

BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGY FOR WOMEN IN COASTAL FISHERIES

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Women's employment and livelihood needs are explicitly integrated into the Blue Economy policy framework under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), with a focus on coastal women, including those in Andhra Pradesh. The scheme recognizes women as a priority beneficiary group and provides both higher financial assistance and targeted initiatives to support their participation and empowerment in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Women beneficiaries are eligible for up to 60% government financial assistance for beneficiary-oriented activities, compared to 40% for the general category. This applies to both individual and group activities, making it easier for women to access funding for fisheries-related enterprises.

- a. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that Andhra Pradesh Fishermen Cooperative Federation (AFCOF) has initiated a strategic intervention to strengthen cooperatives, with a special focus on women-led cooperatives, by facilitating the formation of Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs) across Andhra Pradesh including Nellore. This initiative aims to empower fish farmers through collective action and institutional support while enabling FFPOs to access financial assistance, infrastructure, capacity-building, and other benefits available under the Government of India's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi SahYojana (PM-MKSSY) schemes.
- b. The policies and schemes of the Department of Fisheries, including PMMSY, accord high priority to promoting deep-sea and mechanised fishing as part of the broader strategy for enhancing fish production, productivity, and value-chain modernisation. To safeguard and strengthen the livelihoods of traditional fisherwomen, targeted interventions have been instituted under PMMSY. Women beneficiaries are eligible for enhanced financial assistance of 60% support across a wide range of fisheries activities, including for the acquisition of deep-sea fishing vessels, compared to the 40% support available to the general category. Further, this subsidy is also extended to fisherwomen for diversified income-generating activities such as seaweed cultivation, ornamental fisheries, paddy-cum-fish culture, cage culture, fish processing, value addition, and marketing, thereby promoting livelihood diversification and resilience.
- c. Under PMMSY, the Department of Fisheries supports the formation and strengthening of Fisheries Cooperative Societies across all States/UTs, including Andhra Pradesh. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that 66 Women Fisher Workers' Cooperatives have been registered/converted into Fish Farmer Producers Organisations (FFPO) in Andhra Pradesh. A total of ₹69,11,452 has been released towards Management Cost and Equity Grant to 10 FFPOs, enabling them to improve office infrastructure, undertake business development activities, and strengthen their financial base. In Nellore District, 6 Fisherwomen Cooperative Societies have been converted into FFPOs and an amount of ₹90,000 has been sanctioned as a one-time grant to one FFPO so far.

This Information was given by Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh in the Rajya Sabha in response to a question asked.

JP.

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