

FISHERIES

The estimated fishery potential of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is estimated at 2.435 lakh tons as compared to 39.21 lakh tons for India forming only 6.21% of the fishery potential of our country. In spite of the fact that the islands have rich fisheries potential, it has to be admitted that the resources are not fully exploited by us for obvious reasons. Our present level of exploitation is only about 28000 tons (11.5%) of the estimated fisheries potential which is mainly contributed by the traditional and artisanal sector.

At present about 2964 licensed fishermen are engaged in marine fishing in the narrow belt of Territorial Waters of Andaman and Nicobar islands, close to the shore up to 10 KM with the help of 1821 traditional fishing crafts, 208 small motorized boats and 10 small mechanized trawlers. The fish landed at different fish landing centers of the islands is about 27170 MT (2001). The fish landing centers are scattered in various islands where some population centers exist. Considering the limited demand due to low population of the areas, the fishermen restrict their catch to 50-100 kgs. Per day and maintain a steady price for the fish landed earning the maximum possible revenue for their livelihood.

In order to reduce the gap between the resource availability and present level of harvest the department has implemented various programmes during the IXth Five Year Plan and are continuing in the Xth Plan with the objective to create shore based facilities like setting up of ice plants, cold storages, fish markets and providing various resource inputs to the fishermen/ tribes and their Cooperatives in the islands. Some of the notable achievements are:

- Two new ice plants and cold storage facilities at Hut Bay and Campbell Bay commissioned.
- Land allotted at Rangat, Mayabunder and Car Nicobar for construction of new ice plants and cold storages.
- Various inputs for fishing, storage and transportation provided to 2700 nos. of licenced fishermen/ tribes and nine nos. of their cooperative societies.

- Assistance for renovation of 158 nos. of fish ponds and 21.20 lakhs seed of fresh water fishes provided to Pisciculturists for promotion of fresh water aquaculture.
- 226 fishermen were provided subsidy for motorization of their traditional craft under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Other important achievements

- A draft policy for Fisheries Development in Andaman and Nicobar Islands was prepared by an Expert Committee constituted by the Administration and is under active consideration of the Administration
- Based on the interim policy adopted by the Administration, mainland based deep sea fishing vessels were issued licence for exploitation of deep sea resources.
- Permission accorded to one private company for culture and export of live fish.
- Permission also accorded to three private firms for capture and export of live fish.
- Project report for development of Fish Landing Centre at Junglighat at an estimated cost of Rs.3.68 crores sanctioned by Govt. of India of which 1.68 crores have been released & deposited with ALHW for construction.
- In view of the persistent demand from fishermen to exploit shark fishery resources available in A&N Waters, the Administration accorded approval for issue of shark fishing licence by the department.
- Permission was also accorded by the Administration to Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA) to set up a Shrimp hatchery to meet the shrimp seed requirement of mainland farms / local farmers.
- 42 posts have been identified and transferred to PRI's towards devolution of powers and various functions to be carried out by PRI's.
- Clearance accorded by Aquaculture Authority of India to National Institute of Ocean Technology for a R&D project on Lobster fattening, Fin-Fish / Shell fish culture at the Department of Ocean Development Complex, Dollygung.

Future Schemes

- Commissioning of new ice plant and cold storage at Rangat.
- Construction of Ice Plant & Cold Storage facilities at Car Nicobar and Mayabunder.
- Conducting of survey and investigation for development of fish landing centres at Panighat, Guptapara and Diglipur.
- Supply of fishing material, boats, engines, life saving appliances etc at 50% subsidy to fishermen/ tribes.
- Subsidy for acquisition of improved design of craft and gear.