



# Rising Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

**For Prelims:** Exclusive Economic Zone, Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

**For Mains:** India's Fisheries Sector and related initiatives

## Why in News?

During the first half of this year, [Indian Navy](#) vessels **monitored more than 200 Chinese fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean, despite growing Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).**

- Most of the illegal activity is found in the **Northern Indian Ocean Region (IOR).**
- International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing is organized every year on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

## What is Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU)?

- IUU fishing is a **broad term that captures a wide variety of fishing activity.**
- IUU fishing is **found in all types and dimensions of fisheries;** it occurs both on the high seas and in areas within national jurisdiction.
- It concerns all aspects and stages of the capture and utilisation of fish, and it may sometimes be associated with organized crime.
- **IUU fishing undermines national and regional efforts to conserve and manage fish stocks** and, as a consequence, inhibits progress towards achieving the goals of long-term sustainability and responsibility.

## What is the State of India's Fisheries Sector?

- **Indian Scenario:**
  - **India is the second largest fish producing country** in the world accounting for 7.56% of global production and contributing about 1.24% to the country's Gross Value Added (GVA) and over 7.28% to the agricultural GVA.
  - India aims to achieve a target of producing 22 million metric tonnes of fish by 2024-25.
  - The sector is recognized as a powerful engine for providing **employment to 14.5 million people** and sustaining livelihood for the 28 million fishermen community of the country.
  - The **fisheries sector has witnessed three major transformations in the last few years:**
    - The growth of inland aquaculture, specifically freshwater aquaculture.
    - The mechanization of capture fisheries.
    - The successful commencement of brackish water shrimp aquaculture.
- **Related Initiatives:**
  - **Fishing Harbours:**
    - The development of five major Fishing Harbours (Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradip, Petuaghat) as hubs of economic activity.

- **Seaweed Park:**
  - Multipurpose seaweed park in Tamil Nadu would be the center of production for quality [seaweed](#)-based products, developed on a hub and spoke model.
- **[Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana:](#)**
  - It strives to create direct employment to 15 lakh fishers, fish farmers, etc. and about thrice this number as indirect employment opportunities.
  - It also aims to double the incomes of fishers, fish farmers and fish workers by 2024.
- **Palk Bay Scheme:**
  - The Scheme, “Diversification of Trawl Fishing Boats from Palk Straits into Deep Sea Fishing Boats” was launched in 2017 as a [Centrally Sponsored Scheme](#).
    - It was launched as part of the umbrella [Blue Revolution Scheme](#).
- **Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021:**
  - The Bill proposes to only grant licenses to vessels registered under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, to fish in the **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.

## What are the Initiatives taken to tackle the Issue of Illegal Mining?

- **Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA):**
  - In May, 2022, recognising the **impact of IUU fishing which can lead to the depletion of fish stocks affecting marine ecology**, the [Quad](#) members announced a major regional effort under the ambit of [Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness \(IPMDA\)](#).
  - It aims to **provide a more accurate maritime picture of “near-real-time” activities in the region**.
  - It (IPMDA) is **expected to catalyse joint efforts of India and other Quad partners** towards addressing IUU in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **IFC-IOR:**
  - The Indian Navy's [Information Management and Analysis Centre \(IMAC\)](#) in Gurugram and the **Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** co-located with it monitor all vessel movements on the high seas.
  - IFC-IOR has been **collaborating with other regional monitoring centres across the globe to enhance maritime safety** and security, including efforts to monitor IUU.
- **UNCLOS:**
  - As per [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#), **coastal nations are responsible for addressing IUU fishing issues within their respective EEZ**.
  - Under UNCLOS, regional fisheries management organizations such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement monitor IUU fishing on the high seas.
- **The Cape Town Agreement:**
  - The 2012 Cape Town Agreement is an **internationally-binding instrument that sets minimum requirements** on the design, construction, equipment, and inspection of fishing vessels of 24 meters in length and over or equivalent in gross tons.
    - India is not a signatory of the agreement.
- **Agreement on Ports State Measures:**
  - The objective of this Agreement is to **prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing through the implementation of effective port State measures**, and thereby to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems.
    - India is not a signatory of the agreement.
- **International Day for the Fight against IUU Fishing:**
  - The [General Assembly of the United Nations \(UNGA\)](#) declared 5<sup>th</sup> June the International Day for the Fight against IUU Fishing at its seventy-second session in November 2017.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q.** Defining blue revolution, explain the problems and strategies for pisciculture development in India. (2018)

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**Source: PIB**

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