet does not engage in '**Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated**' (IUU) fishing, according to the National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017.

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National Policy on Marine Fisheries:

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- The draft on the National Policy on Marine Fisheries **lays emphasis on bringing in Blue Revolution** by sustainable utilisation of the fisheries wealth from the marine and other aquatic resources.

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- The Blue Revolution reinforces the **Blue Growth Initiative (BGI)** as amplified at the Rio+20 Conclave held at Rio de Janeiro in 2012.

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- The government's focus is on maximising fleet-size, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in production processes, species-specific and area-specific management plans and spatial and temporal conservation measures.

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- The policy is aimed at improving the livelihood of fishers by encouraging integrated approach on fisheries management, blending of traditional knowledge and science with business principles and effective engagement of industry and other stakeholders to make fishing economically and ecologically viable.

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Source: The Hindu

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