

Turtle Excluder Devices On Fishing Boats

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Department of Fisheries, Government of India have requested all coastal states and Union Territories (UTs) to take necessary steps to review their respective Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (MFRA) with particular reference to harvesting of wild shrimp and use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and amendment thereto if required in order to make it compatible for implementation of the marine turtle conservation program besides issuing notifications/circulars under the existing provisions of MFRAs for the purpose of conservation as well. All coastal states and union territories were also requested to consider immediate declaration of turtle conservation zones, sensitization of concerned authorities and fishermen for strict compliance of turtle conservation measures while fishing. All nine coastal states, namely Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal have amended their MFRAs to mandate TED use. The Union Territory Administrations of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep do not permit fishing using bottom trawl.

ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) have developed the TED model in line with the US - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) specifications, and four agencies have been empanelled by ICAR-CIFT for TED fabrication at a cost of ₹23,485 per unit. The implementation of Turtle Excluder Devices has been included as one of the component in the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme with 100% financial assistance (60% Central + 40% State). The guidelines in this regard has been circulated to all coastal states and UTs to take up the activity of TED fitment in trawl fishing nets. Field demonstrations and awareness programmes are being conducted by the MPEDA-NETFISH and State Fisheries Departments to address implementation challenges. As informed by the MPEDA, Department of Fisheries, Government of Andhra Pradesh has distributed 85 TEDs to 60 trawlers in the State.

The benefits of the use of Turtle Excluder Devices on fishing boats include:

- i. Ensures compliance with national and international marine conservation regulations
- ii. Promotes the conservation and protection of endangered marine species, particularly sea turtles.
- iii. Allows sea turtles to escape from trawl nets, thereby reducing by-catch mortality
- iv. Enhances trawl net opening during fishing operations, improving catch efficiency.
- v. Reduces the entrapment of trash and improves cod-end cleanliness of trawl nets.
- vi. Improves the quality and market value of shrimp and fish catches.
- vii. Compliance with U.S. regulations may support certification of the shrimp fishery and facilitate the lifting of the ban on Indian wild-caught shrimp exports to the United States.

The Department of Fisheries, Government of Kerala informed that they intends to roll out the use of Turtle Excluder Devices in Kerala. The Government of Kerala, vide Notification SRO No. 612/2019 dated 01/09/2019, has made the use of TED mandatory in trawl nets. The Department of Fisheries, Government of Kerala, has submitted the proposal to support the installation of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in 2,599 trawlers amounting ₹649.75 lakh. All possible measures have been taken by the Department of Fisheries, Government of Kerala to minimize turtle by-catch, enhance sustainable fishing practices and improve marine ecosystem health through implementation of TED in bottom trawls.

This information was given by Union Minister of State, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri George Kurian, in a written reply in Rajya Sabha on 23rd July, 2025.

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