

Seafood exports expected to reach USD 14 billion over the next five years

The Indian government plans to invest USD 3.5 billion in the fisheries sector over the next five years, with the aim of increasing its exports to USD 14 billion.

Total fish production in India was 12.59 million tonnes (mt) and the country exported 1.38 mt of fish and fish products with a value of over INR 45,000 crore (USD 6.3 billion) in 2017-18, according to latest data released by the government on Thursday.

Top five fisheries States in India in 2017-18 (in lakh tonnes)

States	Inland	Marine	Total
Andhra Pradesh	28.45	6.05	34.5
West Bengal	15.57	1.85	17.42
Gujarat	1.34	7.01	8.35
Kerala	5.34	1.51	6.85
Tamil Nadu	1.85	4.97	6.82
All India production	89.02	35.88	125.9

According to the Handbook on Fisheries Statistics – 2018, unveiled by Minister of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Giriraj Singh, while inland capture fisheries accounted for 8.9 mt, the share of marine fisheries was 3.69 mt. India is currently the second largest producer of fisheries after China.

Growth in production

The total fish production in 2017-18 was 10.14 per cent more than 11.43 mt produced in 2016-17. Inland fisheries, which grew at 14.05 per cent accounted for much of the growth. Marine fisheries production, on the other hand, went up by only 1.73 per cent in 2017-18.

Andhra Pradesh, which captured 3.45 mt of fish, topped the Indian States, followed by West Bengal which accounted for 1.74 mt. While Andhra Pradesh, retained the top position in inland capture fisheries with 2.85 mt, Gujarat with 7.01 lakh tonnes was number one in marine



fisheries. There has been steady growth in the export of fish and fish products from India.

During 2017-18, the volume of fish and fish products exported was 1.38 mt and INR 45,107 crore (USD 6.3 billion) in value. The export of marine fish products registered an annual growth of 21.35 per cent in volume and 19.11 per cent growth in value.

Trend in export of marine products	
<i>(In ₹ cr)</i>	
2011-12	16,597.23
2012-13	18,856.26
2013-14	30,213.26
2014-15	33,441.61
2015-16	30,420.83
2016-17	37,870.90
2017-18	45,106.89

Boosting exports

Briefing the media on the occasion, the Minister said the government had drawn up plans to increase marine exports to INR1 lakh crore (USD 14 billion) over the next five years. Towards this, the Centre will invest INR 25,000 crore (USD 3.5 billion) in the fisheries sector, he said.

The funds will be used mainly for improving fishing infrastructure and strengthening processing and post-harvest management. The Centre has already extended financial support to the States to develop fishing harbours in seven major ports and commissioned 181 fish landing centres, he said.

Currently, the productivity of India's inland fisheries is just 3 tonnes per hectare, which Singh said needs to be improved substantially.

While the government cannot force people to eat fish, the growing protein intake in the country would lead to more people opting for fish, Singh said. As against a global average of 25 kg per annum, Indian's protein intake is less than 5 kg per year. This is expected to go up significantly in the coming years, the Minister said.

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