

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES  
LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1677  
TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2025**

**UNIFIED BLUE ECONOMY**

†1677. SHRI BRIJIMOHAN AGRAWAL:

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) the major legislative steps taken by the Government for the Blue Economy district from policy-based approaches such as the Deep Ocean Mission along with the draft legislation, inter-ministerial consultations or projected timelines for a Blue Economy Law;
- (b) the existing mechanism which ensures sector-specific, legally binding environmental protections for marine economic activities in the absence of a Unified Blue Economy Act;
- (c) the manner in which the regulatory gaps and overlaps being addressed;
- (d) the proposed plan for unified statutory framework for environmental protection;
- (e) the existing system for the Government to have a statutory benefit-sharing mechanism to guarantee equitable distribution of marine resource benefits such as mariculture, mining and tourism etc. among local communities, private sector and the State; and
- (f) whether there are any dedicated laws or guidelines for private and foreign investment, accountability and liability in the emerging blue economy sectors and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR  
MINISTRY OF SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY  
AND EARTH SCIENCES  
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)**

- (a) Ministry of Earth Sciences is taking a systematic approach towards a legislative framework for the Blue Economy. The Draft National Policy on Blue Economy, covering seven thematic areas including ocean governance and marine spatial planning, was placed in the public domain in February 2021 and revised in July 2022 after inter-ministerial and stakeholder consultations. The policy is aiming to harness ocean resources sustainably for economic growth while protecting marine ecosystems ensuring national security and provides the foundational basis for future legislation. While the Deep Ocean Mission having six defined verticals is a subset of the broader Blue Economy concept which is focused on technological development for exploring deep ocean resources, promoting climate change advisory services, conservation of deep-sea biodiversity, research on ocean biology, and harnessing energy and freshwater from the ocean.
- (b) A robust, sector-specific legal framework ensures environmental protection for marine economic activities. The key laws include:

Sector	Legal Framework / Act
Coastal and Marine Ecosystems	Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
	Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019
	Wildlife Protection Act, 1972

Fisheries and Aquaculture	Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (State-specific)
	National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017
Shipping and Ports & Security	The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958
	Major Port Authorities Act, 2021
	International Maritime Conventions (e.g., MARPOL) (via Merchant Shipping Act)
	Maritime Zones Act, 1976
	Recycling of Ships Act, 2019 Island Vessels Act, 2021
Oil, Gas & Deep-Sea Mining	Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948
	Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 (as amended in 2023)
	Deep Ocean Mission (MoES Framework)
Tourism and Recreation	Environment (Protection) Act & CRZ Rules
	Biological Diversity Act, 2002
Marine Biotechnology & Bio-prospecting	Biological Diversity Act, 2002

- (c) The regulatory gaps and overlaps are being addressed through following mechanisms:
- The PARIVESH portal of Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) acts as a single window for environmental, forest, wildlife, and CRZ clearances.
  - The National Sagarmala Apex Committee and PM Gatishakti portal also aid in integrated planning.
- (d) The current focus is on strengthening the existing environmental legal framework through targeted reforms, including amendments to existing laws and empowering the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's umbrella legislation the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These reforms aim to introduce specific rules to address critical challenges such as e-waste (management), plastics waste management, batteries waste management, and end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) scrapping.
- (e) A statutory benefit-sharing mechanism is already in place across various marine sectors:
- Genetic & Bio-resources: The Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and its associated regulations mandate sharing of benefits through monetary contributions (0.2-0.6% of turnover) to Biodiversity Funds and non-monetary benefit-sharing.
  - Offshore Minerals: The Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act 2023 (OAMDR), requires lessees to pay an additional amount to the Offshore Areas Mineral Trust, not exceeding one-third of the royalty, to the Trust.
  - Fisheries: The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and state policies ensure revenue sharing (15-25%) with local bodies or Self-Help Groups from mariculture parks.

- Tourism: Niti Aayog's guidelines on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) agreements for eco-tourism projects in Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) areas often include a mandatory revenue-sharing component. This typically involves the private operator contributing a minimum of 2-5% of their gross revenue to a local development fund, as part of their agreement with the government.

(f) Yes. There are dedicated laws and guidelines for investment, accountability, and liability:

- 100% FDI is permitted via the automatic route in sectors like sea-ports and aquaculture. Offshore mineral block auctions are open to foreign bidders with specified conditions. (Consolidated FDI Policy, DPIIT)
- The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, adopts international liability conventions and mandates compulsory insurance for pollution damage. Offshore safety is governed by the Oil Mines Regulations, 2017, and a draft Offshore Safety Directive.
- The "Harit Sagar" Green Port Guidelines (2023) mandate ESG reporting for terminal operators. The Deep Ocean Mission requires Environmental & Social Due Diligence for its projects.
- Maritime Zones Act, 1976 along with updated rules like the Offshore Wind Energy Lease Rules, 2023, provides the legal framework for leasing and regulating offshore energy and mineral projects, ensuring compliance with technical, safety, and environmental standards set by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

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