NITI Aayog releases report on “India’s Blue Economy: Strategy for Harnessing Deep-Sea and Offshore Fisheries”

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NITI Aayog today released a report on **“India’s Blue Economy: Strategy for Harnessing Deep-Sea and Offshore Fisheries”**. This report was formally launched by Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member (Agriculture), NITI Aayog, and Shri B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO, NITI Aayog, in a special event attended by representatives from the fisheries sector, maritime states, and stakeholder organizations. A detailed presentation on the report was made by Dr. Neelam Patel, Programme Director (Agriculture Technology Division), NITI Aayog.

India is the second-largest fish-producing country in the world, accounting for 8% of global production. India’s fisheries sector supports nearly 30 million livelihoods and contributes significantly to exports, with fishery products earning ₹60,523 crore in FY 2023–24.

India’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of over 2 million sq. km, deep waters beyond the continental shelf, and11,098 km coastline across nine coastal States and four Union Territories, provide immense potential to expand its marine fisheries into the deep seas. Despite a thriving fisheries sector, the deep-sea fishery resources beyond the continental shelf remain largely unexploited. The EEZ has an estimated potential yield of 7.16 million tonnes, including both conventional and non-conventional resources. The report highlights that responsible utilization of deep-sea and offshore fisheries can enhance seafood exports, generate employment opportunities, and reduce pressure on coastal fisheries, while ensuring ecological sustainability.

It presents a comprehensive framework covering the deep-sea fishing sector within India’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and international waters accessed through regional fisheries agreements. This framework adopts a science-based, technology-enabled, socially inclusive, and ecologically sustainable approach to harnessing India’s deep-sea fisheries potential.

The report identifies six key policy interventions on overhauling policies and regulations; strengthening institutional and capacity building; modernizing fleets and upgrading infrastructure; promoting sustainable fisheries management; mobilizing resources and financing; and enhancing local community participation and partnerships. Recognizing the capital-intensive nature of deep-sea fishing, the report also emphasizes inclusive fleet development by supporting fisher cooperatives and cluster-based approaches, enabling collective ownership, operations, and access to modern technology. It also outlines investment priorities and monitoring mechanisms necessary to ensure long-term ecological and economic sustainability.

An indicative costing framework for the three phases has also been provided by considering the convergence of centrally sponsored and central sector schemes related to fisheries – Phase 1: Laying the foundation and fostering early growth (3 years| 2025-28); Phase 2: Scaling up and achieving global competitiveness (4 years| 2029-32) and Phase 3: Global leadership in sustainable deep-sea fisheries (8 years and beyond | 2033 onwards).

Building on the sector’s strong growth trajectory, the report offers a roadmap to strengthen governance, foster innovation, and enhance participation of stakeholders. Through integrated interventions in policy reform, infrastructure development, sustainability, financing, and community empowerment, the initiative aims to make India a global leader in sustainable deep-sea fisheries, ensuring prosperity for coastal communities and contributing significantly to the Blue Economy vision of the nation.

Alongside the report release, NITI Aayog organized a workshop which witnessed the participation of 18 institutions. The technical session on "Strategy of States and Way Forward towards Harnessing Deep-Sea Fisheries and Export" included presentations from coastal States such as Goa, Gujarat, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu. This was followed by a panel discussion on "Advancing Resource Management through Regulatory Reforms, Research, Financing and Capacity Building" with distinguished panelists.

The report may be accessed at: https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-10/Indias-Blue-Economy-Strategy-For-Harnessing-Deep-Sea-And-Offshore-Fisheries.pdf

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