

Alternatives to Bottom-trawling Mechanism

Posted On: 30 JUL 2025 2:55PM by PIB Delhi

‘Fisheries’ is a State Subject. All coastal States and Union Territories (UTs) are issuing fishing licenses under their respective Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRAs) and granting registration to fishing vessels under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, using the web enabled application called ‘ReALCraft’. As on date, out of 31,045 registered mechanized Fishing vessels operating trawl Nets, 259 are the Fishing Vessels registered as operating the Drag Nets or Bottom Trawl Nets in Bay of Bengal and Arabian Coast. Bottom Trawling is a fishing method used only to catch the targeted benthic fishes and catch of Non-target species are reduced by the use of by-catch reduction devices, which are selective devices, like the Turtle Excluder Device (TED) used in shrimp Bottom trawls. Department of Fisheries, Government of India (DoF, GoI) had advised all coastal states and UTs to take necessary steps to review and amend their respective MFRAs to ensure mandatory use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) towards marine turtle conservation. 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 UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep do not permit fishing using bottom trawl. The implementation of TED has been included as one of the component supported under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme with 100% financial assistance (60% Central + 40% State).

The Government of India has prohibited the harmful fishing methods such as bull or paired trawling and use of artificial light or LED light for fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. All the maritime States/UTs have also been advised to take necessary steps to prevent pair or bull trawling and use of LED light for fishing within and beyond the territorial waters. The maritime States/UTs have also been advised to issue necessary Government Orders (GOs) prohibiting destructive fishing methods including pair/bull trawling for fishing within their territorial waters, temporarily suspend the registration / license of fishing vessel(s) violating the GOs, or cancel the registration/license of such fishing vessel(s) on repeated violations, and to inform Coast Guard and other marine enforcement agencies about such violators, with directions to prevent operation of those fishing vessels.

A sub-component namely “Assistance for Deep Sea Fishing” and another component of “Conversion of Trawlers into Resource Specific Deep-Sea Fishing Vessels” were implemented under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) “Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries” to provide financial assistance to traditional fishermen for promotion of resource specific deep-sea fishing in the coastal States and UTs. The Department of Fisheries, GoI had introduced the components namely, “Support for acquisition of Deep-Sea Fishing vessels for traditional fishermen” and “Up-gradation of existing fishing vessels for export competency” under PMMSY, to provide financial assistance to traditional fishermen for promotion of resource specific deep-sea fishing in all coastal States and UTs.

Under the PMMSY, the Government of India has, for the first time, extended support for activities such as sea ranching and installation of artificial reefs along the entire coastline of India for enhancing the fish stocks and supporting livelihood of fishers. The activities such as mariculture including seaweed cultivation and open sea cage culture are promoted under PMMSY to alleviate the fishing pressure in nearshore waters, and boost marine fisheries production in sustainable manner. 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 30th July, 2025.

(Release ID: 2150101)