



Draft Blue Economy Policy

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Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has rolled out the **draft Blue Economy policy**, inviting suggestions and inputs from various stakeholders.

It is in line with the Government of **India's Vision of New India by 2030**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The policy document highlighted the blue economy as **one of the ten core dimensions for national growth**.
 - It emphasizes policies across several key sectors to **achieve holistic growth** of India's economy. It recognizes the following seven thematic areas:
 - National accounting framework for the blue economy and ocean governance.
 - Coastal marine spatial planning and **tourism**.
 - Marine **fisheries**, **aquaculture**, and fish processing.
 - Manufacturing, emerging industries, trade, technology, **services**, and **skill development**.
 - Logistics, infrastructure and shipping, including trans-shipments.
 - Coastal and deep-sea mining and offshore energy.
 - Security, strategic dimensions, and international engagement.
- **Aims:**
 - Enhance contribution of the blue economy to India's **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**.
The blue economy, which consists of economic activities dependent on marine resources, comprises **4.1% of India's economy**.
 - Improve lives of coastal communities.
 - Preserve marine biodiversity.
 - Maintain the national security of marine areas and resources.

- Reason and Need for a Blue Economy Policy:

- Vast Coastline:

- With a coastline of nearly **7.5 thousand kilometers**, India has a unique maritime position.
 - **Nine of its 28 states are coastal**, and the nation's geography includes 1,382 islands.
 - There are nearly **199 ports**, including **12 major ports** that handle approximately 1,400 million tons of cargo each year.



- Utilisation of Non-living Resources:

India's **Exclusive Economic Zone** of over 2 million square kilometers has a huge living and non-living resources with significant recoverable resources such as **crude oil** and **natural gas**.

- **Sustenance of Coastal Communities:**
The coastal economy sustains over 4 million **fisherfolk and coastal communities**.
- **Other Related Initiatives by India:**
 - **India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development :**
It was inaugurated jointly by both the countries in 2020 to **develop and follow up joint initiatives** between the two countries.
 - **Sagarmala Project:**
 - The **Sagarmala project** is the **strategic initiative for port-led development** through the extensive use of IT enabled services for modernization of ports.
 - It aims at developing Inland **waterways** and coastal shipping which will revolutionize maritime logistics, creating million new jobs, reducing logistics costs etc.
 - It focuses on the **development of coastal communities and people** in the sustainable use of ocean resources, modern fishing techniques and coastal tourism.
 - **O-SMART:**
India has an umbrella scheme by the name of **O-SMART** which aims at regulated use of oceans, marine resources for sustainable development.
 - **Integrated Coastal Zone Management:**
It focuses on conservation of coastal and marine resources, and improving livelihood opportunities for coastal communities etc.
 - **National Fisheries Policy :**
India has a National Fisheries policy for promoting 'Blue Growth Initiative' which focus on sustainable utilization of fisheries wealth from the marine and other aquatic resources
- **Global Steps:**
Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)- 14 seeks to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Blue Economy

- The concept was introduced by **Gunter Pauli in his 2010 book-** “The Blue Economy: 10 years, 100 innovations, 100 million jobs”.
- It is the **sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health**.
- It **advocates the greening of ocean development strategies** for higher productivity and conservation of ocean's health.

- It encompasses–
 - **Renewable Energy**: Sustainable marine energy can play a vital role in social and economic development.
 - **Fisheries**: Sustainable fisheries can generate more revenue, more fish and help restore fish stocks.
 - **Maritime Transport**: Over 80% of international goods traded are transported by sea.
 - **Tourism**: Ocean and coastal tourism can bring jobs and economic growth.
 - **Climate Change**: Oceans are an important carbon sink (blue carbon) and help mitigate climate change.
 - **Waste Management**: Better waste management on land can help oceans recover.
- Blue Economy emphasizes on **integration of development of the ocean economy with social inclusion, environmental sustainability, combined with innovative business models.**

Way Forward

- With its vast maritime interests, the blue economy occupies **a vital potential position in India's economic growth.**
- It could well be the **next multiplier of GDP and well-being**, provided sustainability and socio-economic welfare are kept center-stage.
- Therefore, India's draft blue economy policy is envisaged as a **crucial framework towards unlocking the country's potential** for economic growth and welfare.

Source: PIB