



## CURRENT AFFAIRS



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Date - 8 APRIL 2023

# Coastal Aquaculture Bill 2023

*This article covers "Daily Current Affairs for UPSC" and the topic is 'Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023' which is in news, it covers "Polity and Governance" In GS-2; the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023

**For Mains:** GS-2, Polity and Governance

### Why in news:

The Government introduced the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2023, through its Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Parshottam Rupala.

### ABOUT AQUACULTURE

- Aquaculture is the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants. It's water farming.
- The saline water along the shore has been discovered to be good for aquaculture, which primarily produces prawns.
- Aquaculture may be performed on approximately 12 lakh hectares along the country's coast, of which only 14% has been utilised thus far.
- This industry has enormous potential that should be capitalised on.

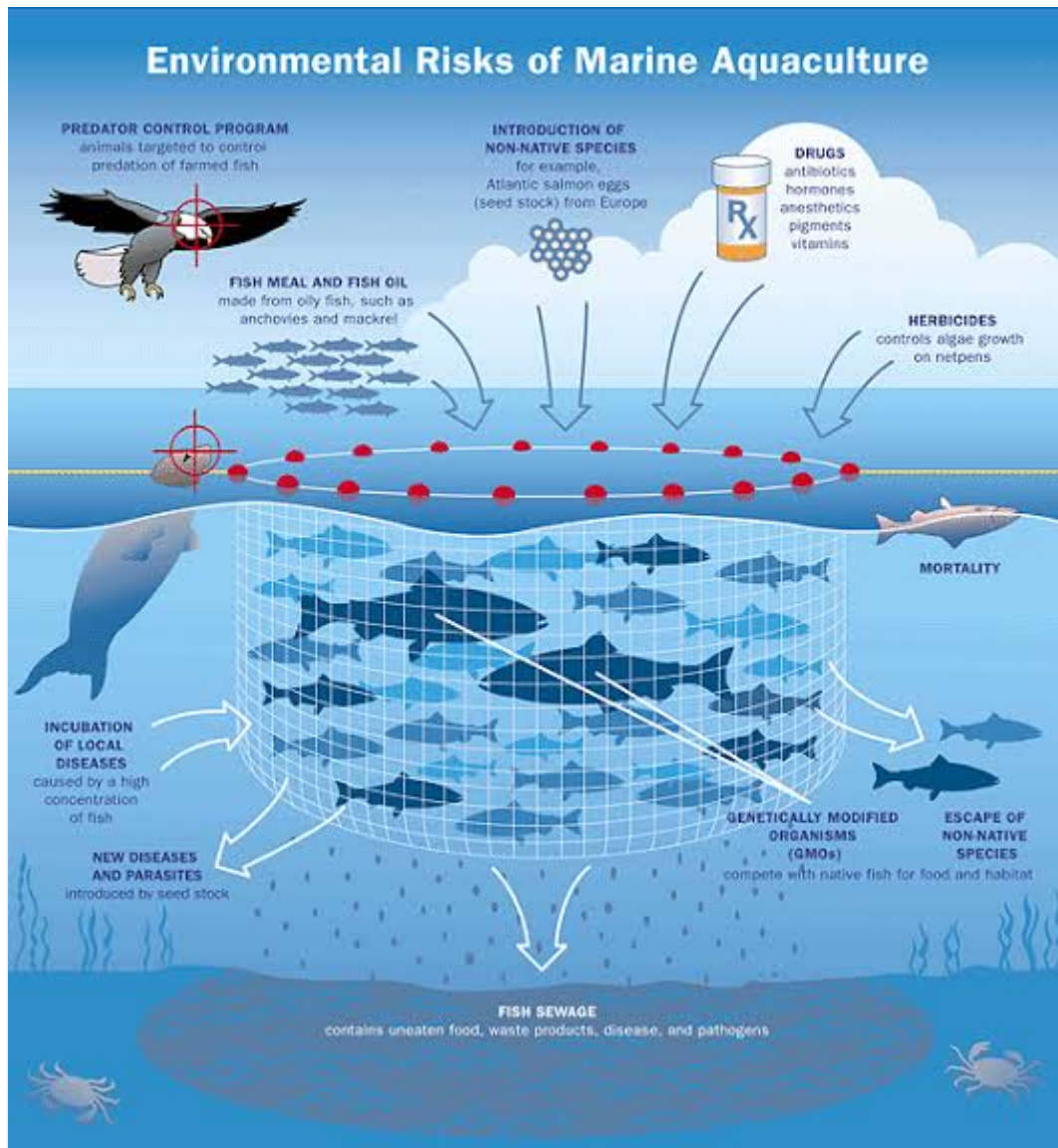
### ABOUT COASTAL AQUACULTURE BILL 2023

- It proposes amending the Coastal Aquaculture Authority bill of 2005.

- The Bill intends to decriminalise the Act's offences in order to promote ease of doing business and to fine-tune the Coastal Aquaculture Authority's operational procedures.
- It also planned to promote emerging forms of environmentally friendly coastal aquaculture, such as cage culture, seaweed culture, marine ornamental fish culture, and pearl oyster culture, all of which have the potential to provide new job opportunities.
- In addition, the Bill prohibits the use of antibiotics and pharmacologically active compounds that are dangerous to human health in coastal aquaculture.
- To broaden the scope and embrace all activities, the bill replaces the term "farm or farms" with "activity or activities."
- The Act proposes that CAA establish new subordinate offices to oversee the tight regulation.
- An amendment has been proposed to delegate the authority to establish the tenure in accordance with the tenure of land allotment by the government.
- In the "No Development Zone," coastal aquaculture hatchery operations, seaweed culture, and cage culture are permitted. (200m from the High Tide Line towards the coast).
- Decriminalization of the act by abolishing the penalty of up to three years in prison for practising aquaculture without a permit.
- The Bill aims to clarify that coastal aquaculture and related operations would continue to be governed by "the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act and no other Acts."

### **BILL SEEKS PROVISIONS FOR BIOSECURITY**

- The Bill also includes additional "biosecurity" provisions, which refer to procedures and strategies for analyzing, managing, and reducing the danger of introducing or spreading harmful organisms such as viruses and bacteria within the coastal aquaculture unit, which could lead to infectious diseases.
- It calls for the establishment of a "Brood Stock Multiplication Centre," which will receive post-larvae or juveniles that are pathogen-free, tolerant, or resistant to such pathogens, as well as other post-larvae or juveniles from a "Nucleus Breeding Centre," to be reared under strict biosecurity and disease surveillance.



## Coastal Aquaculture Bill

### CURRENT STATUS OF AQUACULTURE IN INDIA

- After China, India is the world's second-largest producer of farmed fish, accounting for more than 8% of worldwide aquaculture production.
- India's proportion of world manufacturing has consistently climbed from around 6% in the 2000s to 7% in 2010 and now around 8%.

#### Initiatives are taken by the Indian Government

- Some of the first efforts in this area date back to the mid-1950s, when work on breeding Indian Major Carp (IMC) species like catla, rohu, and mrigal was conducted.
- 'Composite Fish Culture,' or CFC, is a method that uses a six-species mix of IMC and foreign carp.

- During the 1970s, it was made available for extension among fish farmers through an All India Coordinated Research Project on Composite Fish Culture (AICRIP-CFC).

## **TRANSITION TO BRACKISH WATER AQUACULTURE**

- The expanding relevance of brackishwater aquaculture in India has been a significant shift in recent years.
- India is primarily a freshwater aquaculture country, with a long history of fish growing in private and community tanks/ponds.
- Currently, freshwater aquaculture accounts for around 88% of total farmed fish production in India.
- However, in recent years, brackishwater aquaculture production has grown at a far faster rate, and its share of overall production has risen from roughly 3% 10 years ago to more than 12% now.
- Marine aquaculture is still in its infancy in India, with a small contribution.

## **MAJOR ISSUES RELATED TO COASTAL AQUACULTURE BILL**

- The use of antibiotics and chemicals such as formalin and hydrogen peroxide in aquaculture has come under scrutiny.
- Formalin, which contains formaldehyde and methyl alcohol, is used to preserve fish to extend its shelf life, and there have been suspicions that formaldehyde may be linked to certain types of cancer.
- The discovery of formalin-laced fish across the country sparked widespread panic.
- Several states, including Kerala, Goa, Manipur, Assam, and Meghalaya, temporarily prohibited the import of fish from other states.

## **WAY FORWARD**

- The expansion of aquaculture across the country over the last few decades demonstrates its viability as a source of income.
- Fish production accounts for about 1% of India's GDP and more than 5% of agricultural GDP.
- Quality requirements cannot be overlooked as the share of fish exports is expected to expand from 10% to approximately 13% by 2030.
- To gain a larger share of the global export market, India must improve its processing and value-addition capabilities.
- Since the wild or catch fishery is under constant and permanent threat of extinction, a move from hunting to farmed fish is the only way to provide food and nutritional security in some of the world's poorest regions.

- The comparative advantage is held by Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON COASTAL AQUACULTURE BILL**

### **Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act 2005**

- The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA) has been a powerful force in maintaining coastal aquaculture farm regulation and registration.
- The act requires the central government to ensure that these farms have no negative effects on the coastal environment.
- Since its inception, the act has been crucial in promoting the sector's growth and development.
- This resulted in a stunning \$8 billion in seafood exports in the previous fiscal year.
- The Authority for regulating coastal aquaculture activities consists of:
  - A Chairperson (current or former High Court Judge).
  - A Coastal aquaculture expert.
  - 4 members representing Coastal States (Rotational Bases)
  - 1 Secretary
  - Nomination:
    - The Central Department of Ocean Development
    - of Env. and Forests
    - of Agriculture
    - of Commerce

**Source:**  
**Indian Express**

**Saurabh Kaushik**