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A study on Fisheries: Government schemes and support in India

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Abstract

The fisheries sector has been one of the major contributors of foreign exchange earnings with India being one of the leading seafood exporting nations in the world. It includes government launching scheme like Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro Marine Processing and Development of Agro Processing Clusters). Blue Revolution or Neel Kranti Mission, with its multi-dimensional activities, focusses mainly on increasing fisheries production and productivity from both aquaculture and fisheries resources in inland and marine sector, its main objective is to enhance food and security of the country.

Keywords: aquaculture sector, blue revolution, financial assistance, infrastructure, agro processing

Introduction

Government of India and State governments have been taking several initiatives for the holistic growth and development of fisheries and aquaculture sector, and for the welfare of the fish farmers in the country. The government schemes of fisheries mainly consist of Central Plan Schemes with 100 per cent central assistance, Centrally Sponsored Schemes where the state government and the Central government share the expenses as per terms of the schemes, and the State Plan Schemes where the concerned State governments design their schemes as per need and bear the entire expenses of the schemes. The schemes not only aim to augment production of various fish and other aqua products but also ensures safety of fishermen, adoption of environmental friendly practices, infrastructure and market development, land development, etc. Fisheries sector is having the potential to grow at a rate higher than 6 per cent annum, contribute to export earnings, provide livelihood, food and nutrition security and contribute significantly to the overall economic development of the country. Considering the importance, Government of India has formed a new Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and a separate Department for Fisheries. With a view to facilitate production, marketing, processing and exports in fisheries, Government of India has established dedicated institutions for fisheries development in the country, implemented lot of subsidy linked schemes and introduced the Blue Revolution during 2015-16.

Blue revolution

Realizing the immense scope for development of fisheries and aquaculture, the Government of India has restructured the Central Plan Schemes under an umbrella of Blue Revolution. The Blue Revolution or Neel Kranti Mission, with its multi-dimensional activities, focusses mainly on increasing fisheries production and productivity from both aquaculture and fisheries resources in inland and marine sectors through full potential utilisation of water resources for fisheries development in a sustainable manner, while keeping in view the bio-security and environmental concerns. The mission aims at reaching an annual production of 150 lakh tons by 2020. The highlights are given below.

Blue revolution: The Neel Kranti Mission

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Department of Fisheries has introduced the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries" or Neel Kranti 2016 in December 2015 by restructuring all

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the existing schemes. The Neel Kranti 2016 had been approved at a total central outlay of Rs. 3000 crore for implementation during a period of five years (2015-16 to 2019-20). The major components of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) on Blue Revolution Scheme are:

- Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture,
- Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post-harvest Operations,
- National Scheme for Welfare of Fishermen,
- Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and other need- based Interventions,
- Institutional Arrangement for Fisheries Sector,
- Strengthening of Database & Geographical Information System of the Fisheries Sector (SODGIS)
- National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and its activities.

Objectives

- To fully tap the total fish potential of the country both in the inland and the marine sector and triple the production by 2020.
- To transform the fisheries sector as a modern industry with special focus on new technologies and processes
- To double the income of the fishers and fish farmers with special focus on increasing productivity and better marketing post-harvest infrastructure including e-commerce and other technologies and global best innovations
- To ensure inclusive participation of the fishers and fish farmers in the income enhancement
- To triple the export earnings by 2020 with focus on flow of benefits to the fishers and fish farmers through institutional mechanisms in the cooperative, producer companies and other structures
- To enhance food and nutritional security of the country.

Financial Assistance

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, subsidy was provided for various activities and free training was provided to fish farmers on improved scientific fish culture practices. The Central government bears the full expenses of the schemes in the Union Territories (UTs) and 90 per cent in North-East & Hilly States and 60 per cent in other States Whereas the rest is borne by the concerned States.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) was announced in the Union Budget 2019-20 with an aim to turn India into a hotspot for fish and aquatic products through appropriate policy, marketing and infrastructure support. The government intends to promote aquaculture through easy access to credit and also to bring all fishermen under the ambit of all farmer welfare programmes and social security schemes with expanded coverage for accident insurance. The government initiatives are committed towards “Blue Revolution” or Neel Kranti’ and to make India as the top fish producing country in the world. The Department of Fisheries will establish a robust fisheries management framework. This will address critical gaps in the value chain, including infrastructure, modernization, traceability, production, productivity, post-harvest management and quality control.

Sampada

Government of India has approved a new Central Sector Scheme- SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro Marine Processing

and Development of Agro Processing Clusters) with an outlay of Rs. 6,000 crore for the period 2016-20 co-terminus with the 14th Finance Commission cycle. The scheme will be implemented by Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India. It is a comprehensive package that aimed at creation of modern infrastructure from farm gate to retail outlet. The scheme consists of the following sub-schemes:

- Mega Food Park
- Integrated Cold chain and preservation infrastructure
- Creation/expansion of food processing and preservation capacities
- Infrastructure for agro processing clusters
- Creation of backward and forward linkages
- Food safety and quality assurance infrastructure
- Human resources and institutions

Institutions for Fisheries

Government of India has established a host of dedicated institutions in fisheries sector to augment production, financing, marketing, export, research, capacity building, etc. These institutions continue to guide the sectors requirements and are located in different regions across the country.

Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Fund

The Government of India has decided to constitute Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Fund (FIDF) for funding infrastructure projects in fisheries sector with a corpus of Rs. 7,522 crore. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), National Cooperatives Development Corporation (NCDC), and all Scheduled Banks will serve as Nodal Lending Entities (NLE).

Kisan Credit Card to Fish Farmers

The Government of India extended the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) facility to fisheries sector also in 2018-19, to meet the working capital requirement of fisheries activities including aquaculture. Government of India has announced interest subvention on Kisan Credit Card (KCC) limit (for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry) upto Rs. 2.0 lakh during 2019-20 keeping the same conditions as applicable to agricultural crops.

Rural Infrastructure Development Fund

Government of India has permitted National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to extend Rural Infrastructure Development Fund loans for fisheries related infrastructure such as fishing harbours/jetties and riverine fisheries.

Conclusion

Fisheries being one of the promising sectors of agriculture and allied activities in India, the Government of India scheme on Blue Revolution focusses on tapping the full production potential and enhance productivity substantially from aquaculture and fisheries resources with an anticipated growth rate of 6 to 8 per cent per annum.

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