

High-Level Indian Delegation Led by Dr. Abhilaksh Likhi, Secretary, Department of Fisheries Partners with Iceland for Sustainable Blue Growth

Icelandic collaboration in Zero-Waste Fisheries, Technology Transfer to Further Strengthen India's Blue Economy

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An official Secretary-level delegation led by Dr. Abhilaksh Likhi, Secretary, Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying (MoFAH&D), Government of India, undertook a three-day visit to Reykjavík, Iceland, from 10th–12th September 2025. The visit aimed to strengthen bilateral cooperation between India and Iceland in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors through strategic partnerships, investment promotion, and innovation exchange.



On 11th September, Dr. Likhi held a high-level meeting with senior representatives of the Iceland Ocean Cluster (IOC) in Reykjavík, where discussions focused on **collaboration in developing fisheries and aquaculture clusters in India, particularly through zero-waste interventions**. The deliberations underscored the potential for leveraging Iceland's technological leadership in sustainable marine practices alongside India's expansive production capabilities. **Both sides explored investment opportunities for the Icelandic seafood processing industry in India, along with ways to deepen business-to-business (B2B) linkages**. Emphasis was placed on innovation-driven cooperation in fish processing, value addition, traceability, and certification to enhance sustainability and competitiveness in the sector.

Senior officials from the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) presented India's vision for fisheries and aquaculture cluster development, highlighting opportunities in investment, innovation, and international collaboration. Icelandic companies, including BRIM and Hampiðjan, along with the Iceland Ocean Cluster, shared insights into Iceland's pioneering zero-waste models and cutting-edge processing technologies. The meeting also saw participation of Mr. R. Ravindra, Ambassador of India to Iceland, Embassy of India, Reykjavik along with other senior officials from the Embassy of India in Reykjavík while prominent Icelandic

participants included Mr. Thor Sigfusson, Founder and Chairman of the Iceland Ocean Cluster, and Mr. Bala Kamallakharan, Founder of Startup Iceland. Dr. Likhi also visited *MATIS*, a leading Icelandic food and biotech R&D company, where he was briefed on their work in food safety, biotechnology, and sustainable marine resource utilization. The visit opened new avenues for collaboration in research and technology transfer to bolster India's fisheries value chain.



On 10th September, the Indian delegation visited the *Icelandic Fishing Expo 2025* at Laugardalshöll, Reykjavík, where Dr. Likhi met with Ms. Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, Minister of Industries, Iceland. The two sides discussed developments in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and explored opportunities for strengthening institutional and commercial ties. The Indian delegation also interacted with leading Icelandic fishing associations, agencies, and entrepreneurs to learn about innovative technologies and best practices in sustainable fishing. In a separate thematic discussion, **both sides identified several key areas for future cooperation that included the establishment of fisheries and aquaculture clusters with zero-waste**

interventions, and the deployment of deep-sea fishing vessels equipped with on board processing facilities, trans-shipment capabilities, value addition mechanisms, and robust traceability and certification systems. Emphasis was also laid on training and capacity building in deep-sea fishing technologies, alongside the adoption of advanced vessel monitoring and surveillance (VMS) systems to enhance regulatory oversight and resource management. **Additionally, both sides explored collaboration in promoting trout farming, health management, and marketing in India's hilly states, as well as in developing specialized fishing technologies for tuna and tuna-like species in the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.**

The visit marks a promising chapter in Indo-Icelandic cooperation and is expected to catalyse joint research, industrial partnerships, and innovation-led growth in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

About Iceland Ocean Cluster

The Iceland Ocean Cluster (IOC) is an innovation and business network based in Reykjavík, Iceland, dedicated to fostering sustainable growth in the marine and ocean industries. Founded in 2011 by Þór Sigfússon, the cluster serves as a collaborative hub that brings together entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, and companies working across a wide range of sectors related to the ocean economy.

With a mission to promote better utilization of ocean resources through innovation, sustainability, and the creation of new value chains, its focus is on 100% fish utilization.

India's Cluster-Based Approach under PMMSY

The Government of India has already adopted a cluster-based development model under the PMMSY to promote competitiveness and organized growth in fisheries and aquaculture. So far, 34 clusters have been notified across various States and Union Territories. **The cluster-based approach enhances competitiveness and efficiency by uniting geographically connected enterprises of all sizes - micro, small, medium, and large-across the entire value chain, from production to exports.** This collaborative model improves financial viability through strong linkages, addresses value chain gaps, and creates new business opportunities and livelihoods. By fostering partnerships and resource sharing, **it aims to reduce costs, promote innovation and support sustainable practices.** The cluster-based development model brings together fishers, fish farmers, SHGs, JLGs, FFPOs, processors, vendors, cooperatives, transporters, start-ups, and other stakeholders. It is also supported through convergence with various ministries like the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, MSME, along with institutions like NABARD etc.

So far, 34 clusters have been notified across the country:

Sr.No.	State	Cluster
1	Lakshadweep	Seaweed Cluster
2	Madurai, Tamil Nadu	Ornamental Fisheries
3	Hazaribagh, Jharkhand	Pearl Cluster
4	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Tuna Cluster
5	Soreng, Sikkim	Organic Fisheries Cluster
6	Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir	Coldwater Fisheries Cluster
7	Sirsa, Haryana	Saline Water Aquaculture Cluster
8	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	Reservoir Fisheries Cluster
9	Raipur, Chhattisgarh	Tilapia Cluster
10	Siwan, Bihar	Wetland Fisheries Cluster
11	Siddharthnagar, Uttar Pradesh	Pangasius Cluster
12	Balasore, Odisha	Scampi Cluster
13	Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh	Brackish Water Aquaculture Cluster
14	Uttar Kannada, Karnataka	Sea Cage Cluster

15	Mancherial, Telangana	Murrel Cluster
16	Kollam, Kerala	Pearl Spot Cluster
17	Gir Somnath, Gujarat	Fishing Harbour Cluster
18	Muktsar Sahib, Punjab	Saline water Aquaculture cluster
19	Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand	Cold water Fisheries cluster
20	Purba Mednipur, West Bengal	Dry Fish Cluster
21	Karaikal, Puducherry	Fishing Harbour Cluster
22	Mokokchung, Nagaland	Integrated fish farming Cluster
23	Bishnupur, Manipur	Pengba fish Cluster
24	Goalpara, Assam	Riverine Fisheries Cluster
25	Kolasib, Mizoram	Paddy cum fish Cluster
26	Ziro, Arunachal Pradesh	Aqua-tourism Cluster
27	Kargil, LADAKH	Coldwater Fisheries Cluster
28	North Goa, Goa	Estuarine cage Cluster
29	Kullu, Himachal Pradesh	Coldwater Fisheries Cluster
30	Unakoti, Tripura	Pabda fisheries Cluster
31	Churu, Rajasthan	Saline water aquaculture Cluster
32	Raigad, Maharashtra	Fisheries Cooperatives Cluster
33	Diu (Vanakbara), DNH & DD	Fishing Harbour Cluster
34	West Khasi Hills, Meghalaya	Organic fish farming Cluster

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